

# Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Open House and Survey Summary

May 29, 2024

---

## Introduction

On May 1, 2024, the City of Mercer Island hosted an Open House to inform community members about the Draft Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. The Open House briefed attendees on the requirement to undertake a periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure it was updated with current information and complied with changes in state law. It also outlined work that had been undertaken by the City since 2022 to review existing elements in the Comprehensive Plan and identify necessary amendments, as well as the addition of two new elements: the Economic Development Element and the Park and Open Space Element. Additionally, the event served as a venue to share information about significant revisions to the Housing Element arising from new requirements in 2023 from HB 1220, which amended the Growth Management Act (GMA) to require local governments to plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all income levels.

### Exhibit 1. Open House Welcome Board



The open house was held on Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 6:00-8:00pm at the Mercer Island Community and Event Center. Thirty-two members of the community attended (See Appendix A). Additional attendees included City staff, members of the Mercer Island Planning Commission, and the City Council. After signing-in, attendees were provided with a handout with information on where to find additional information online, an invitation to take a survey related to the update, and a detailed timeline of work the City has undertaken and upcoming key dates related to the periodic review and update of the Comprehensive Plan (See Appendix B).

Attendees received a presentation from City staff that summarized updates, key information, and dates regarding the periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan (See Appendix C). After the staff presentation, community members were invited to circulate to different stations set up around the room with Display Boards highlighting information on key elements of the periodic update (See Appendix E), such as the board seen in Exhibit 2.

**Exhibit 2: Comprehensive Plan Overview**

## Growth Management & Comprehensive Plans

**WHAT IS THE GMA?**

The GMA, or Growth Management Act, is a state law that outlines strategies for managing growth and directing development in counties and cities. For cities like Mercer Island, it mandates the creation of a Comprehensive Plan with a 20-year planning horizon. This plan must undergo review and potential revision every decade to ensure alignment with any updates to the GMA and to stay current with evolving needs and priorities.

The GMA requires that certain elements be addressed in every Comprehensive Plan. For Mercer Island, those elements are:

Land Use	Transportation	Parks and Recreation
Housing	Economic Development	Shorelines
Capital Facilities Plan	Utilities	Climate Change & Resiliency*

\*The Climate Change and Resiliency element was added in 2023 as a mandatory element, the deadline for Mercer Island to add a climate change is June 30, 2029.

**WHAT IS VISION 2050?**

Vision 2050 is the plan for growth, in the Puget Sound region. Adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), it serves as the blueprint for growth and transportation investments across the four-county region. This plan provides guidance for countywide planning policies and regional allocation of growth. With the region's population projected to reach 5.8 million people by 2050, Vision 2050 will direct infrastructure investments and concentrate growth accordingly.

**WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?**

A Comprehensive Plan is the centerpiece of local long-range planning, projecting ahead over a 20-year planning horizon. It contains a vision, goals, objectives, policies, and implementation actions to guide decision-making by elected officials and staff. The GMA emphasizes implementation, recognizing that achieving a plan's objectives requires regulatory and financial support, including zoning regulations, program initiatives, and both capital and non-capital spending. Development regulations and capital budget decisions must align with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

**HOW MUCH WILL MERCER ISLAND GROW BY 2044?**

By 2044, Mercer Island is expected to have **1,239** new households and **1,300** new jobs than in 2019.

Source: BERK, 2024.

The presentation, display boards at each station, and additional Open House material are posted to the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update project page on the City's Let's Talk website. A link to the presentation can be accessed [here](#).

In conjunction with the Open House the City also opened a survey on May 1, 2024, to gather community member's insight on issues related to the Periodic Update of the Comprehensive Plan. The survey closed

on May 20, 2024, with eighty-seven respondents. A printout of the survey questions and responses can be found in [Appendix F](#).

Following this introduction, you will find a summary of the Open House, including observations on common themes noted from the written comments provided by attendees and responses to engagement activities. Additionally, a summary of the online survey responses and key findings is provided.

## Public Communication

The Open House event on May 1 was promoted through various print, emailed, and online methods. This included the Mercer Island Report, the online Community Planning and Development Weekly Bulletin, the Mercer Island Weekly E-newsletter, appropriate city calendars, official communication and through social media. See Exhibit 3.

The survey was promoted through the project webpage, social media, and the e-newsletter. These are in addition to the May 1, 2024, Open House promotions, some of which mentioned the survey's availability and included links to the project website where it was hosted. See Exhibit 4.

### Exhibit 3. Promotion Methods of the May 1 Open House

Medium	Date	Additional Notes
Let's Talk Mercer Island (Online)	March 29, 2024	Published on Project webpage
Planning Commission Calendar (Online)	April 1, 2024	First published on April 1
Mercer Island Reporter	April 17, 2024	Legal Notice of possible Planning Commission Quorum
Community Planning and Development Weekly Bulletin (Online)	April 15, 22, & 29, 2024	Notice of Open House and possible Planning Commission Quorum
Mercer Island Weekly E-Newsletter	April 17 & 24, 2024	(Emailed)
City Council Calendar (Online)	April 29, 2024	Notice of possible City Council quorum at the May 1, 2024 Open House
City Manager Communication	April 16, 2024	Report to City Council
City Social Media Posts	April 30, 2024	Posted on Facebook

### Exhibit 4. Promotion of the Survey

Medium	Date
Let's Talk Project webpage.	May 2, 2024
City Social Media Post (Facebook)	May 10, 2024
Mercer Island Weekly E-Newsletter	May 1, 2024

## Key Takeaways

The feedback gathered from the open house and online survey highlighted several key themes and priorities for the community, following are some takeaways from these community engagement efforts:

- 32 individuals attended the May 1, 2024, open house.
- 87 responses were received from the online survey available from May 1 to May 20, 2024.
- General agreement that Mercer Island is a good place to live.
- Concerns about changes resulting from new development and its impacts on livability.
- Support for a greater diversity of housing types on the island to allow more housing choice.
- High importance placed on the preservation of mature trees and landscaping.
- Support for improvements to safely and conveniently access transit options.
- Need for enhanced pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
- High value placed on parks and open spaces.



# Open House Summary

## Informational Stations

Five of the seven information stations at the Open House highlighted different elements of the Comprehensive Plan and one provided background on the GMA and the city's current Comprehensive Plan. See Appendix E to view all sixteen boards on display at the Open House. Stations focused on elements featured display boards depicting the elements' goals, policies, and general information for community review. Staff members from various City departments managed the stations to help attendees understand the proposed changes to each element and answer any questions.

Attendees could engage with City staff at each station. At the Housing Element and Economic Development Element stations, attendees were also given the opportunity to share their ideas and preferences on display boards, by placing post-it notes and colored dots. Staff encouraged attendees to share their input through the online Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review Survey, which opened on May 1, 2024. Additionally, attendees could leave anonymous written comments in the comment box (Appendix D).

## GMA & Comprehensive Plan Information Station 1

After signing in to the Open House, people entered the room where the event was held and came upon the first informational station with two display boards explaining the Comprehensive Plan process and the state and regional laws that affect it, including an introduction to the GMA. Another display board included a timeline showing important dates over the past two years since the City initiated the periodic review and update of the Comprehensive Plan, including past City Council presentation, planning commission meetings, and community workshops. See Exhibit 5. The timeline noted upcoming dates and opportunities when the public could participate to share input regarding the update of the Comprehensive Plan. Larger images of the following three display boards can be found in Appendix E.

### Display Boards

#### Exhibit 5. Display Boards at First Informational Station

**Growth Management & Comprehensive Plans**

**Washington State Growth Management Act** (first enacted in 1992)

**PIERCE'S VISION 2050**  
Multicity Planning Policies (King, Snohomish, & Pierce Counties)

**2021 King County Countywide Planning Policies**  
(King County & PI, III, IV)

**Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan**  
(first adopted in 1998, amended in 1998 by complying with GMA, last periodic update was in 2012)

**Development Regulations & City Programs**

**Development / Construction**

**HOW MUCH WILL MERCER ISLAND GROW BY 2047?**  
By 2047, Mercer Island is expected to have 1,239 new households and 1,309 new jobs (as of 2019).

**WHAT IS THE GMA?**  
The GMA, or Growth Management Act, is a state law that outlines strategies for managing growth and directing development in counties and cities. For cities like Mercer Island, it mandates the creation of a Comprehensive Plan with a 20-year planning horizon. The plan must undergo review and possible updates every decade to ensure alignment with any updates to the GMA and to stay current with existing needs and priorities.

The GMA requires that certain elements be addressed in every Comprehensive Plan. For Mercer Island, these elements are:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Public and Recreation
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Stormwater
- Capital Facilities Plan
- Utilities
- Climate Change & Resiliency

**WHAT IS VISION 2050?**  
Vision 2050 sets the plan for growth in the Puget Sound region, adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), a joint effort by the Puget Sound region's growth and development jurisdictions across the four-county region. The plan provides guidance on regional planning policies and regional allocation of growth. With the region's population projected to reach 10 million people by 2050, Vision 2050 will direct infrastructure investments and concentrate growth accordingly.

**WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?**  
A Comprehensive Plan is the cornerstone of local long-range planning, providing a road map for 20-year planning horizons. It contains a vision, goals, objectives, policies, and implementation actions to guide decision-making by elected officials and staff. The GMA emphasizes implementation, responsibility and authority to plan objectives requires ongoing monitoring and updates, including zoning regulations, program initiatives, and both local and non-regulatory funding. Development regulations and capital budget decisions must align with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

**The Comprehensive Plan**

**MERCER ISLAND'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TODAY**

The plan, or Growth Management Act, is a state law that outlines strategies for managing growth and directing development in counties and cities. For cities like Mercer Island, it mandates the creation of a Comprehensive Plan with a 20-year planning horizon. The plan must undergo review and possible updates every decade to ensure alignment with any updates to the GMA and to stay current with existing needs and priorities.

The GMA requires that certain elements be addressed in every Comprehensive Plan. For Mercer Island, these elements are:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Capital Facilities
- Economic Development
- Stormwater
- Climate Change & Resiliency
- Public and Recreation

The individual elements of the Comprehensive Plan must align with each other, consequently, adjustments to one element to address changes in state law may necessitate amendments to other elements to maintain internal consistency.

**WHAT'S NEW?**  
Washington State, the region, and Mercer Island are constantly changing and evolving, influenced by national influences and trends. To keep the City's Comprehensive Plan relevant, regular review and amendments to meet new data requirements, RFPB regional growth requirements and such by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and align with the community's vision.

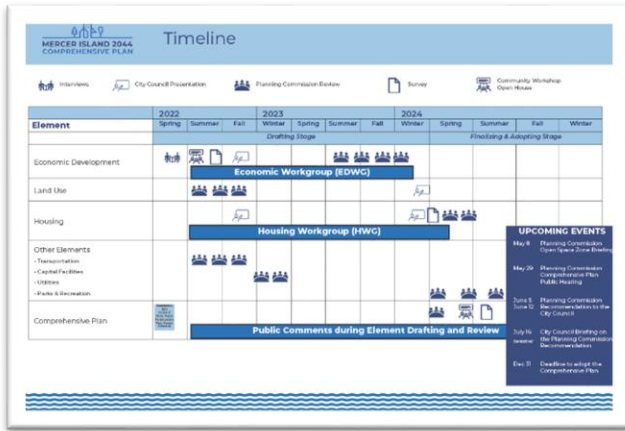
Major issues to be updated periodically include and, if necessary, update the comprehensive plan every ten years. With the current deadline set for December 31, 2024.

During this Periodic Update, the City will introduce two new elements:

- Economic Development
- Public and Open Space

Additionally, the existing Housing Element has undergone significant reworking to ensure compliance with state and regional requirements.

**Elements typically include:** Vision, Goals, Policies, Programs, Regulations, Land Use, Housing, Transportation, Utilities, Capital Facilities, Economic Development, Stormwater, Climate Change & Resiliency, and Public and Recreation.



## Land Use and Shoreline Elements Information Station 2

The Land Use Element and Shoreline Element information were combined at one information station. See Exhibit 6 and Exhibit 7. Larger images of the two boards displayed at this station can be found in Appendix E.

The Land Use Element display board highlighted new and updated land use goals focused on development outside of the Town Center. Key proposed amendments aim to better align with the: land use objectives in the city’s adopted Climate Action Plan, proposed amendments to the Housing Element and the New Park and Open Space Element. A proposed new goal addresses reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emission.

No changes are proposed to the existing Shoreline Element. The related display board showed a map of the island’s shoreline environments and listed the Shoreline Master Program Goals, which have remained unchanged since the last periodic update in 2015.

**Exhibit 6. Snippet from the Land Use Element Board**

**Interconnected**

The Land Use Map is interconnected with other elements in the Comprehensive Plan. Changes to land use affects those elements, including:

**COMING SOON**

The Land Use Map will see some minor changes and updates to align with the new Parks and Open Space Element.

**Mercer Island Land Use Plan**

The Land Use Plan is intended to be a general depiction of land uses. The map is not a description of zoning boundaries nor should it be interpreted on a site specific basis.

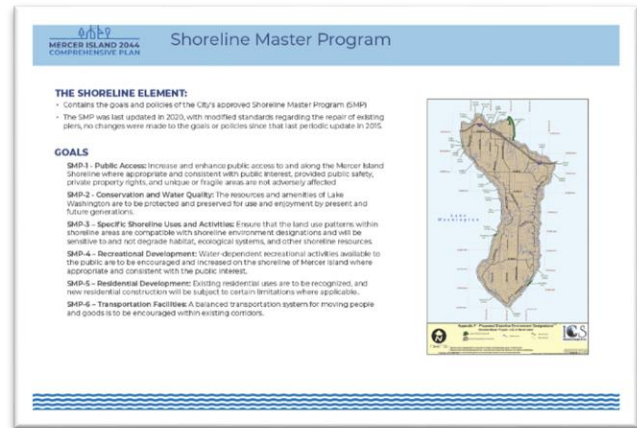
**Legend**

- Commercial Office
- Linear Park (I-90)
- Multi-Family
- Neighborhood Business
- Open Space
- Park
- Public Facility
- Single Family
- Town Center

The Mercer Island City limits delineates the designated Urban Growth Area. The UGA limits are congruent with the Mercer Island Lake Washington Shoreline.

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles  
City No. 21-28 Issues 4

**Exhibit 7. Land Use Element and Shoreline Master Program Display Boards**



**Housing Element Information Station 3**

The Housing Element information station had four display boards describing the purpose of the Housing element, explaining why it had been rewritten to address changes in state and regional regulations since the last periodic update, highlighting new requirements of local jurisdictions to accommodate housing that is affordable to all income levels. See Exhibit 8 and Exhibit 9

Larger images of the five boards displayed at this station can be found in Appendix E.

**Exhibit 8. A snippet from a Housing Display Board**

**What's New?**

- Element completely rewritten due to Washington State HB 1110 and HB 1220
- By 2044, an expected growth of **1,239 households**.
- Existing land capacity: **1,429 additional housing units**.



Exhibit 9. Housing Display Boards

### Housing Element

**PURPOSE**

- Provide the policy approach the City will take to manage projected growth and accommodate its housing needs.

**WHY WAS IT REBREWITT?**

Changes in state laws related to housing have resulted in restructuring this element to a single title.

- Comply with HB 1220. Requires cities to allow moderate density housing units on a single lot.
- Comply with HB 1220. Requires cities to plan and accommodate housing that is affordable to all income levels. This includes:
  - Planning for sufficient land capacity for all economic segments,
  - Allowing for moderate density housing, and
  - Identifying racially disparate impacts (RDI), taking measures to address these impacts, and reduce the risk of displacement.

**KEY GOALS**

- Overall: NEW. Stimulate housing affordable for all income levels.
- Affordable Housing: NEW. Allocation of all income levels can afford to live in Mercer Island because of the housing mix.
- Racially Disparate Impacts (RDI): NEW. Undo identified RDI, avoid displacement, and eliminate disparities in housing.
- Area Displacement: NEW. Reduce and mitigate displacement risk as regulations change and development occurs.
- Residential Regulation: Balance regulations that safeguard public health, safety and welfare.
- Implementation: Implement the Housing Element in a timely & efficient manner.

**WHAT'S NEW?**

- Directing compelling revision due to Washington State HB 120 and HB 1220.
- By 2044, an expected growth of 1,239 households.
- Adding land capacity 1,429 additional housing units.

### Housing Element Changes: HB 1220

**What is HB 1220?**

HB 1220 amended the Growth Management Act to require local governments to "plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all income levels."

To comply, Mercer Island must make the following updates:

- Plan for sufficient land capacity to address the housing needs of all economic segments in the community.
  - Identifying housing types and areas in the City with capacity to accommodate housing units at each affordability level.
- Incorporate provisions for moderate-density housing types, (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes).
- Adopt policies, identify programs, and implement strategies to support and enable the production of housing units to accommodate projected housing needs for all economic segments as allocated by income segments by King County to Mercer Island consistent with the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) VISION 2035 and the OMA.
- Identify racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing policies and regulations and take steps to undo any impacts and identify areas at higher risk of displacement and include anti-displacement policies.

**How is Mercer Island's housing growth target determined?**

King County developed Countywide Planning Policies (CPP), a shared framework for how to manage regional growth and its adopted growth targets for the region.

King County allocated these growth targets to each jurisdiction and directs each jurisdiction to address affordable housing needs and the condition of its existing housing supply.

Established by the King County CPPs, each jurisdiction must plan for and accommodate its allocated share of countywide future housing for moderate-, low-, very low-, and extremely low-income households.

### Housing Element Changes: HB 1220

**WHAT IS HB 1220?**

- Plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all income levels.
- Plan for sufficient land capacity to address the housing needs of all economic segments in the community.
- Incorporate provisions for moderate-density housing types.
- Adopt policies, identify programs, and implement strategies to support and enable the production of housing units to accommodate projected housing needs for all economic segments as allocated by income segments by King County to Mercer Island consistent with the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) VISION 2035 and the OMA.
- Identify racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing policies and regulations.

**CITY'S PERMANENT HOUSING NEW NET NEED 2019-2044**

**KEY FINDINGS FROM THE CITY'S RACIALLY DISPARATE IMPACTS EVALUATION**

- Households have a 20 percent higher cost burden than nonminority residents of the area.
- Households of color are 8 percent more likely to face housing cost burdens compared to White households.
- Black or African American households in Mercer Island are experiencing severe housing cost burden at more than double the rate of any other racial group.

### Housing Types & Needs

**1,239 new homes** are required to reach Mercer Island's housing growth target from 2019 to 2044.

**HOUSING NEED DISTRIBUTION BY INCOME GROUP**

Income Group	Percentage	Number of Units
Low Income	12%	149
Moderate Income	25%	310
High Income	63%	780

**HOUSING AFFORDABILITY**

- 25% of the 2019 households in Mercer Island are with cost burdens (30% or severely cost burdened (40%)).
- Households are generally considered cost burdened if housing expenses, including utilities, cost more than 30% of their income. Severe cost burdens is when households' housing costs are greater than 40% of their income.
- Severely experienced higher rates of housing cost burden than white households. Severe cost burdens by both race and low- and high-income households.
- Mercer Island has 102 more severely cost burdened units available.

**WHAT IS MODERATE DENSITY HOUSING?**

- DUPLEXES
- TOWNHOUSES
- COTTAGE RESIDENTIAL
- COURTYARD APARTMENTS
- STACKED FLATS
- TRIPLEXES - SOUPLEXES

**WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?**

- Home Plans: 30% of a household's gross income is used for housing costs including utilities.

### Housing Types

**Directions**

- Green: Where cost of housing aligns with the area's income level.
- Yellow: Where cost of housing is slightly above the area's income level.
- Red: Where cost of housing is significantly above the area's income level.

**Other Housing Types**

Please study notes below.

## Engagement Activity

At the Housing Element information station attendees were provided information on the City's housing target for the next 20 years and the need for additional multifamily development as well as a better mix of housing types other than multifamily and detached single unit homes. Attendees had the opportunity to share their opinions and preference on different housing types by placing a green dot on the type of housing they currently reside in and orange dots on housing types they might want or consider living in sometime in the future (participants could place more than one orange dot). See Exhibit 10.

### Key Observations:

- Eight participants indicated that they currently live in a detached single-family home, two live in townhomes, and one in a condominium.
- Participants were open to considering a range of middle housing types as home in the future as follows:
  - A detached single-family home – 7 participants
  - A single-family home with an accessory dwelling unit – 2 participants
  - A unit in a Triplex – 4 participants
  - A unit in a Fourplex – 1 participant
  - A cottage home – 5 participants
  - A townhouse – 6 participants
  - A unit in a courtyard apartment (2-3 story building) - 4 participants
  - A unit in a stacked flat apartment (2-3 story building) – 3 participants
  - A unit in a condominium building – 4 participants
  - A detached accessory dwelling unit associated with a single-family home – 2 participants

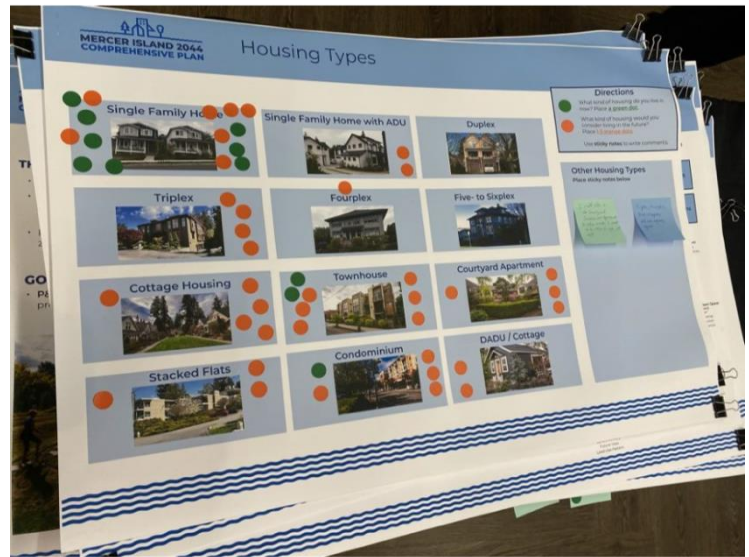
Participants were also asked to indicate on a sticky note placed on the activity board if there were other housing types not shown they would consider as a home in the future. Two sticky notes were placed on the board stating the following:

*"I would like to do courtyard condos, not apartments. In other words, I want to be able to own, not rent."*

*"Triplex, fourplex, and five-sixplex all are equally great"*

*"Increase building height in Town Center to increase population, provide lower income housing and increase customer base for retail businesses"*

Exhibit 10. Engagement Activity - Housing Element Display Board



# Transportation Element Information Station 4

The Transportation Element station display board included the existing goals and information on the purpose of the Transportation Element and its relationship with elements of the Comprehensive Plan with a focus on planning for all modes of transportation to support the City’s housing and job growth targets. Participants were encouraged to view the City’s 2024-2029 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), updated annually, and provides feedback and comments. A QR with a link to the website where the TIP could be reviewed was provided on the display board. See Exhibit 11. A larger image of the board displayed at this station can be found in Appendix E.

## Display Board

Exhibit 11. Transportation Display Board

**MERCER ISLAND 2044 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

# Transportation

### THE TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

- Ensures that planning for all modes of transportation in the City aligns with the broader, long-term goals and policies of the other elements with a focus on accommodating housing and job growth permitted in the Land Use Element.
- Deflects concurrency, a requirement that transportation facilities are consistent and adequate enough to serve new development based on level-of-service (LOS) standards for performance. As the City grows, the transportation facilities keep pace with changes in demand.
- Goals and policies include:
  - Land Use Assumptions for estimating travel patterns
  - Traffic Impacts for assessing traffic effects on I-90
  - Facilities and Services needs
  - Financial Plan
  - Intergovernmental Coordination efforts
  - Demand Management Strategies
  - Nonmotorized transportation components

### UPCOMING PROJECTS

Check out the City's 2024-2029 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for upcoming transportation upgrades and improvements. Updated annually, it covers city roadway, pedestrian, bicycle, and other transportation projects.

Provide your feedback and comments through June 4.

### GOALS

- T-1. Encourage the most efficient use of the transportation system through effective management of transportation demand and the transportation system.
- T-2. Receive the maximum value and utility from the City's investments in the transportation system.
- T-3. Minimize negative transportation impacts on the environment.
- T-4. Provide transportation choices for travelers through the provision of a complete range of transportation facilities, and services.
- T-5. Comply with local, regional, state and federal requirements
- T-6. Ensure coordination between transportation and land use decisions and development.
- T-7. Provide a safe, convenient, and reliable transportation system for Mercer Island.
- T-8. Preserve adequate levels of accessibility between Mercer Island and the rest of the region.
- T-9. Balance the maintenance of quality Island neighborhoods with the needs of the Island's transportation system.
- T-10. Maintain acceptable levels of service for transportation facilities and services on Mercer Island.
- T-11. Ensure parking standards support the land use policies in the Comprehensive Plan.
- T-12. Promote bicycle and pedestrian networks that safely access and link commercial areas, residential areas, schools, and parks in the City

## Utilities Element & Capital Facilities Element Information Station 5

The Utilities Element and Capital Facilities Element’s information were combined on one display board at this information station. The display board described the purpose of each element, listed the services and facilities addressed in each element, and indicated that each element would have information updated on current services, level of service, and financial assumptions to support the City’s 20-year growth forecast. See Exhibit 12. A larger image of the board displayed at this station can be found in Appendix E.

### Display Board

**Exhibit 12. Utilities and Capital Facilities Display Board**

## Utilities and Capital Facilities

**UTILITIES:** describes the general location, capacity, and provider of existing & proposed utilities.

**CAPITAL FACILITIES:** catalogs current public facilities. The element includes strategies for capital planning, financing, and revenue sources to support growth.

**BOTH ELEMENTS:**

- Assess capacity to meet the current and future needs based on planned growth out to 2044.
- Discuss existing “level of service” standards, and the investment needed to achieve or maintain them.

**WHAT'S NEW?**

- Updated information on current services provided, level of service, and financial assumptions to support the 20-year growth forecast
- Signed a 20-year contract in 2020 with Puget Sound Energy for carbon-free wind power to operate all City government operations.
- Adopted the PROS (Parks, Recreation and Open Space) plan in 2022

**CAPITAL FACILITIES BUDGET FORECAST**

■	Utilities
■	Streets, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Facilities
■	Buildings, Equipment, and Technology
■	Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

**Includes**

- Parks & Open Space
- Public Buildings
- Public Schools
- Telecommunications
- Public Streets & Roads
- Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities


- Water
- Sewer
- Solid Waste
- Electricity
- Natural Gas
- Stormwater

## Economic Development Element Informational Station 6

As part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan periodic review process the City Council directed City staff to include a new Economic Development Element as part of the periodic update. The Economic Development Element station display board included the new element’s purpose and information on how it was developed and its proposed goals. See Exhibit 13.

### Display Board

**Exhibit 13. Economic Development Display Board**



**MERCER ISLAND 2044  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Economic Development

**Directions**

Place **green dots** on the goal you think should be top priorities.

Use **sticky notes** to write comments.

THE \*NEW\*  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
ELEMENT:

- Articulates the City’s strategy through 2044 for fostering and enhancing the local economy
- Sets goals and policy direction aimed at leveraging the city strengths, capitalizing on opportunities, and building resilience in the local economy to overcome challenges.

The Draft Element was prepared by the Economic Development Work Group (EDWG), comprising two Planning Commissioners and three City Councilmembers.


The EDWG convened eleven times between June 2022 and June 2023 to develop the draft element, ultimately making a recommendation on the draft element and implementation plan on June 8, 2023.

WHAT GOALS SHOULD THE CITY FOCUS ITS EFFORTS ON FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

SUPPORTING & IMPROVING THE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM	The City of Mercer Island actively fosters a healthy business ecosystem.
REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS	Mercer Island’s healthy business ecosystem attracts entrepreneurs, businesses, and investment.
BUSINESS ATTRACTION	Existing businesses thrive as the cornerstone of Mercer Island’s business ecosystem.
CUSTOMER ATTRACTION	The business ecosystem on Mercer Island is sustainable in that it meets the social, environmental, and economic needs of residents now and in the future.
SUPPORTING & IMPROVING THE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM	The City actively reduces the regulatory burden created by commercial development regulations and permitting processes to support a healthy business ecosystem, entrepreneurs, and innovation in business.
REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS	The Mercer Island business ecosystem includes a diversity of goods and services enjoyed by residents and visitors.
BUSINESS ATTRACTION	The commercial areas in Mercer Island, and especially the Town Center, are lively, vibrant gathering places for the community and visitors.
CUSTOMER ATTRACTION	Commercial areas are attractive and inviting to the Mercer Island community and visitors.
SUPPORTING & IMPROVING THE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM	Public space in Town Center is plentiful, providing residents and visitors places to gather, celebrate, and socialize.
REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS	Mercer Island residents and visitors can safely access commercial areas.

### Engagement Activity

Attendees had the opportunity to share their opinions and preference on which of the proposed goals listed on the draft display board should be the City’s top priority to focus on in the next five years by placing a **green dot** one or more of the four categories the goals are broadly organized under (participants could place more than one orange dot).



May 29, 2024 Mercer Island | Periodic Update Open House and Survey – May 2024

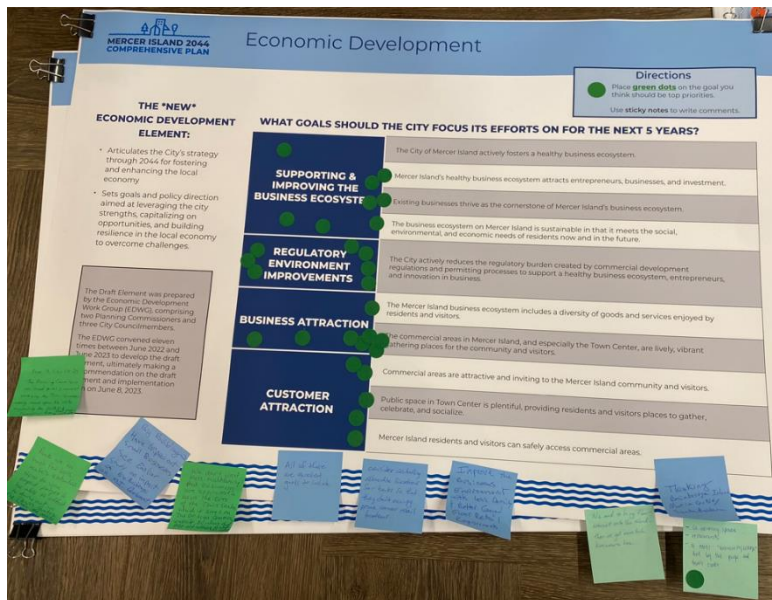
13

**Key Observations:**

There seems to be no one area where the City should focus its economic development efforts in the next 5 years. Participants placement of green dots highlighted a balanced interest in all four areas with “Customer Attraction” having the fewest green dots. The total number of green dots were placed on the following preferred focus areas related to economic development in the City:

- Focus efforts on supporting and Improving the Business Ecosystem – 8 votes  
●●●●●●●●
- Focus efforts on Regulatory Environment Improvements – 7 votes  
●●●●●●●
- Focus efforts on Business Attraction – 8 votes  
●●●●●●●●
- Focus efforts on Customer Attraction – 5 votes  
●●●●●

**Exhibit 14. Economic Development Engagement Activity**



Participants were also invited to write any comments they had related to the new Economic Development Element on a sticky note and place it on the activity board. See Exhibit 14. Ten sticky notes were placed on the board stating the following:

“Coworking spaces”

“We need to bring fiber internet onto the island – then we get more tech businesses here”

“Restaurants”

“A mini “University village” feel by the Town Center”

*“Improve the business environment with less density and better ground floor retail requirements”*

*“Consider controlling allowable locations for banks so that they don’t occupy prime corner retail locations”*

*“All of these are excellent goals to include”*

*“We don’t want more multifamily. Businesses are supposed to be in the core of Town Center which it says on the design commission website so why did they not adhere to the ...”*

*“Big building? Have wiped out small businesses. See earlier study*

*on impact of big buildings on MI Development”*

*“Rents are too high for both renters and retailers. How do you expect people to be able to afford to dine out in the Town Center when the rents are too high?”*

*“Page 4, line 14-20: The Planning Commission received public comment verbally by Traci Grend [? full last name illegible] adding more specific info regarding the South End Commercial Area that may be worth adding”*

*“Thinking Bainbridge Island, Marin County, Santa Barbra”*

## Parks and Open Space Element Station 7

The Park and Open Space Element is the second new element proposed to be included as part of this Periodic Update of the Comprehensive Plan. The Park and Open Space display board was still being drafted but was expected to provide policy direction to establish an Open Space zone and Park zone. The board included a map from the 2022 Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (PROS) of all existing parks and Open spaces, the new element will adopt the most recent version of the PROS Plan by reference., Notice that interested participants could provide feedback on the proposed Open Space zone at a future Planning Commission meeting. See Exhibit 15.

Exhibit 15. Parks and Open Space Display Board

**MERCER ISLAND 2044 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## Parks and Open Space

**THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

- NEW element
- Adopts the most recent version of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan by reference.
- Policy direction to establish an Open Space zone and Park zone.

**\*NEW\* Element!**  
Provide feedback on the proposed Open Space Zone at the Planning Commission briefing on May 8

**GOAL**

- P&OS-1. Continue to maintain the island's unique quality of life through the stewardship, preservation, and maintenance of parks, open spaces, trails, and recreational facilities.

**MAP 1: EXISTING PARKS & OPEN SPACES 2022 PROS Plan**

**LEGEND**

- City Park
- Neighborhood Park
- City Open Space
- Open Field/Landing
- Neighborhood Open Space
- School

**Table of Parks and Open Spaces:**

Name	Address	Area	Notes
Albion Park	1000 Albion St	City Park	
Albion Open Space	1000 Albion St	City Open Space	
Albion Field/Landing	1000 Albion St	Open Field/Landing	
Albion Neighborhood Open Space	1000 Albion St	Neighborhood Open Space	
Albion School	1000 Albion St	School	
Albion Park	1000 Albion St	City Park	
Albion Open Space	1000 Albion St	City Open Space	
Albion Field/Landing	1000 Albion St	Open Field/Landing	
Albion Neighborhood Open Space	1000 Albion St	Neighborhood Open Space	
Albion School	1000 Albion St	School	

## Comment Box

Attendees were able to leave anonymous remarks in writing and place them in a box provided at the meeting to collect comments. Overall, 25 comments were placed in the comment box. The comments were wide ranging and included thoughts on housing density, tree canopy, neighborhood characters, and other topics. To see images of all comments received, refer to Appendix D.

Comments submitted are transcribed below:

- For help setting the stage so people understand what AMI %s really mean, maybe we can call some of the multi-family “Teacher Housing”.
- You are not aware of toxic herbicides please do something thank you.
- We should get fiber internet for the entire island, not just the middle and high school.
- One submission with several bullets:
  - Allow multifamily housing in more areas of the City
  - Please don't place all multifamily housing directly adjacent to the highway.
  - Consider at least 5 to 6 stories for multifamily housing, up to 8 stories would be ideal to allow affordability.
  - Ensure mixed-use zoning near new affordable housing for access to amenities.

- Upzone more areas near transit. Especially ½ mile radius near light rail station.
- One submission with several bullets:
  - Kill the off-island PC idea!
  - Hed as part of the growth targets while 1220 is the pacing item, we still need to plan for the end of single family zoning.
  - Island Crest “missing link” is a TIP priority
  - I'd like to see pockets of multi-family to include townhouses and duplexes in the single family zones where it makes sense.
- What type of data will inform your decision on the Island Crest corridor between Island Park and 68<sup>th</sup>?
- Put flashing pedestrian lights on 84<sup>th</sup> & 71<sup>st</sup> street by IMS. Signs are hard to see and kids use this corridor to walk to school.
- Do not put gravel next to bike paths. Cyclists will ride in the center of the path to avoid it and avoiding slipping on the gravel.
- Is there some economically feasible way to use stormwater runoff to water beach areas (grass) at Groveland Park. - Need reservoir and pipes.
- We need fiber internet on the Island. We should add piping + potential conduit every time we replace utility pipes going forward.
- Increase public charging stations!
- Bike Lanes – They aren't used on the Mercers because materials that cause flats and accidents are in them. - Bike lanes on 84<sup>th</sup> are never used. People (Adults) ride in street. Youth drive on sidewalks. This is a waste of funds.
- Commercial Office Zone – The City lacks the infrastructure needed (broadband) to attract companies to Mercer Island.
- By alerting the community of counting you can skew the results. What is your control group reason for communication was to reduce calls. How many calls do you receive?
- Do not remove trees on the west side of ICW between Island Park Elementary and 68<sup>th</sup>. These provide a barrier between cars and pedestrians.
- Something has to be done to stop all the mature trees from being cut down for development and there should not be allowed a fee-in-lieu for being allowed to remove trees and the penalty + fees need to be in the 1000s no 100s.
- Nine signed copies of a form letter were submitted that states:

Please add this preamble to the Housing Chapter:

Mercer Island is primarily a single-family zoned community. Large minimum lot sizes and a low gross floor area to lot ratio, combined with yard setbacks and limits on impervious surfaces, contribute to the rural character of the single-family zones that islanders cherish. These regulations also support the retention of mature trees and vegetation, which capture carbon, limit solar heat,

and provide habitats for birds and woodland animals. In 2017, new regulatory limits were adopted for our single-family zone after a years-long process involving extensive citizen participation and public processes. These adopted regulatory limits, including minimum lot size, height limits, impervious surface limits, yard setbacks, gross floor area to lot area ratios, and onsite parking minimums, preserve the rural character of our single-family zone and will not be changed as a part of these amendments to our comprehensive plan.

## Key Observations

Comments were wide ranging, from the 25 submissions placed in the Comment Box at the Open House, which had a total of 38 signed-in attendees. Several key observations were noted that highlight the attendees' priorities and concerns, providing insights to City officials and staff in their decision-making process.

### Housing & Zoning

- **Support for Multifamily Housing:** Some comments expressed interest in and the need for more multifamily housing options and increased density, near the new light rail station and bus interchange but also diversification within single family zones.

Several comments emphasized the need for diversification of multifamily housing options throughout the island, including suggesting increasing the density, particularly near transit and amenities, allowing multifamily housing in single family neighborhoods, not locating all new multifamily next to the I-90, to consider taller multifamily buildings in some areas (5-8 stories), and ensuring mixed use zoning.

- **Preservation of Single-Family Zones:** Some commentors strongly advocate for maintaining what they describe as the rural character of the existing single-family zones, emphasizing retaining the existing zoning will provide environment protection such as tree preservation and keeping existing single-family neighborhood character.

The form letter signed by 9 individuals expressed strong sentiments about the importance of preserving existing regulations and maintaining a rural character of single-family zones keeping minimum lot sizes, height limits, as well as the retention of mature trees.

### Public Amenities & Infrastructure

- **Broadband and Internet Access:** There is a call for improved internet infrastructure, including extending fiber internet access throughout the city.

Several comments highlighted the need for better internet infrastructure in the City, including fiber internet for the entire island, not just schools. The lack of high-speed internet may deter businesses from locating there.

- **Public Amenities:** There was one request for more electric vehicle charging stations and several that touched on the need for bike lane improvements and pedestrian safety.

### Environmental Concerns

- **Tree Preservation:** High level of importance placed on protecting mature trees to maintain the existing character of the island.

Several comments mentioned the importance of protecting mature trees and landscaping for both the environmental benefits as well as maintaining the island’s existing character. Suggestions included imposing higher penalties and fees for tree removal and to prevent development related removal of mature trees and landscaping.

- **Sustainable Practices:** Community support for sustainable environmental practices.

One comment asked for the City to explore economically feasible ways to use stormwater runoff for watering park areas. One comment urged the City to be aware of and stop the use of toxic herbicides.

### Multimodal Transportation

- **Nonmotorized Travel safety:** Interest in improved safety measures to benefit pedestrians and bicyclists.

Several comments focused on improvements needed for safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, most focused on the Island Crest corridor. Suggestions included installing flashing pedestrian lights, not placing gravel on the shoulders of bike paths and addressing maintenance issues in bike lanes to prevent accidents.

- **Public Transit and Infrastructure** Some comments addressed the importance of improving infrastructure to support public transit and ensure it aligns with the location of future growth.

### Community Outreach

- **Community Participation and Communication:** Desire to better understand decision making processes. Some comments appeared to focus on data collection and decision- making processes relating to bike lane improvements on Island Crest Way Corridor related projects.

# Survey

The City of Mercer Island conducted an online survey to assess the community’s insight on issues related to the Periodic Update of the Comprehensive Plan. The survey was available from May 1 to May 20 on the City’s online public engagement platform [Let’s Talk Mercer Island](#) and gathered responses from 87 participants. Survey questions invited opinions about housing affordability, city investment priorities, and transportation planning.

This summary provides brief descriptions of the results for the survey’s eighteen questions, including bar charts with the number of responses received (N= #) for each question, as some questions were optional. For a comprehensive view of all survey responses, refer to Appendix F which includes more details.

## Survey Participant Demographics

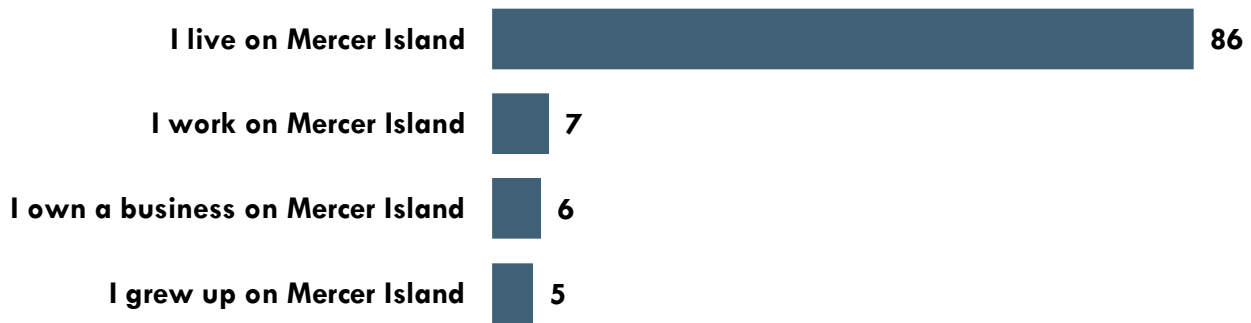
Respondents were mostly older, nearly all residents of Mercer Island, wealthier, and most respondents own their homes.

## Survey Reponses Summary

*Question 1. What best describes your relationship with Mercer Island? Use all that apply.*

The majority of respondents, approximately 83%, live on Mercer Island. See Exhibit 16.

**Exhibit 16: Respondents’ Relationship with Mercer Island (N=87)**

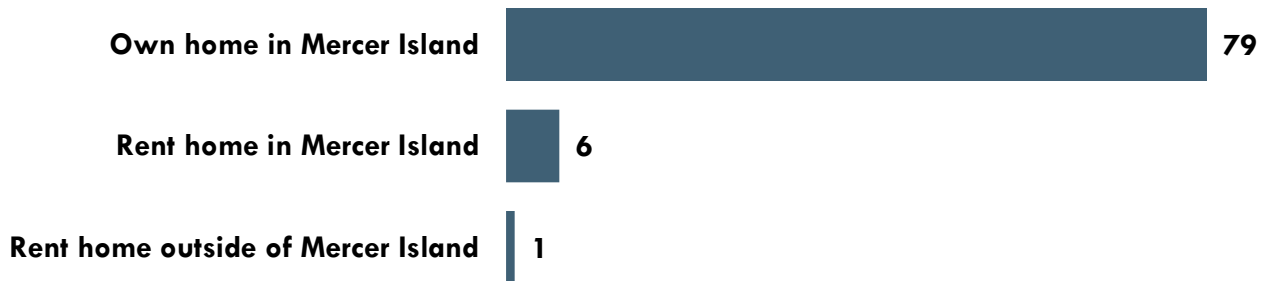


Source: BERK, 2024.

Question 2. What best describes your current living situation? Select the best fit.

92% of survey respondents own a home in Mercer Island. See Exhibit 17.

**Exhibit 17: Respondents' Current Living Situation (N=87)**

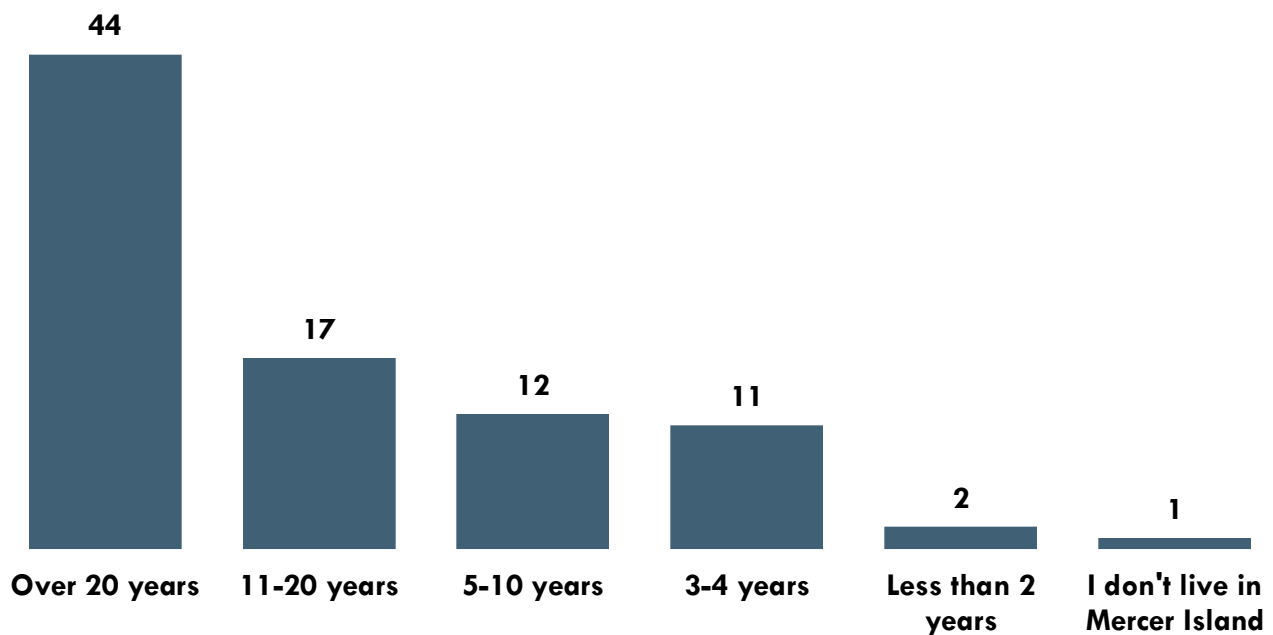


Source: BERK, 2024.

Question 3. How long have you lived in Mercer Island?

Approximately 51% of the respondents have lived in Mercer Island for over 20 years. However, 29% of the respondents have lived in Mercer Island for 10 years or less. See Exhibit 18.

**Exhibit 18: Respondents' Length of Time Living in Mercer Island (N=87)**



Source: BERK, 2024.

Question 4. What part of Mercer Island do you spend the most time in?

The largest portion of survey respondents, approximately 44%, frequently access the north end of Mercer Island. However, 39% of respondents frequently access the mid-island, located between SE 40<sup>th</sup> and SE 68<sup>th</sup> Street. See Exhibit 19.

Exhibit 19: Respondents' Most Frequented Part of the Island (N=87)

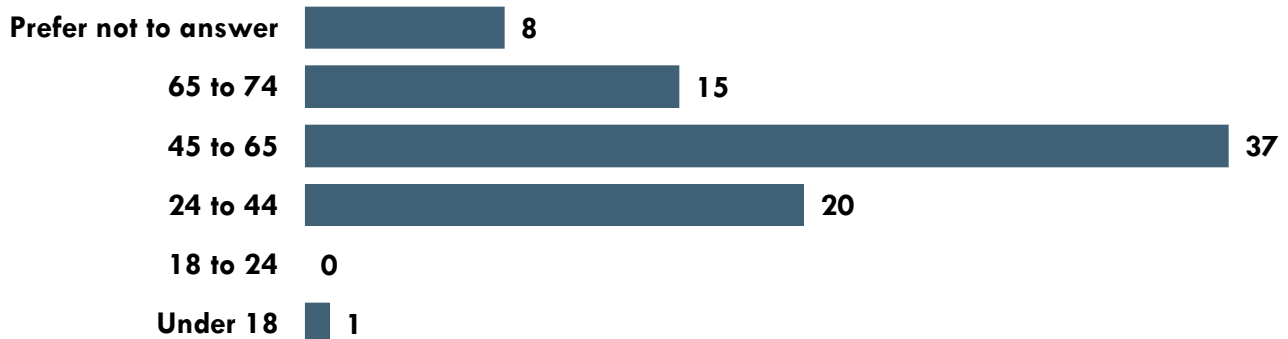


Source: BERK, 2024.

Question 5. What is your age?

The age distribution of respondents skews older. 71% of respondents are age 45 or older, with 22% of respondents 65 years of age or older. Based on [census data](#), the survey's distribution is comparable to the overall Mercer Island age distribution. See Exhibit 20.

Exhibit 20: Respondents' Age (N=81)

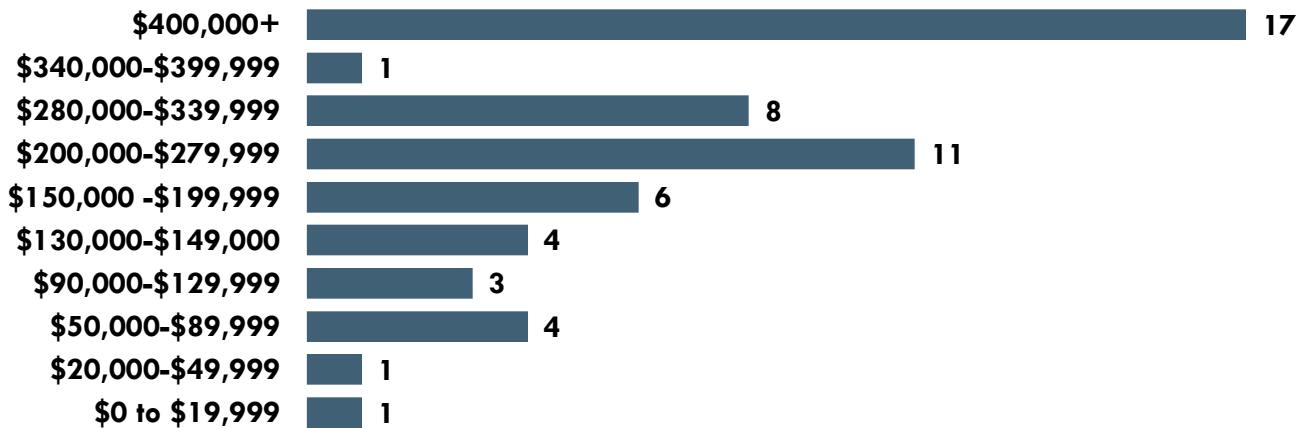


Source: BERK, 2024.

*Question 6. Which of the following best describes your household income last year?*

The respondents' household income skews wealthier, with approximately two-thirds of respondents earning \$200,000 or more a year. 48.3% of [census](#) respondents report household income over \$200,000. For the survey respondents, 43% report income within that same bracket. 30% of total respondents earn \$400,000 or more. Approximately 11% of respondents earn less than \$90,000 a year. However, some respondents chose to skip this question. See Exhibit 21.

**Exhibit 21: Respondents' Income (N=86)**



Source: BERK, 2024.

*Question 7. What do you love most about Mercer Island? Pick your top three.*

Among the 8 options, 28% of respondents love Mercer Island due to its safety. 24% of respondents also value its central location and 19% of respondents value the City's sense of community, as well as its parks and recreation opportunities. Several respondents also mentioned the good schools, while a couple of respondents also mentioned the quiet neighborhood character. See Exhibit 22.

**Exhibit 22: Mercer Island Most Loved Aspects (N=87)**



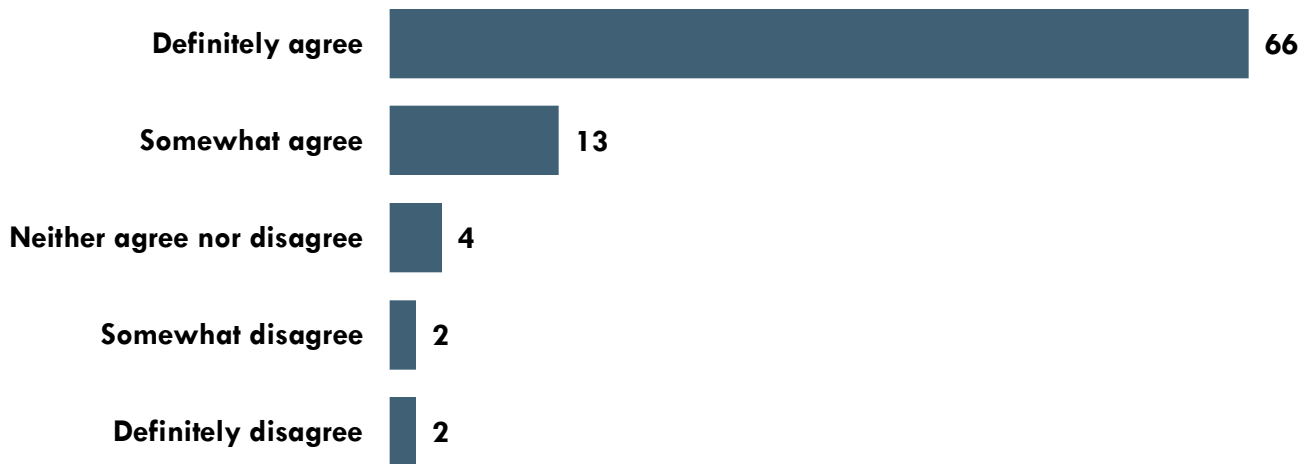
Source: BERK, 2024.

Question 8. Mercer Island strives to be Puget Sound's most livable residential community. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements

**Mercer Island is a good place for my household to live**

Respondents consider Mercer Island to be a good place to live, with more than three-fourths of the respondents definitely agreeing with this statement. See Exhibit 23.

**Exhibit 23: Results to "Mercer Island is a good place for my household to live" (N=87)**

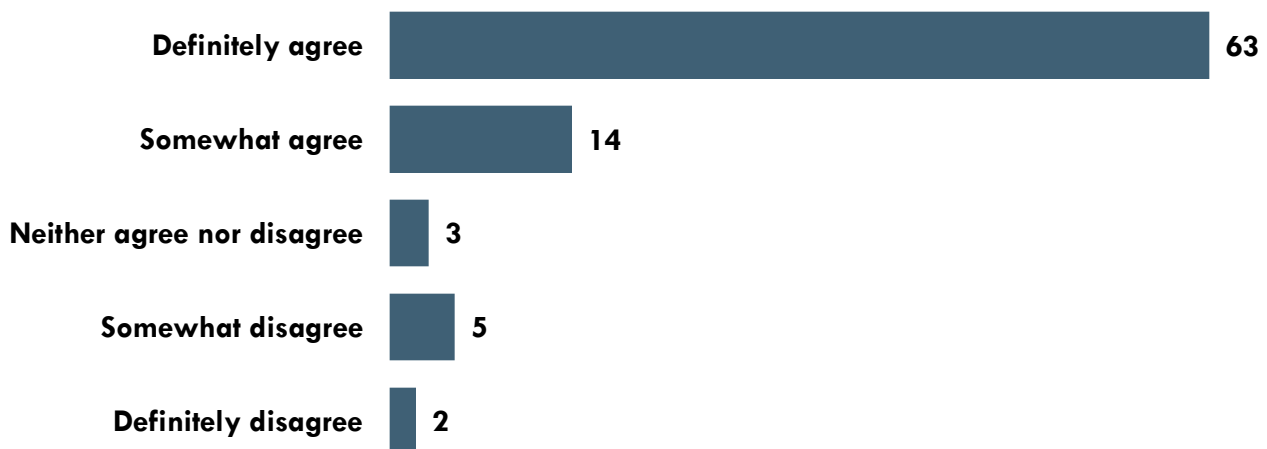


Source: BERK, 2024.

**I have housing that meets my needs.**

88% of respondents have housing that meets their needs. Only 8% of respondents do not have housing that meets their needs. See Exhibit 24.

**Exhibit 24: Results to "I have housing that meets my needs" (N=87)**

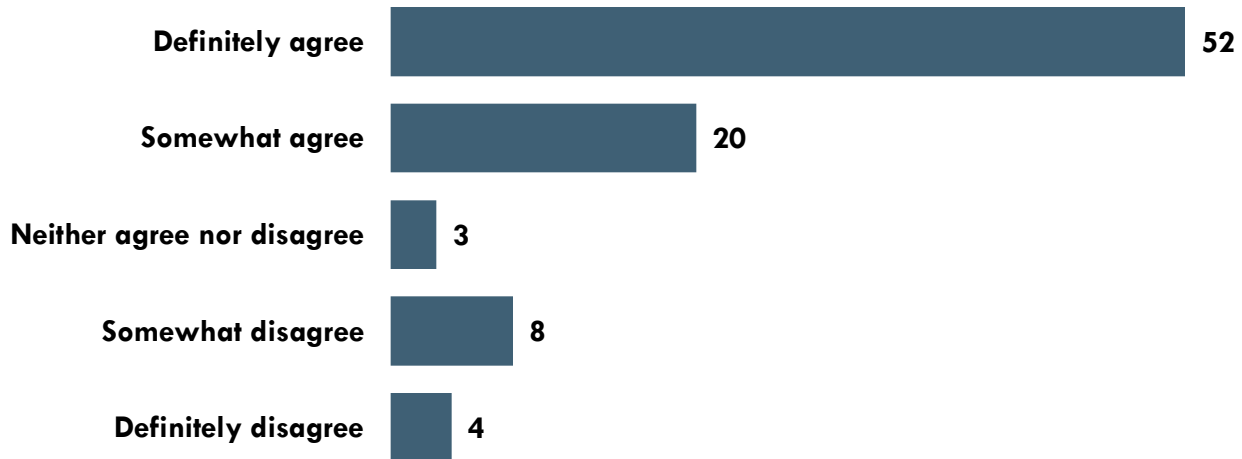


Source: BERK, 2024.

***I have housing that is comfortable for me to live in long term.***

83% of respondents have housing that is comfortable for them in the long term. However, 14% of respondents do not have housing that is comfortable in the long term for them. See Exhibit 25.

**Exhibit 25: Results to “I have housing that is comfortable for me to live in long term” (N=87)**

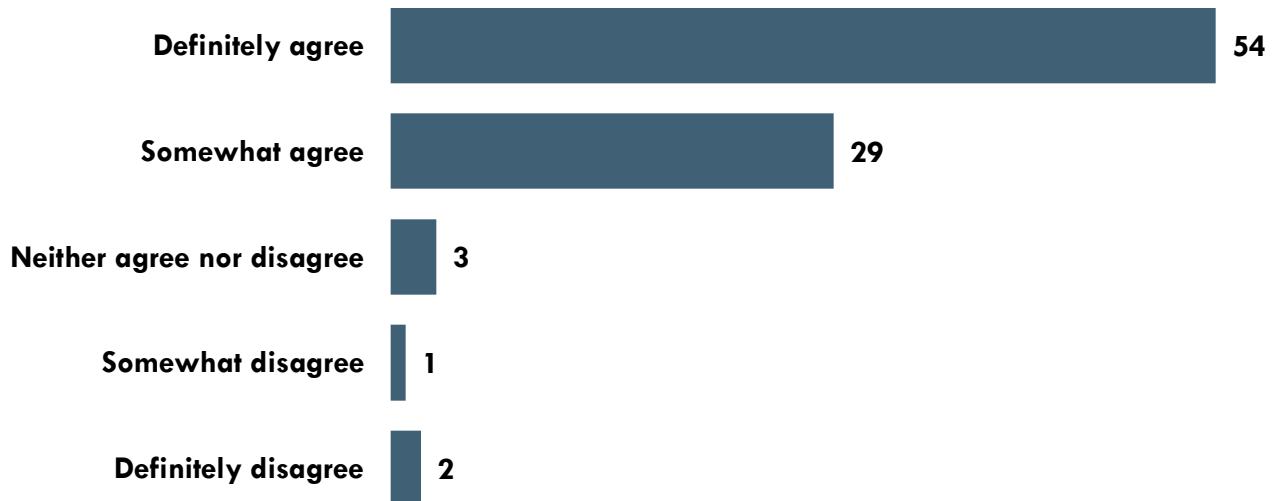


Source: BERK, 2024.

***I can access services for daily life, such as grocery stores, banks, and pharmacies.***

The vast majority of respondents (93%) can access the necessary services in the City. See Exhibit 26.

**Exhibit 26: Results to “I can access services for daily life, such as grocery stores, banks, and pharmacies” (N=87)**

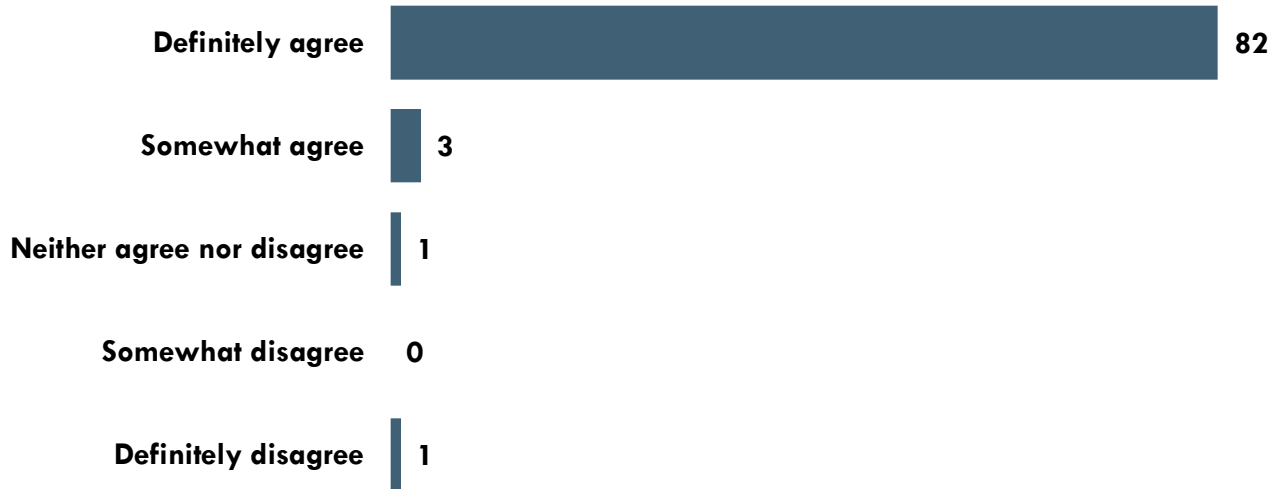


Source: BERK, 2024.

***I have access to open space, parks, and outdoor environments***

Respondents overwhelmingly have access to open space, parks, and the outdoor environment, with 94% in definite agreement regarding access to these spaces. See Exhibit 27.

**Exhibit 27: Responding to “I have access to open space, parks, and outdoor environments.” (N=87)**

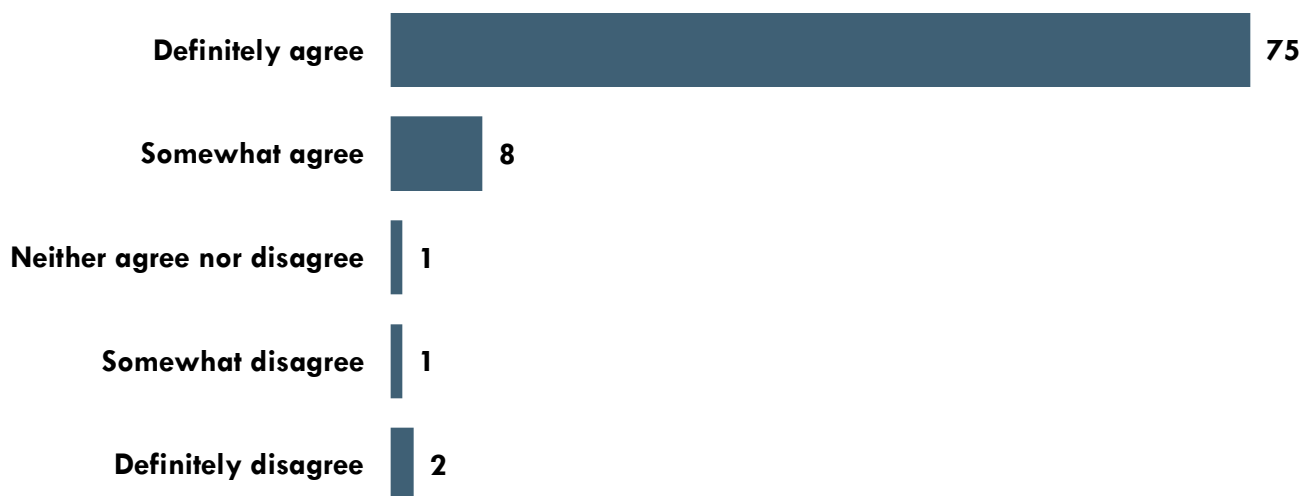


Source: BERK, 2024.

***I can safely walk around my neighborhood.***

95% of respondents feel safe walking around their neighborhoods, with 86% of all respondents definitely agreeing with feeling safe. See Exhibit 28.

**Exhibit 28: Responding to “I can safely walk around my neighborhood” (N=87)**

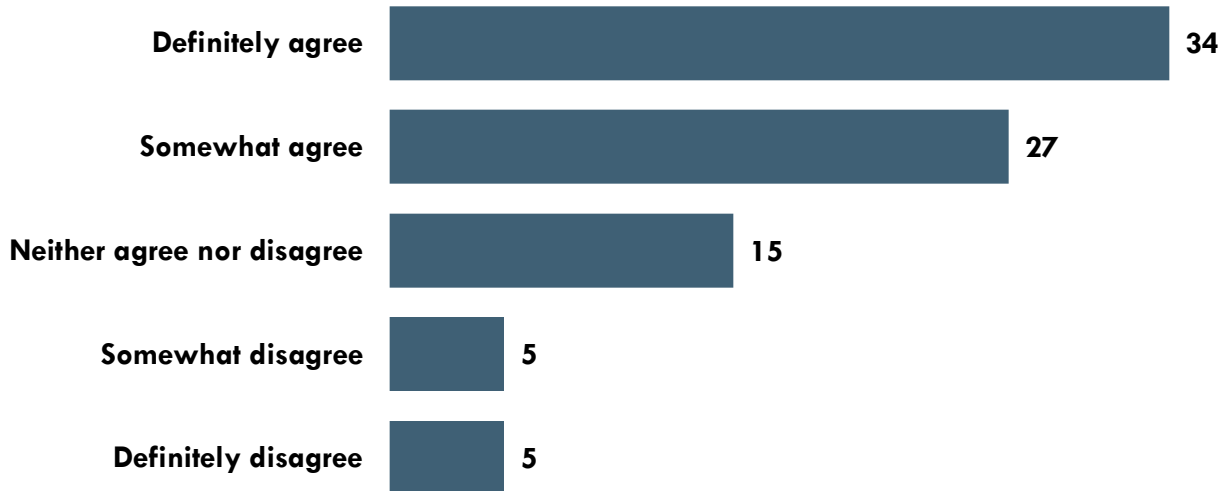


Source: BERK, 2024.

***I can safely bike through my community.***

71% of respondents can safely bike through the community, with 40% of total respondents definitely agreeing with the statement. However, 12% of respondents do not feel like they can safely bike through the community. See Exhibit 29.

**Exhibit 29: Responding to “I can safely bike through my community” (N=87)**

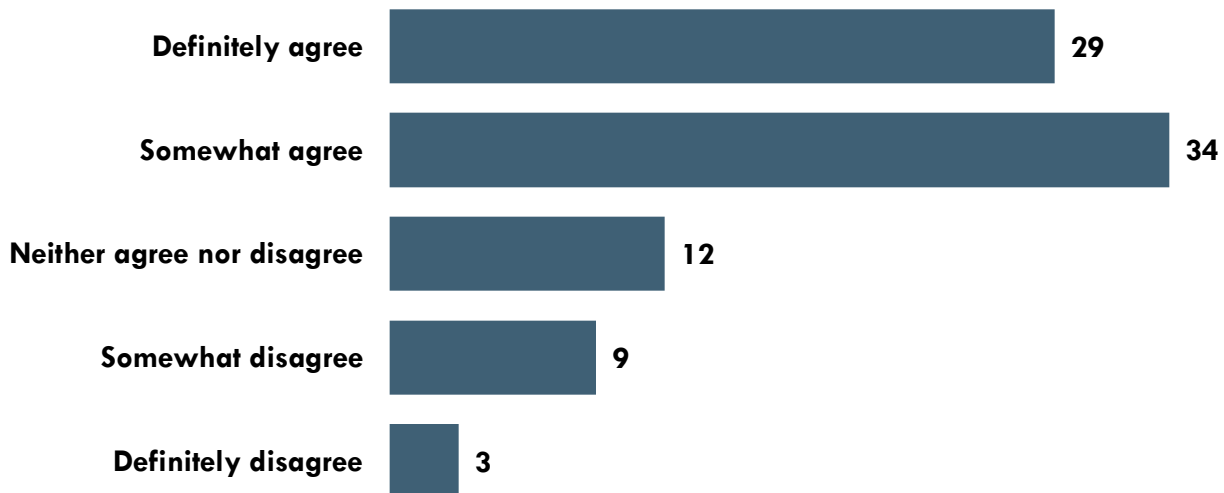


Source: BERK, 2024.

***If I have a problem, I know where to go for assistance.***

72% of respondents are aware of where they can go for help if there is a problem. See Exhibit 30.

**Exhibit 30: Responding to “If I have a problem, I know where to go for assistance.” (N=87)**

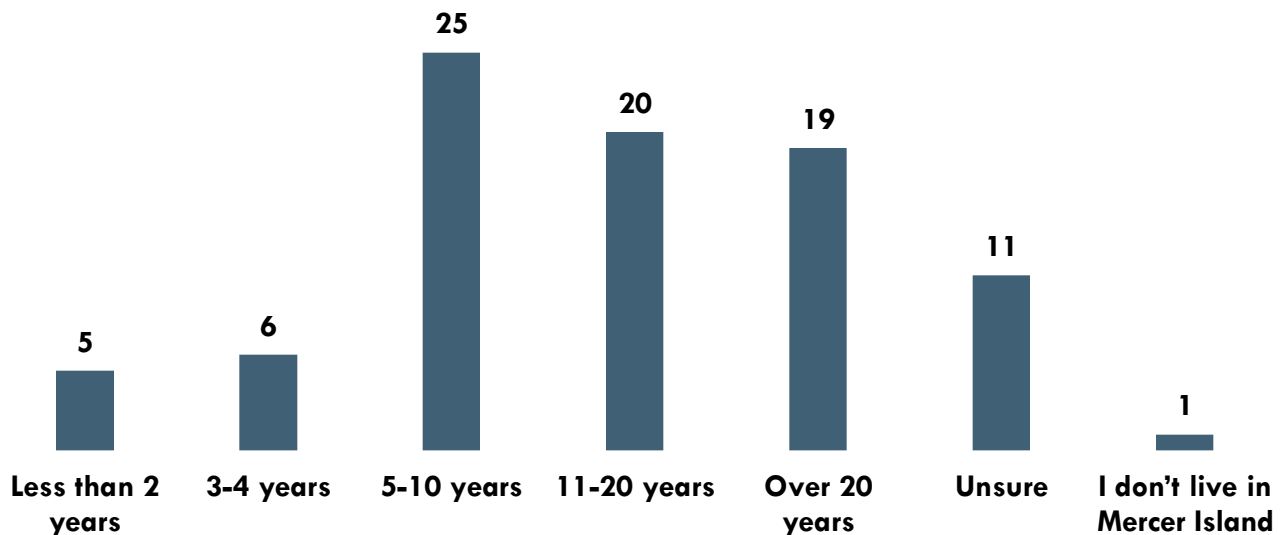


Source: BERK, 2024.

*Question 9. I plan to stay in my current Mercer Island home for*

Survey respondents plan to stay in their current homes for many years. 74% of respondents plan to stay in their homes for longer than five years, while 22% of total respondents plan to stay for more than 20 years. However, there are some respondents who are unsure about how long they plan to stay in their current home, with 13% of respondents feeling unsure. See Exhibit 31.

**Exhibit 31: Respondents' Plans to Stay in Their Current Mercer Island Home (N=87)**



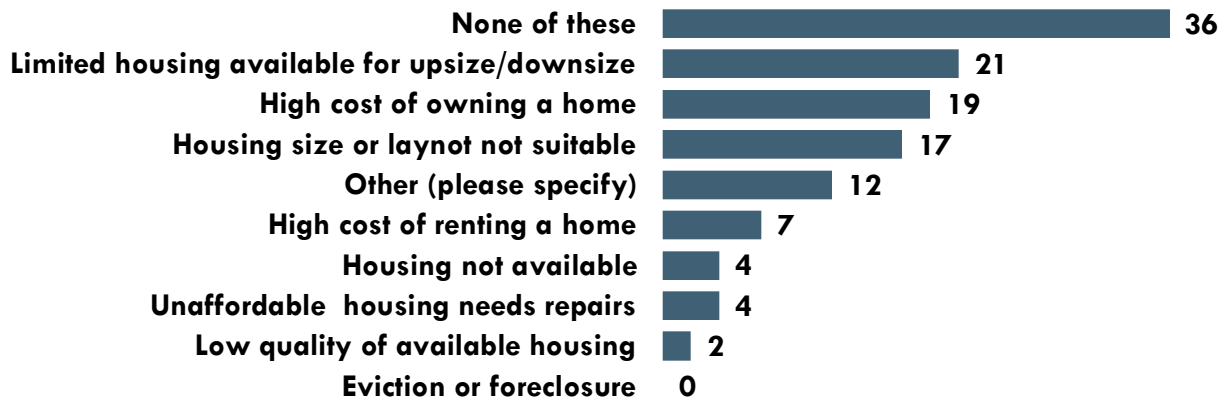
Source: BERK, 2024.

*Question 10. Do you foresee a time when you may need to sell your home or move out of your home and leave Mercer Island due to one or more of the following reasons? Choose all that apply.*

30% of respondents did not see a reason for why they would sell their current home. For those that did identify a reason, 17% of respondents referenced limited available housing, 16% of respondents referenced the high cost of owning a home, and 14% of respondents referenced incompatible housing size or layout. See Exhibit 32.

12 respondents did respond with “Other” Of these respondents, three respondents expressed concern about the quality of the education and public safety. Two respondents also noted an increased need for assisted living, and two respondents mentioned restrictive building codes.

**Exhibit 32: Respondents' Reasons for Why They May Need to Sell Current House (N=87)**

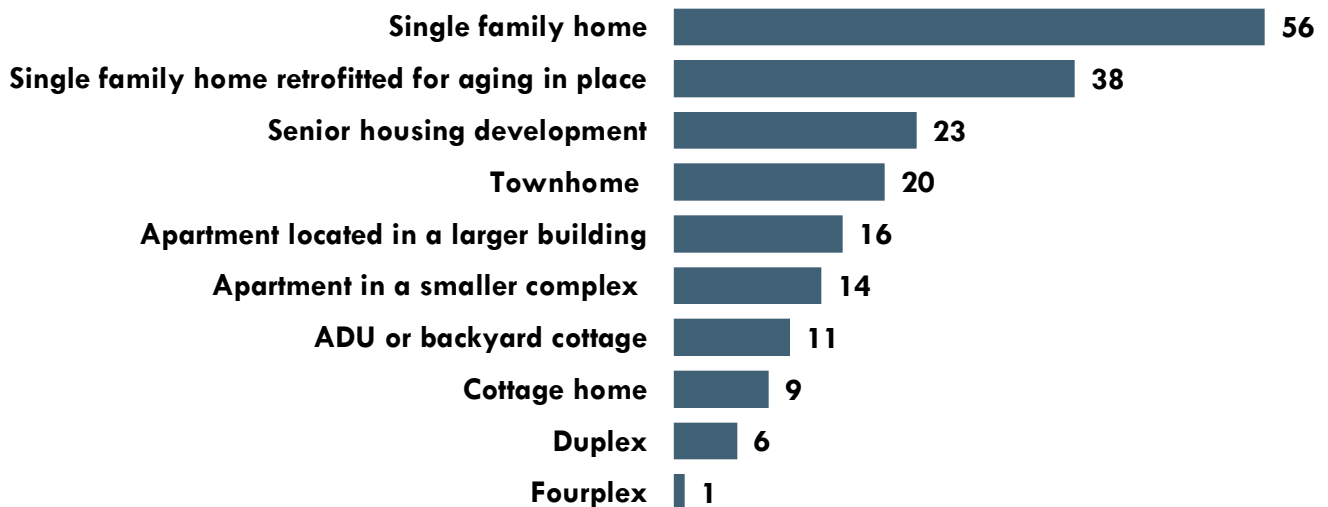


Source: BERK, 2024.

*Question 11. Within the next 20 years, what type(s) of housing could you see your household living in? Select up to three options.*

29% of respondents see themselves and their households living in a single-family home, while 19.5% see themselves similarly living in a single-family home that allows for aging in place. Senior housing was also a popular option, with 12% of respondents seeing this as a future housing type. See Exhibit 33.

**Exhibit 33: Future Housing Types Respondents Could Live in (N=87)**



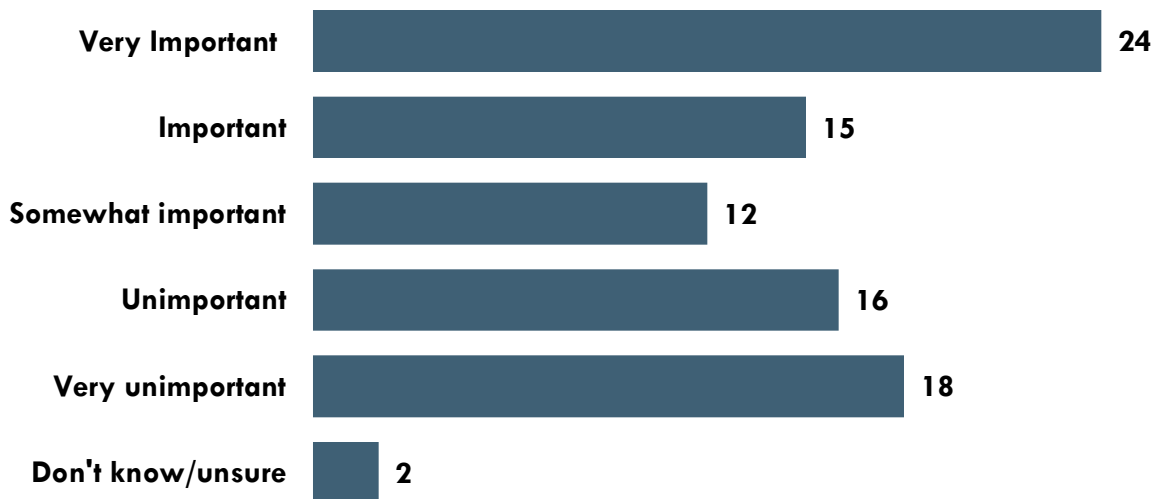
Source: BERK, 2024.

Question 12. As you anticipate your housing needs and how they may change over the next 20 years, please indicate the importance of the City addressing each of the following housing issues.

**Availability of different types of housing to purchase:** Single family detached house, townhouse, apartment/condominiums to purchase within my price range

Survey respondents were divided about the availability of a variety of housing types available for purchase. 45% of respondents find it important or very important to have different types of housing available for purchase within their price range. Meanwhile, 39% of respondents do not find this housing issue to be important. See Exhibit 34.

**Exhibit 34: Importance of the Availability of Different Housing Types (N=87)**

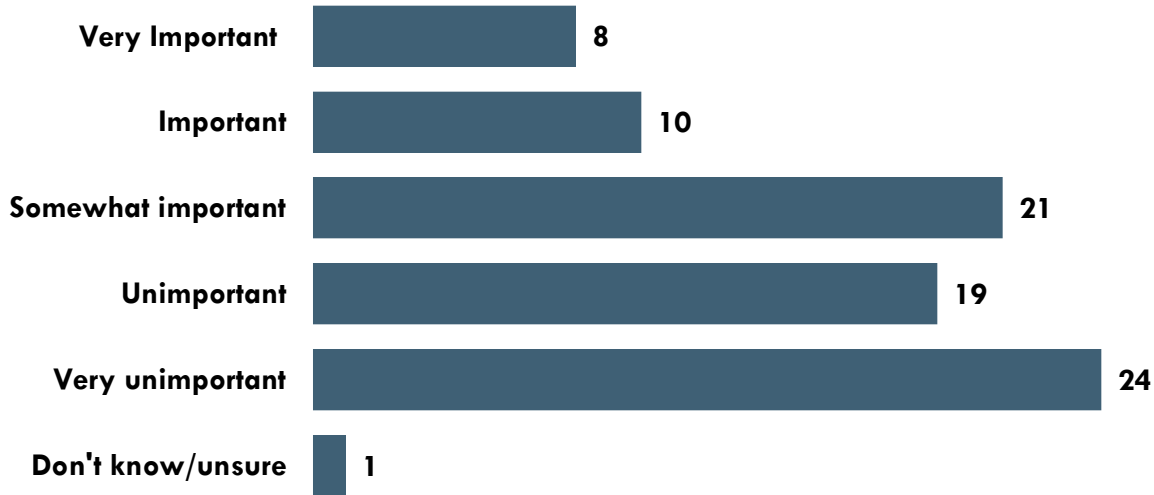


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Availability of rental housing:** Different types of homes such as single family house, apartment/condominiums to rent within my price range

The availability of rental housing is a less-important housing issue among survey respondents. Approximately 51% of respondents did not think the availability of rental housing is important, with 29% of the total respondents considering it very unimportant. Meanwhile, only 22% of respondents considered it important or very important. See Exhibit 35.

**Exhibit 35: Importance of the Availability of Rental Housing (N=87)**

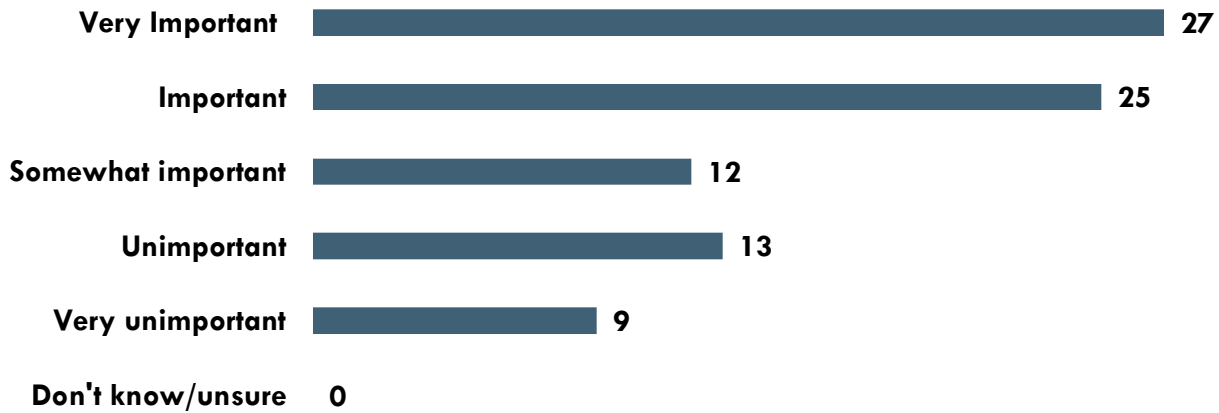


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Proximity to Essential Amenities:** Housing options within walking distance to the light rail station, bus stops, work, shopping, restaurants, schools

The majority of respondents (60%) believe it is important or very important for housing options to be located near essential amenities. See Exhibit 36.

**Exhibit 36: Importance of Housing Options in Proximity to Essential Amenities (N=87)**

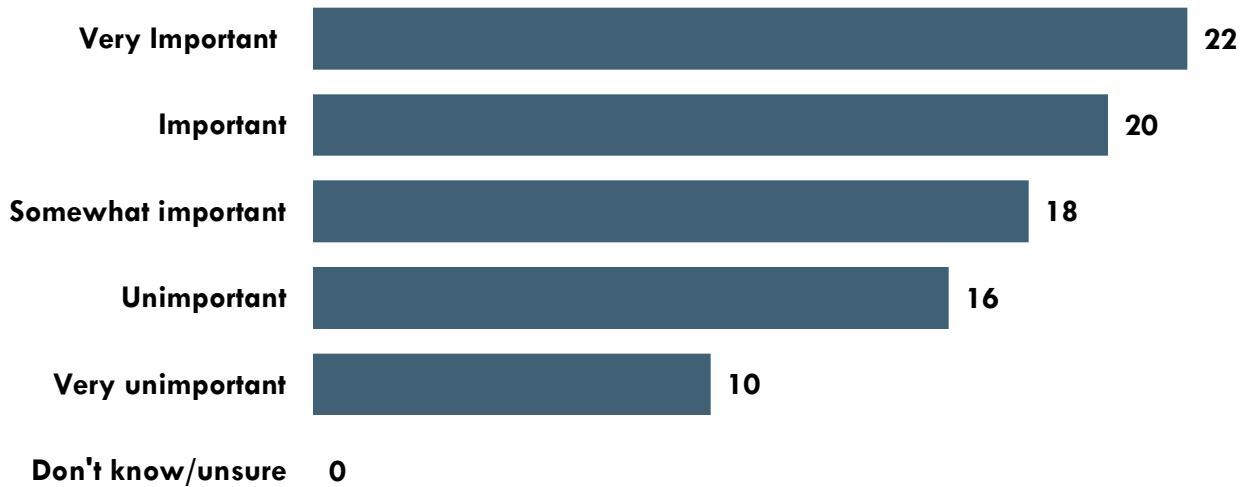


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Housing Options in Commercial Areas:** *Housing in mixed-use areas with shopping or restaurants*

Nearly half (49%) of respondents consider it important or very important for housing options to be in commercial areas. Only 30% of respondents do not consider it important. See Exhibit 37.

**Exhibit 37: Importance of Housing Options in Mixed-use Commercial Areas (N=87)**

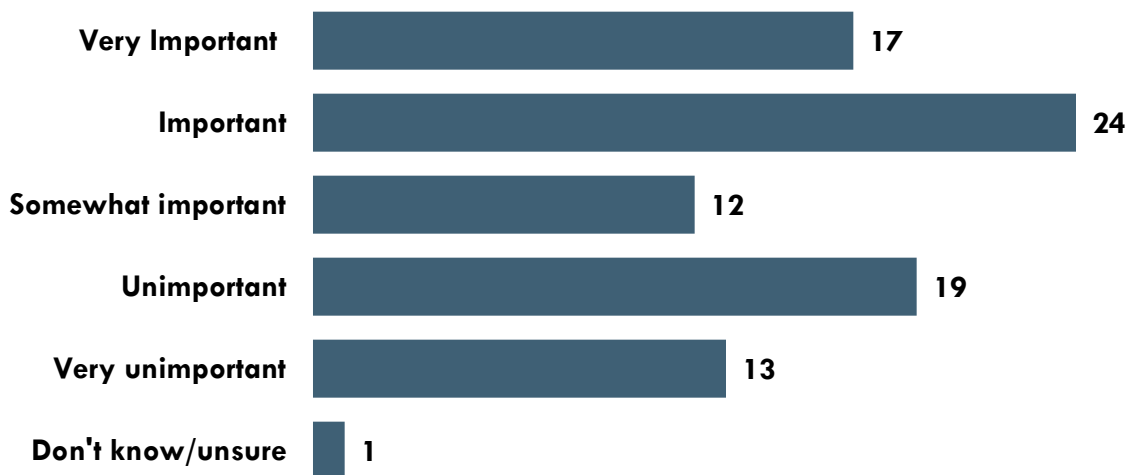


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Right-sized Housing for Smaller Households:** *Availability of a range of housing options that are right-sized for smaller households*

The importance of housing for smaller households is somewhat divided among respondents. 48% of respondents consider it important or very important to have a range of housing options for smaller households, while 37% of respondents consider it unimportant or very unimportant. See Exhibit 38.

**Exhibit 38: Importance of Right-Sized Housing for Smaller Households (N=87)**

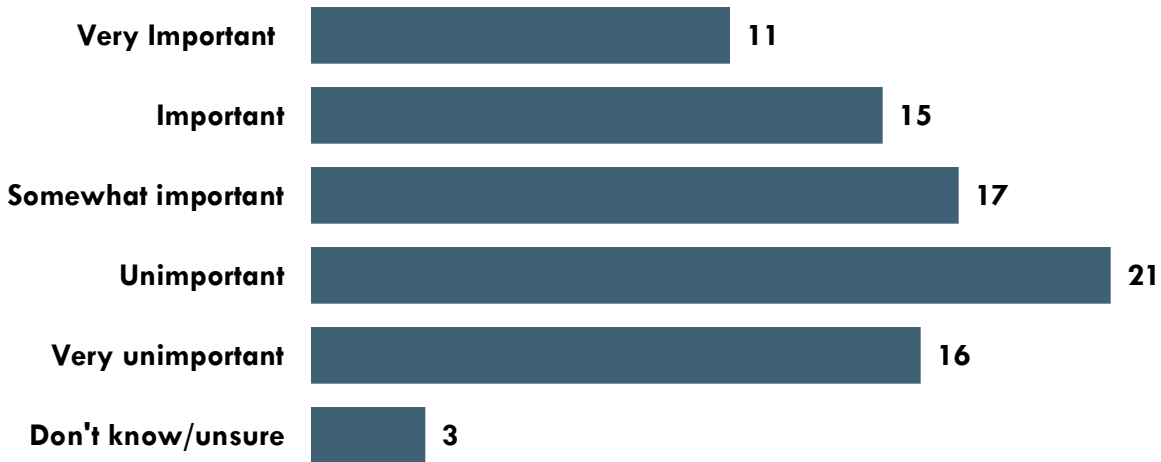


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Right-sized Housing for Larger or Growing Households:** Availability of a range of housing options that are right-sized for large or growing households

45% of respondents consider it unimportant or very unimportant to have housing options for growing households, while 31% of respondents consider it to be important or very important. One-fifth of respondents found it somewhat important. See Exhibit 39.

**Exhibit 39: Importance of Housing Options for Large or Growing Households (N=87)**

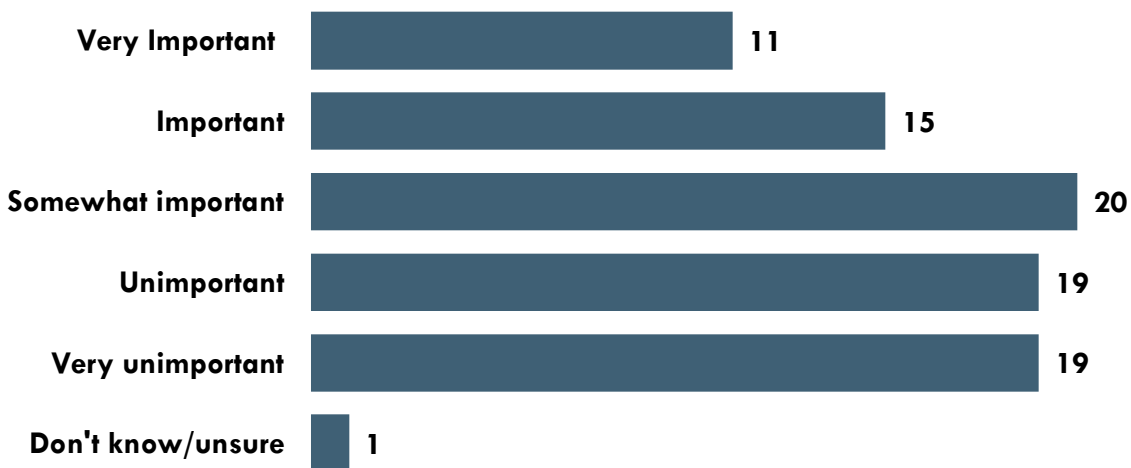


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Diversity of Housing Types Across Income Levels:** Availability of affordable housing for sale or rent across all income levels.

Nearly half of respondents (47%) found it unimportant or very unimportant to have a diversity of housing types across all income levels, while 31% found it important or very important. See Exhibit 40.

**Exhibit 40: Importance of Diversity of Housing Types Across Income Levels (N=87)**

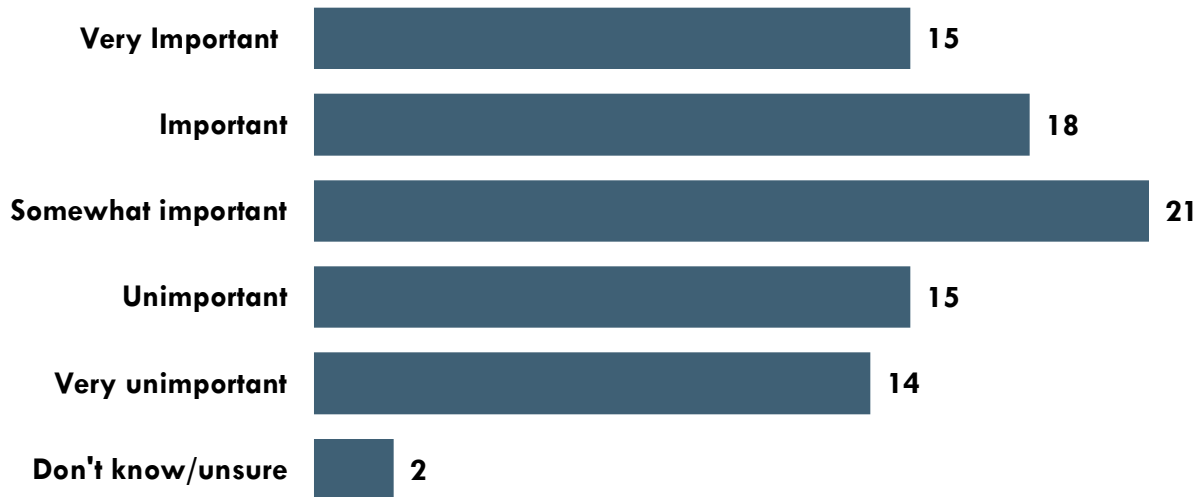


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Housing close to Services:** Availability of affordable housing options close to public and social services

One-fourth of respondents find it somewhat important for affordable housing to be located near public and social services, with 39% of respondents considering it important or very important and 34% considering it unimportant or very unimportant. See Exhibit 41.

**Exhibit 41: Importance of Affordable Housing Options Services (N=87)**

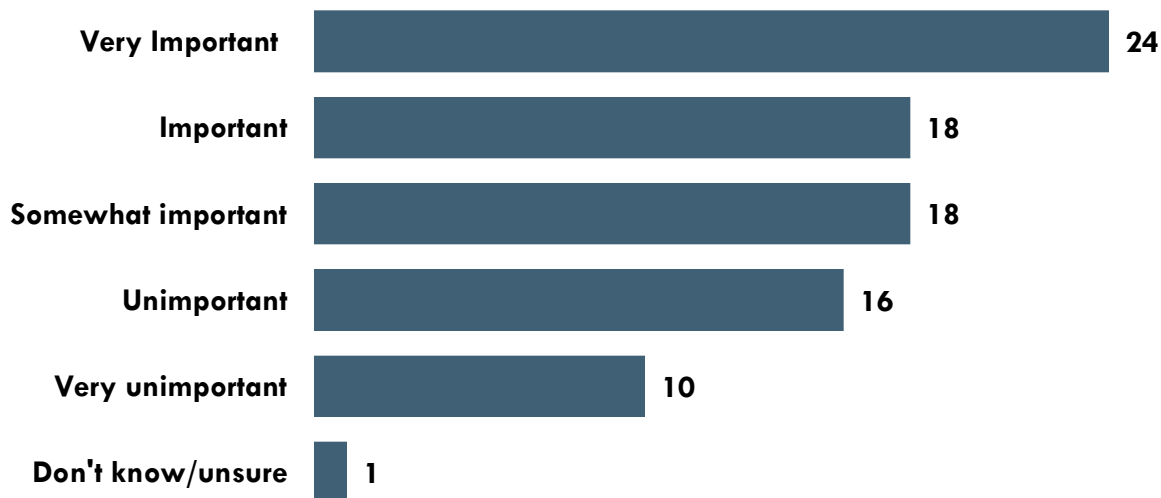


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Housing close to Parks:** Availability of housing near parks and open spaces

Nearly half of respondents (48%) consider it important or very important for housing to be located near parks and open spaces. Nearly 30% of respondents did not consider it important. See Exhibit 42.

**Exhibit 42: Importance of Housing Near Parks and Open Spaces (N=87)**

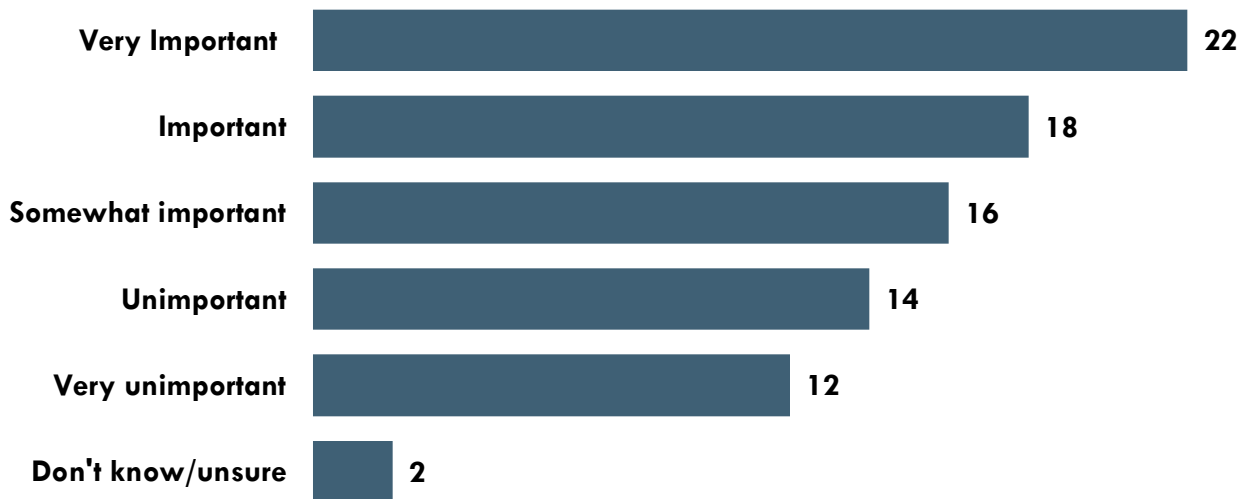


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Off-Island Transportation Options:** Housing located near convenient options to access off-island transportation.

Nearly half of respondents (48%) consider it important or very important to have housing near off-island transportation options. 31% of respondents did not consider it to be an important housing issue. See Exhibit 43.

**Exhibit 43: Importance of Off-Island Transportation Options (N=87)**

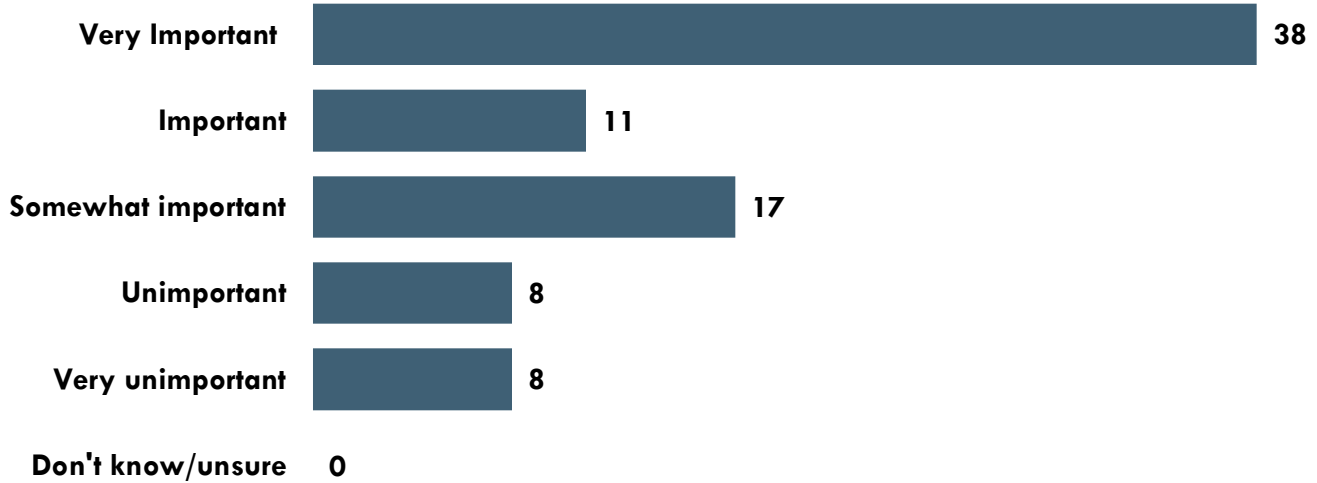


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Nonmotorized Travel Options:** Safety and ease of walking and biking within and between areas of the City from where I reside.

Nonmotorized travel options are an important issue for survey respondents. Nearly 60% of respondents consider it important or very important, with 46% of total respondents considering it very important. In comparison, one-fifth of respondents consider it unimportant or very unimportant. See Exhibit 44.

**Exhibit 44: Importance of Nonmotorized Travel Options (N=87)**



Source: BERK, 2024.

*Question 13. As you envision middle housing development occurring in Mercer Island, what do you foresee being the most impactful?*

The factors that respondents find to be very impactful as a result of middle housing development are tree and landscape loss (62% of respondents), increased traffic and parked car impact on walkability (62%), reduction in parking requirements near transit zones leading to an increase in cars parking on the street (62%), and an overall increase in people parking on residential streets (52%).

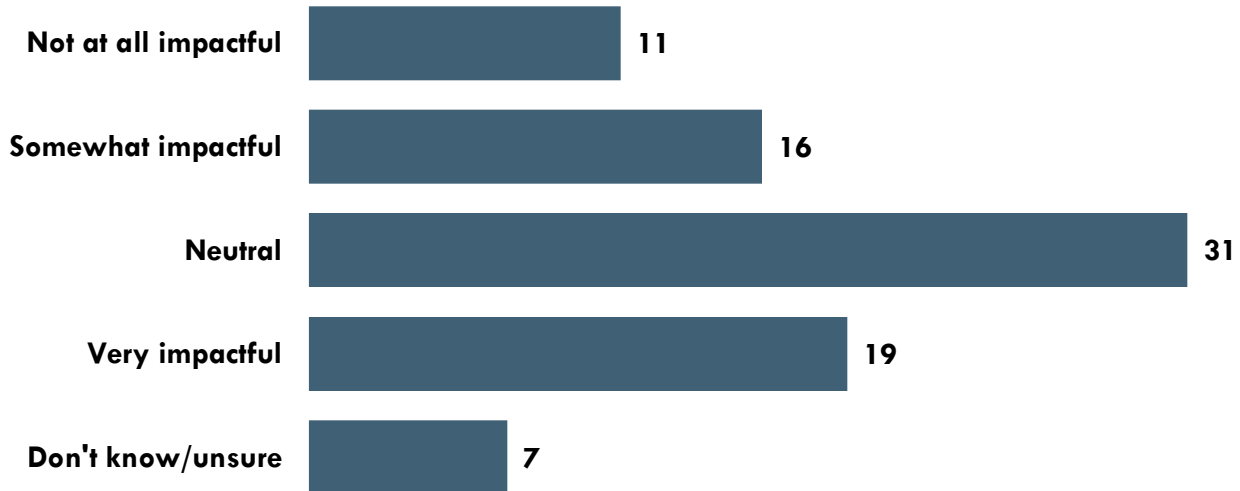
In comparison, only 31% of respondents consider driveways and garages to be very impactful. However, respondents did consider it to be somewhat impactful (28%).

Respondents expressed a high level of neutrality regarding the impact of middle housing scale in comparison to existing residential development, with 45% of respondents feeling neutral or unsure.

**New middle housing will not be at the same scale as the existing residential development**

Survey respondents were divided regarding the impact of middle housing scale on the existing residential development. 32% of respondents consider it somewhat impactful or not at all impactful, while 23% of respondents consider it very impactful. 45% of respondents were either neutral or unsure about middle housing impact. See Exhibit 45.

**Exhibit 45: Middle Housing Scale Not the Same as Existing Residential Development (N=87)**

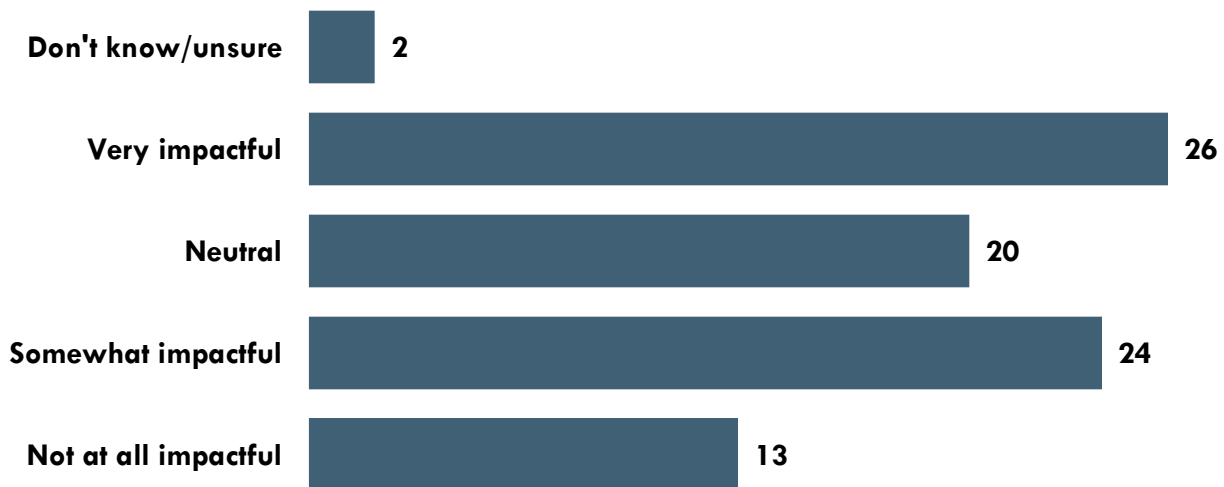


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Visual impacts from more driveways and garages facing the street**

31% of respondents consider the visual impacts of driveways and garages facing the street to be very impactful, while 28% consider it somewhat impactful, and 15% do not consider it impactful. 26% of respondents felt neutral or were unsure of the level of impact. See Exhibit 46.

**Exhibit 46: Visual Impacts from Driveways and Garages Facing the Street (N=87)**

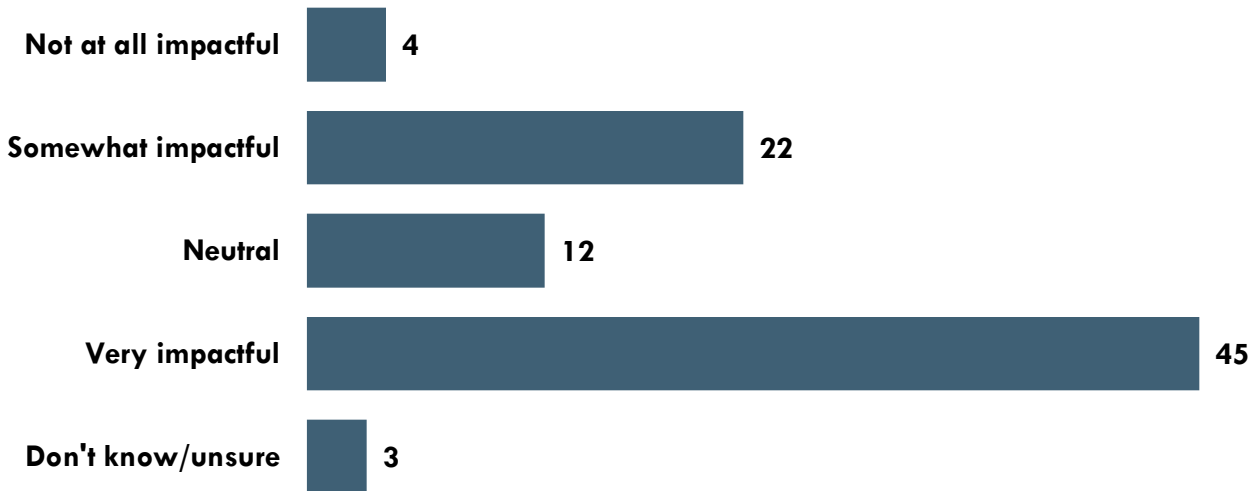


Source: BERK, 2024.

### More people parking on the residential street in my neighborhood

More than half (52%) of respondents consider an increase of people parking on the street in their neighborhood to be very impactful, while 26% of respondents consider it somewhat impactful. Only 5% of respondents thought that people parking on the street would have no impact. See Exhibit 47.

**Exhibit 47: Additional People Parking on the Residential Street in my Neighborhood (N=87)**

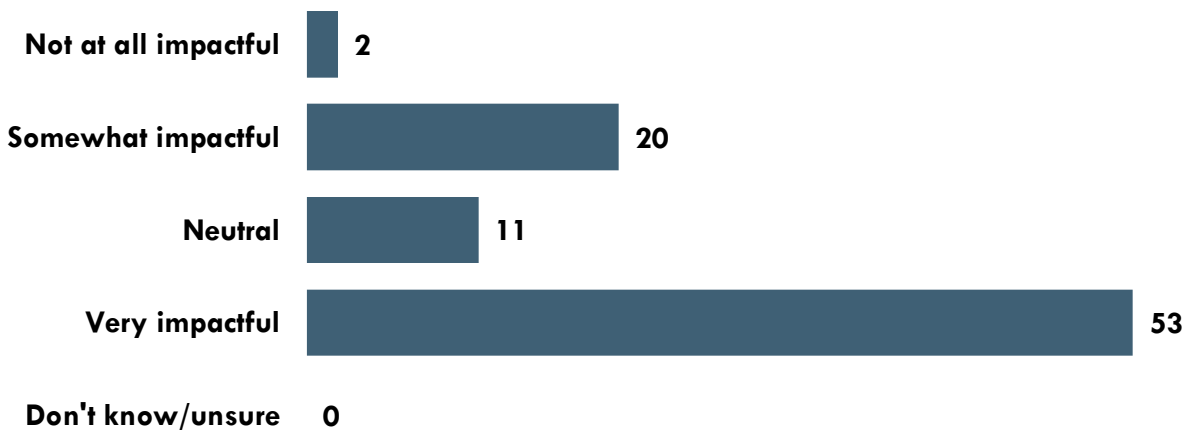


Source: BERK, 2024.

### Additional traffic and parked cars impacting the walkability of my neighborhood and making it less pedestrian-friendly

62% of respondents consider increased traffic and parked cars to have a great impact on the neighborhood walkability, with 23% of respondents thinking the increased traffic and parked cars would affect walkability. See Exhibit 48.

**Exhibit 48: Additional Traffic Affecting Walkability in Neighborhoods (N=87)**

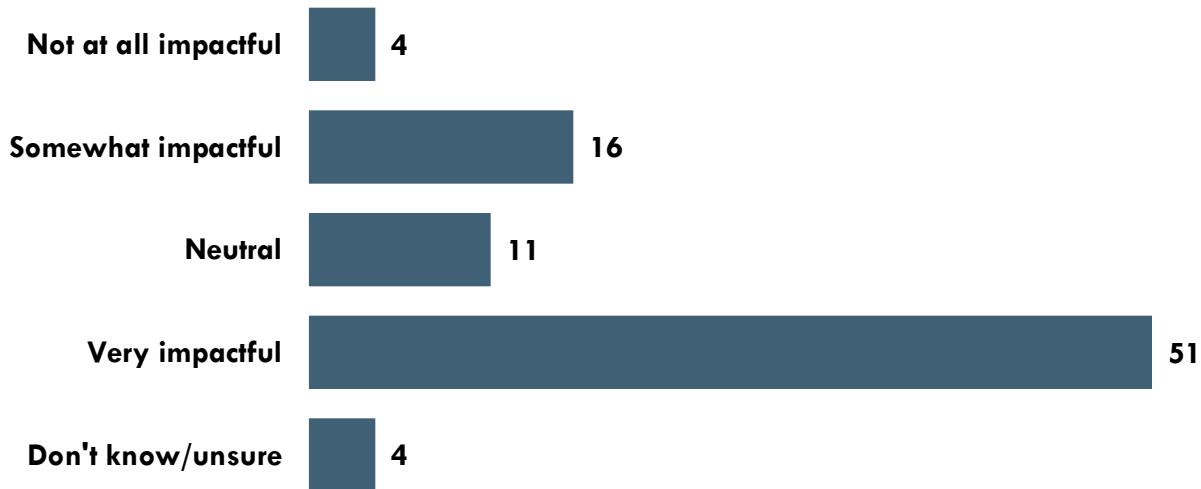


Source: BERK, 2024.

### Reduced parking requirements in areas close to transit causing more residents to park on the street

62% of respondents consider reduced parking requirements and an increase in those parking on the street to be very impactful on their neighborhood. 19% of respondents also considered it to be somewhat impactful. See Exhibit 49.

Exhibit 49: Parking Requirements Reduction in Areas Close to Transit (N=87)

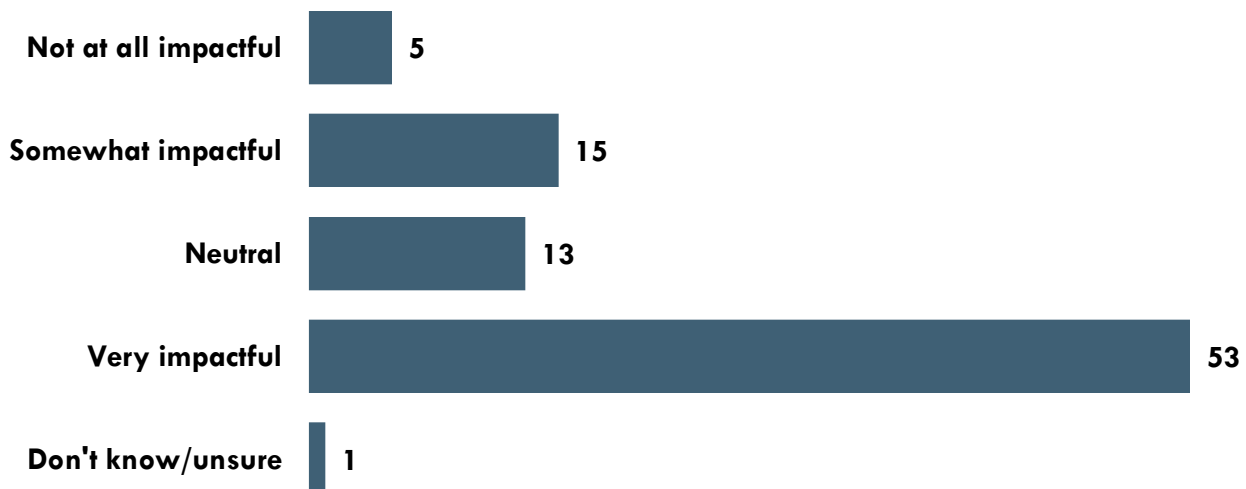


Source: BERK, 2024.

### Loss of mature trees and landscaping when new development occurs

62% of respondents consider the tree and landscape loss because of development to be very impactful on their neighborhood. See Exhibit 50.

Exhibit 50: Tree And Landscaping Loss as a Result of Development (N=87)



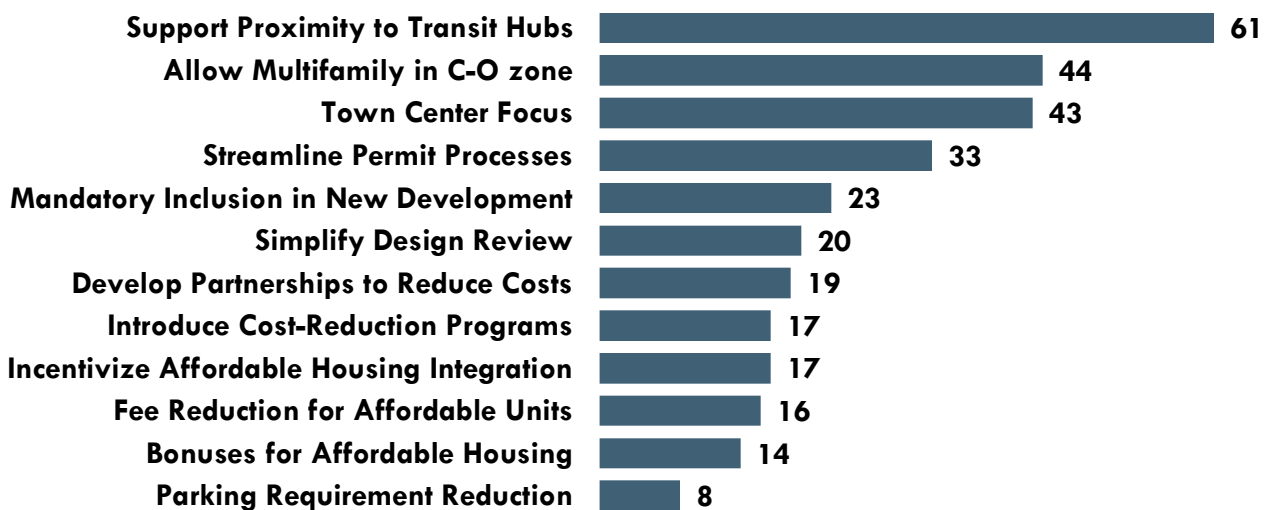
Source: BERK, 2024.

Question 14. Mercer Island is committed to fostering a more diverse range of housing options that are affordable to households at all income levels. Below are potential strategies aimed at expediting the development of affordable housing for all economic segments of the community. Please select the top five strategies you believe the city should prioritize for implementation:

The top five strategies that survey respondents support to expediate affordable housing development include proximity to transit hubs (19%), multifamily in the C-O Zone (14%), focusing development in the Town Center (14%), a streamlined permitting process (10.5%), and mandatory inclusion of affordable housing in new development (7%).

Respondents did not favor applying a parking requirement reduction to expediate affordable housing, with only 2% of respondents selecting that as a strategy. See Exhibit 51.

**Exhibit 51: Respondents’ Preferred Strategies to Expediate Affordable Housing Development (N=87)**



Source: BERK, 2024.

Question 15. What are some of the barriers that prevent you from using transportation modes other than driving alone? Choose all that apply

The primary barriers related to using other transportation modes besides driving include frequency of service and the overall transit coverage area. Respondents also expressed concerns about safety.

21 respondents also selected “other” for this question. Seven respondents stated convenience and time as the primary factors for driving or not choosing alternative transportation modes. Similarly, four respondents referenced needing to transport their children via car. Five respondents did not want to use alternative transportation forms, preferring to travel by car. Respondents also expressed further safety concerns related to public transit. See Exhibit 52.

*“With three kids, adding a bus schedule into family logistics would be inconvenient and impractical.”*

*“I can get to my destination much faster than taking public transit, plus it is safer to take my own vehicle.”*

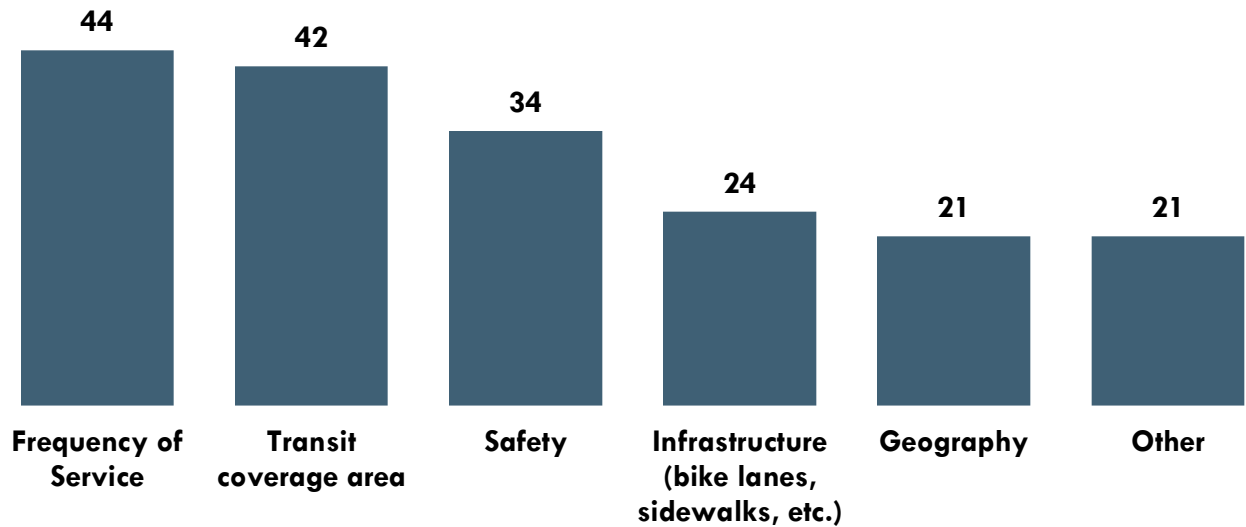
*“I do not enjoy public transportation.”*

*“Transit to anywhere meaningful takes far longer than driving by car. Additionally, there are health and safety concerns when taking public transit off-island.”*

*“I can get to where I want to go quicker than I could with any public transit, not to mention, you take Bellevue and Issaquah, I can park for free when I shop and wouldn't have to wait for a bus or trudge from the transit stop to the mall/shops/restaurants.”*

*“I drive, walk and take the bus. This island is built for cars and nothing else.”*

**Exhibit 52: Barriers Preventing Respondents' from Using Transportation Modes Other than Driving (N=87)**



Source: BERK, 2024.

*Question 16. A goal for traveling in the Central Puget Sound Region is to increase options so more people can safely choose walking, biking, or taking transit to the places they want to go. In your opinion, how impactful would the following strategies be to improve transportation in Mercer Island?*

Overall, survey respondents feel that improving bicycle and pedestrian routes, including safe routes to school, would be the most impactful strategy, with 52% of respondents saying it would be very impactful and 11% saying it would have some impact. Survey respondents also think improving the last-mile transportation options to be impactful, with 47% of respondents considering it to be very impactful and 21% of respondents considering it to have some impact. Respondents also favored providing added parking with 47% of respondents considering it very impactful and 38% of respondents considering it to have some impact.

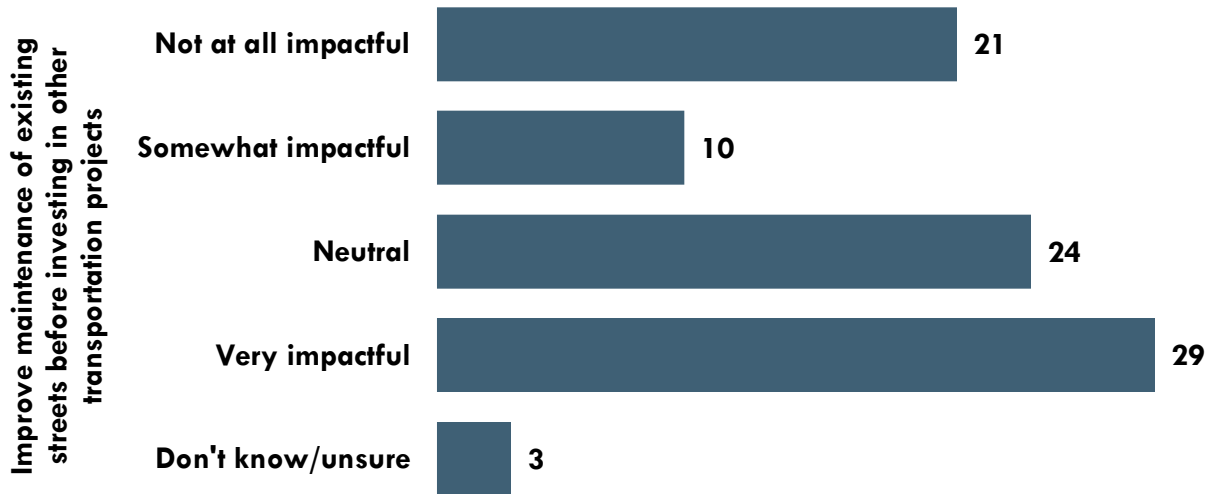
Respondents responded in a more neutral way to the impact of enforcement (traffic laws, parking enforcement), and a more equitable distribution of transportation impacts.

Respondents are relatively evenly split on the impacts of street calming methods.

**Improve maintenance of existing streets before investing in other transportation projects**

One-third of respondents think that improving maintenance of existing streets would be very impactful on improving transportation and one-third of respondents think that it would be somewhat impactful, while one-fourth of respondents do not think it would be impactful. 31% of respondents felt neutral or were unsure. See Exhibit 53.

**Exhibit 53: Prioritizing the Improvement of Existing Streets Before Investing in Other Transportation Projects**  
(N=87)

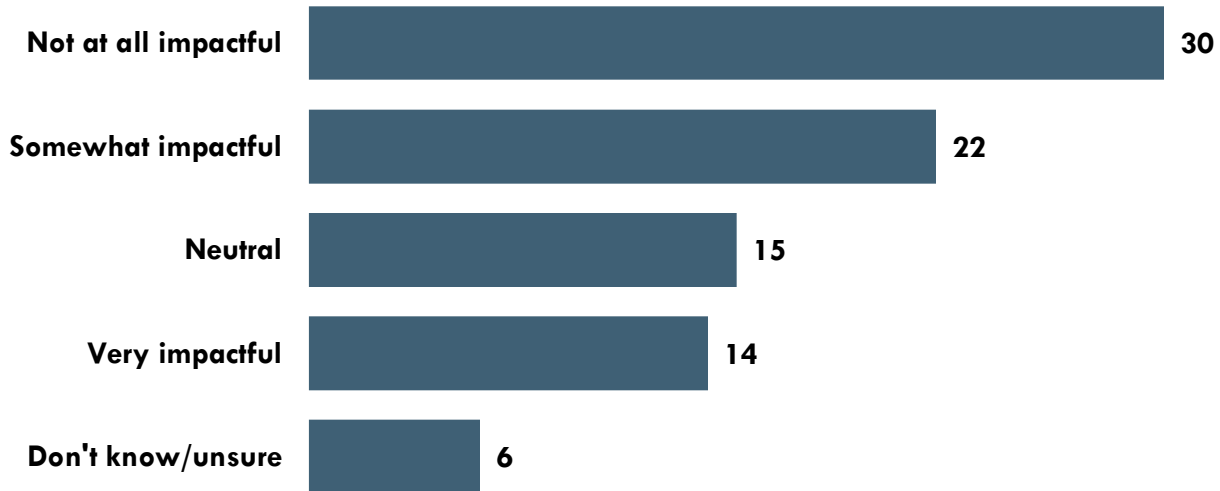


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Increase public education programs about buses, light rail, and other transportation options, in conjunction with the opening of the Mercer Island light rail station**

Approximately one-third of respondents do not think that increasing public education around transportation options would have an impact on improving transportation in Mercer Island, with only 16% of respondents considering it to be very impactful and 25% of respondents considering it to have somewhat of an impact. One-fourth of respondents felt neutral or were unsure about the impact of increasing public education programs. See Exhibit 54.

**Exhibit 54: Increasing Public Education about Transportation Options in Mercer Island (N=87)**

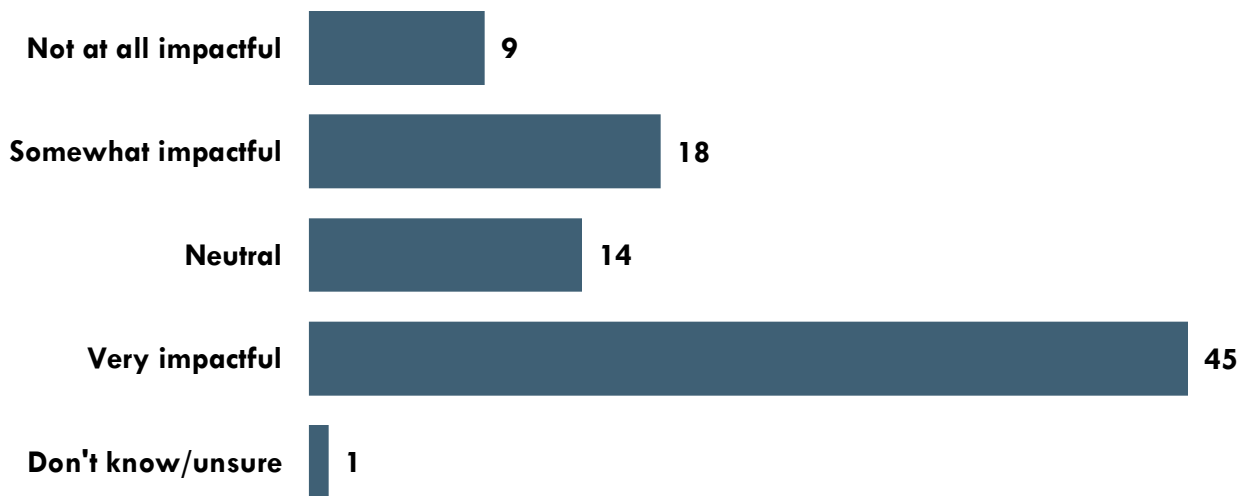


Source: BERK, 2024.

***Improve and expand safe pedestrian and bicycle routes, including safe routes to school***

Approximately half of the respondents (51%) think that improving and expanding the pedestrian and bicycle routes would improve transportation in Mercer Island, with 20% of respondents thinking that it would be somewhat impactful. Only 10% of respondents did not think it would be impactful at all. See Exhibit 55.

**Exhibit 55: Improving Safe Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes, Including Safe Routes to School (N=87)**

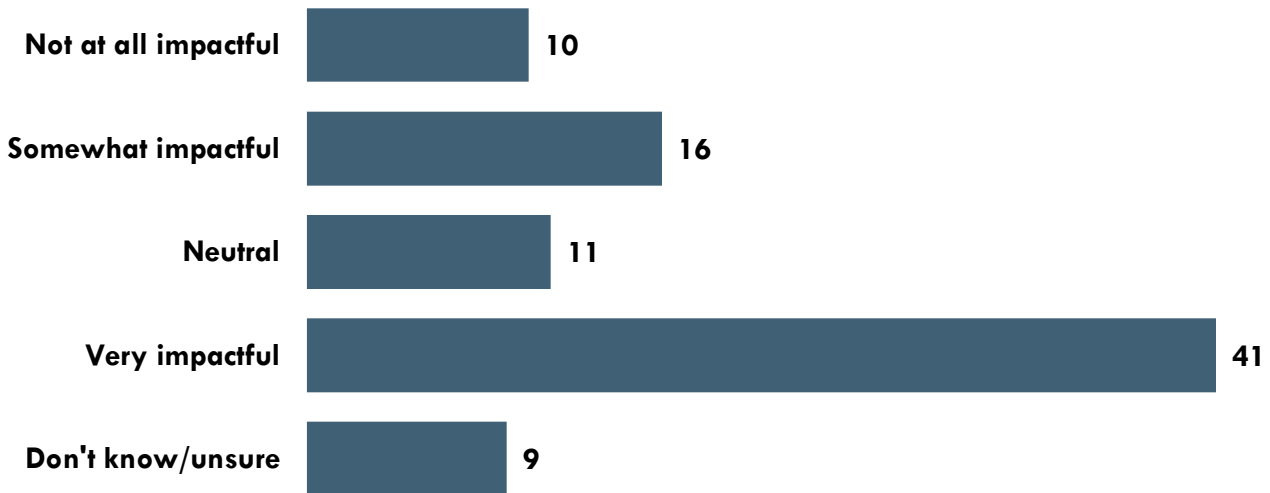


Source: BERK, 2024.

### Improvements to the “last mile” transportation options to the Town Center and Transit Station

Survey respondents think that improvements to the “last mile” transportation options would be impactful, with 47% of respondents considering it to be very impactful and 18% of respondents considering it to be somewhat impactful. Approximately 23% of respondents felt neutral or were unsure of its impacts. See Exhibit 56.

Exhibit 56: “Last Mile” Improvements to the Town Center and Transit Station (N=87)

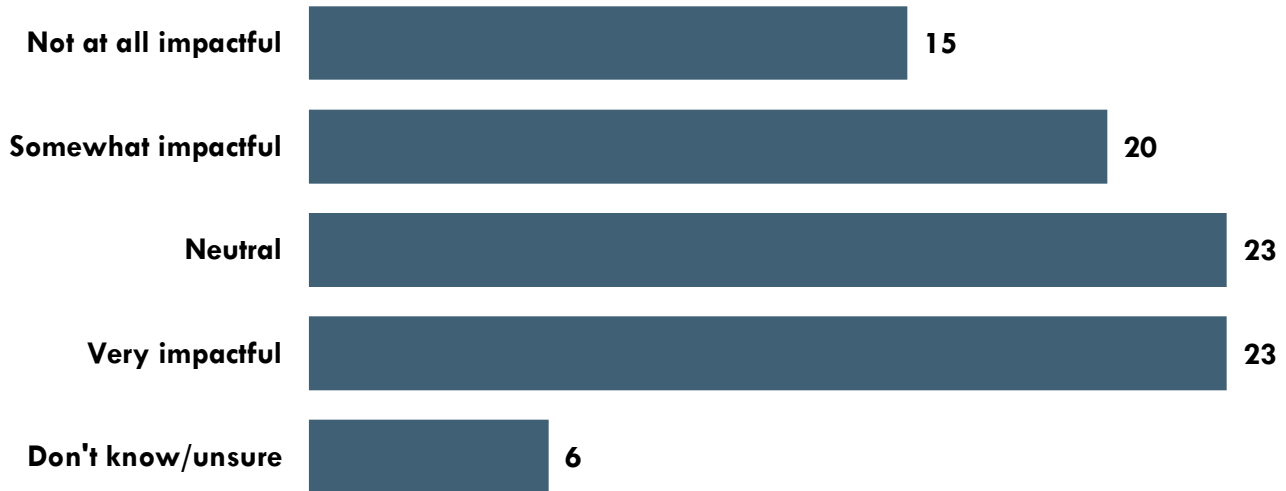


Source: BERK, 2024.

### Use street calming methods to reduce vehicle speed in residential areas

Respondents were divided about the impacts of applying street calming methods to reduce vehicle speeds. Approximately one-fourth of respondents consider it to be very impactful and 22% of respondents consider it to be somewhat impactful. However, one-third of respondents felt neutral or unsure about the impacts of these methods. See Exhibit 57.

**Exhibit 57. Street Calming Methods to Reduce Vehicle Speeds (N=87)**

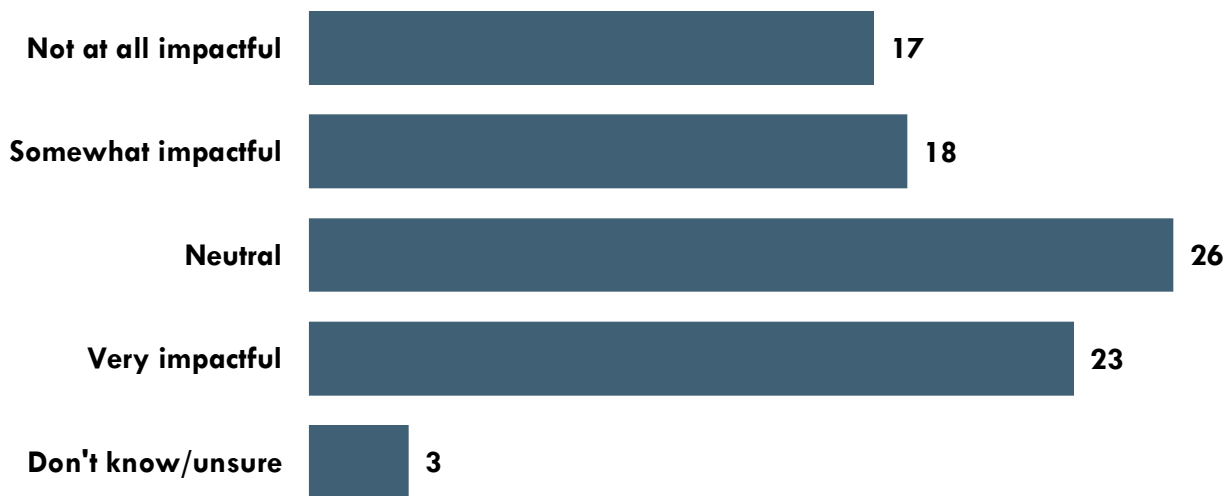


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Improve enforcement of traffic laws**

Respondents felt relatively neutral regarding the impact of improved enforcement of traffic laws. One-third of respondents felt neutral or were not sure about the impact. However, 26% of respondents thought that it might be very impactful and 21% of respondents thought it would have somewhat of an impact. See Exhibit 58.

**Exhibit 58: Improved Enforcement of Traffic Laws (N=87)**

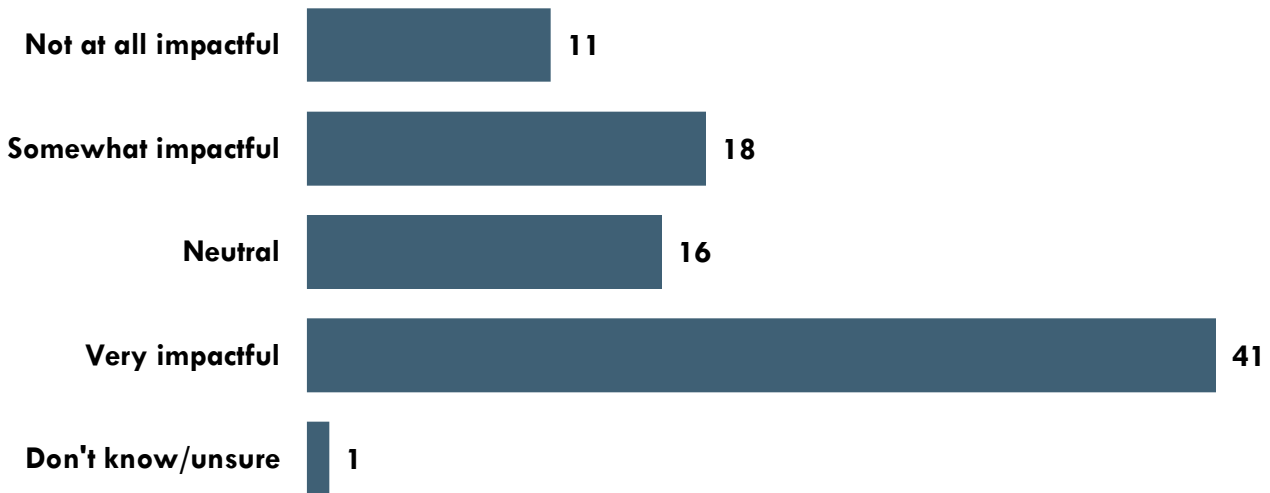


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Provide more public parking in the Town Center for patrons and commuters**

Respondents considered providing additional parking in the Town Center to be impactful, with nearly half (47%) of respondents believe it to be very impactful and 38% of respondents consider it to have some impact. See Exhibit 59.

**Exhibit 59: Providing Additional Parking in Town Center (N=87)**

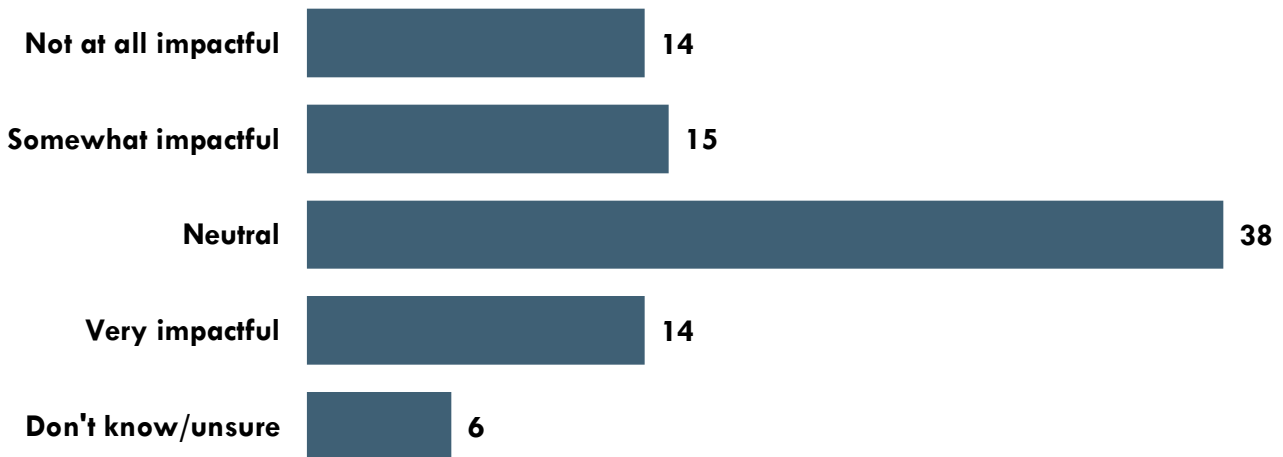


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Parking Enforcement**

Respondents primarily felt neutral about the impact of increasing parking enforcement. Half of respondents felt neutral or unsure about its impact. Meanwhile, respondents were evenly divided on if it would be very impactful or not impactful at all. 17% of respondents considered it to be somewhat impactful. See Exhibit 60.

**Exhibit 60: Parking Enforcement (N=87)**

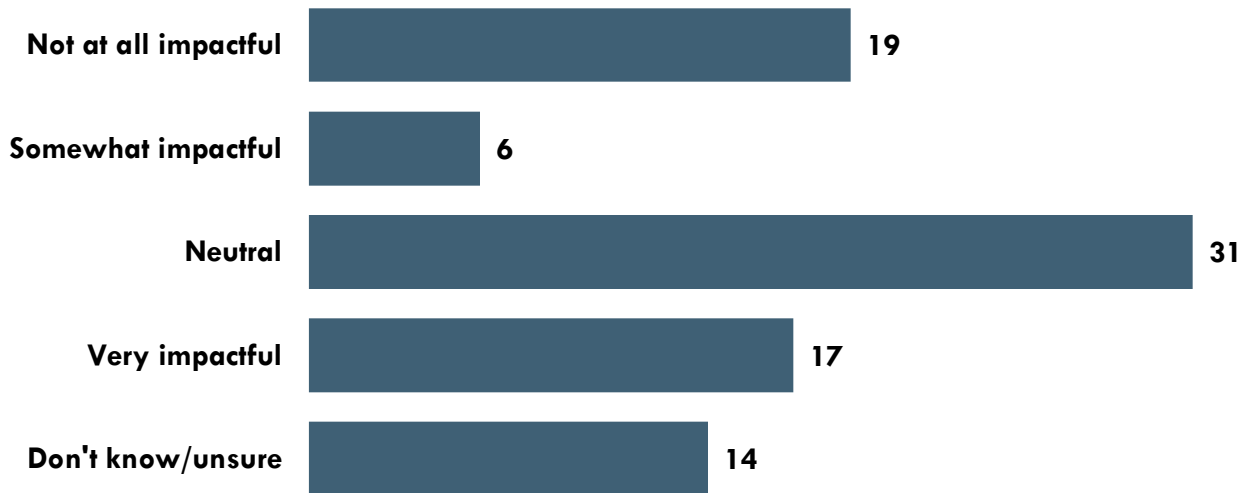


Source: BERK, 2024.

**Ensure transportation projects equitably distribute disruption, burdens, and benefits**

Respondents primarily felt neutral about the impact of equitable distribution of transportation impact. 52% felt neutral or unsure about its impact. Meanwhile, respondents were fairly divided regarding if it would be very impactful (20%) or not impactful at all (22%). 7% of respondents considered it to be somewhat impactful. See Exhibit 61.

**Exhibit 61: Equitable Transportation Projects Impact (N=87)**



Source: BERK, 2024.

Question 17. As the City of Mercer Island strives to foster a robust economic environment and enhance the commercial areas to attract people, entrepreneurs, businesses, and investment, we would like your input on how you would prioritize the following economic initiatives. Please order each from 1 to 10, with 1 being the top priority (most important)

Respondents closely ranked the priority for the city’s economic initiatives. Though, partnering with community organizations, periodically distributing business newsletters, and studying the feasibility of moving City Hall ranked the highest. On the other hand, attracting high-wage employers, partnering with affordable housing community-based organizations (CBOs), and developing an entrepreneurial guide ranked the lowest. See Exhibit 62. Related quotes are below:

*“They all should get “10” on a scale, not make us have to put in a number in order of how important. We are losing so much commercial retail and restaurants and bars in the Town Center in exchange for multifamily residential buildings with no on-street parking which no-one wants and which goes against what we want. There is a push for micro-housing and co-sharing housing, just make sure that there is something in The Comprehensive Plan which makes it that there is a limit on density. We want affordable housing, but not at the cost of making people live like sardines all packed into small units to make it look like they are affordable.*

**Exhibit 62: Economic Initiatives Prioritization (N=87)**



Source: BERK, 2024.

Question 18. What improvements and investments should the City of Mercer Island prioritize in the next 10 years? Please select your top three priorities from the list below

Survey respondents would primarily like the City to prioritize maintaining city services. Other top priorities include adding more variety of retail and other businesses, ensuring there is quality infrastructure, and protecting the natural resources in Mercer Island. See Exhibit 63. Related quotes are below:

*“Design a town center that is actually usable by the residents of Mercer Island. Inconvenient and restrictive parking has forced us and neighbors to take our business off island. It is a frequent point of discussion.”*

*“Pretty much everything in question 18 should be on the list! Please make it easier to get around the island quickly.”*

**Exhibit 63: City Improvements and Investments Prioritization (N=87)**



Source: BERK, 2024.

*Question 19. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?*

This open-ended question received 47 responses from participants. The themes that emerged most prominently are summarized below.

- **Keep the City’s Character and Single-Family Housing:** One-fourth of the 47 respondents wrote comments related to maintaining Mercer Island’s character, which was frequently described as small suburban, and single-family bedroom community. Respondents also described the City’s character as unique, safe and quiet, with a high quality of life. The respondents voiced concerns about how the growth would affect the City’s residential character.

*“Please do not destroy the single family neighborhoods of Mercer Island. That and its parks are what make it unique. Any mandated increase in density or creation of affordable units should be limited to the Town Center and existing multifamily areas and near the Light Rail Station.”*

*“Keep the single-family characters and don’t turn Mercer Island into Capitol Hill, where I moved from.”*

*“Mercer Island’s high value to me is totally associated with its uniform Single Family nature and its commitment to safety.”*

*“Do not destroy our Single Family Neighborhoods chasing a pipe dream. It is okay that Mercer Island is a suburb and not an urban center. It is ok that it is a bedroom community with walkable, safe, single family neighborhoods with abundant tree cover.”*

*“Protecting our single family neighborhoods is key to the city’s continued success and those neighborhoods are the majority of the island and why many moved here.”*

- **Increase Affordable Housing Options:** Another top common theme focused on increasing affordable housing, specifically for upper-class families and those who work in Mercer Island like teachers. Those in support often focused on increasing affordable housing options for upper-class households, such as increasing condominiums, townhouses, and infill housing options.

*“We love it here and are committed to staying here for my son’s top-notch education. We live in an apartment and have no chance of getting a condo here with HOA fees, etc. A small 2-bedroom condo that is affordable on a teacher’s salary would be a game changer for us.”*

*“If there is a way to supporting housing for educators particularly those teaching at our schools that would have a strong positive multiplier on many aspects of Mercer island life.”*

*“Mercer Island is a unique community positioned between two major cities. I would love to see a community plan that reflects inclusion, diversity and equitable solutions. We should be caring for all of our neighbors and be an inviting place for all (not just those who can afford to live here), and there are residents like myself who do want change in my own backyard. The housing crisis is real and as a community, we can be part of incremental change. Thank you for taking time to collect input from the residents.”*

*“There is very little available land for development of smaller homes. Of there are places that can infill smaller affordable homes that would be great.”*

*“Growth is necessary and inevitable, and we need some more affordable housing for those who otherwise have to commute.”*

*“We NEED more affordable housing. note, I don’t want low-income housing. I don’t want rental assistance. I just want us to Build more dense units downtown. Condos, townhouses, etc. The entry level house on Mercer Island shouldn’t be \$2mn. There are reasons why our elementary school attendance is down. People want to live here! Approve buildings that work for Upper class families with young kids.”*

- **Increase Density:** Respondents also showed support for increasing density. However, some respondents had thoughts on where the density ought to go, with many favoring increased density in the Town Center compared to the CO zone. Overall, there was a strong sentiment to increase density in a smart, “right” way

#### Town Center Support

*“Increase density & height limits in the town center to increase housing supply and attract more businesses- and move city hall there rather than rebuilding it in place. Open up the rest of the island to higher density housing options, including ADUs and fourplexes, with reduced or eliminated parking minimums.”*

*Please do not encourage multi-family housing development in the C-O zone. Traffic is already troublesome there and there are no public transit options. Keep multifamily development in and around the Town Center where it already exists and where public transportation options already are present. This concentration of housing in Town Center will support retail.*

*“Implement climate action! Increase density in the town center, accommodate multi-modal transportation options.”*

*“The only place affordable housing makes any sense is in the town center, but even then with the cost of land and construction developers can't go below 80% AMI for affordable housing or they won't build. Increased density does not benefit existing residents.”*

*“Any mandated increase in density or creation of affordable units should be limited to the Town Center and existing multifamily areas and near the Light Rail Station.”*

*“The CO zone by the JCC and French School already has bad traffic and no high speed transit options - it is NOT the place to encourage multifamily housing. Multifamily housing should be limited to the Town Center, existing zones, and areas near the light rail - this will provide the density that will foster a revitalized retail environment.”*

### CO Zone Support

*“The proposed C-O zone should be for multi family housing and the city should not make it nearly impossible to build there because of the proximity to single family housing. More townhomes, condos, and affordable single family homes are needed.”*

### Practice Smart Growth

*“PLEASE keep the investments, safety, peace, and overall quality of life needs of those who have already lived and supported MI for years at the forefront of decisions made. There's no putting the toothpaste back in the tube once we've made these very important and impactful decisions. Over the past 10-15 years, there have been a number of MI development decisions made that have weakened, rather than strengthened, our position and desirability relative to some of our neighboring cities. In many ways, MI is unique and it's difficult to compare. Residents would like to keep it that way, but for the right reasons, positive reasons.”*

- **Expand Multimodal Infrastructure.** 15% of the respondents who provided open-ended responses also showed interest in expanding the multimodal infrastructure. Respondents were particularly interested in expanding the sidewalk infrastructure and streetlights, and others expressed support for expanding the bicycle infrastructure, particularly in relation to providing safe routes to school.

*“Please add sidewalks and please add street lights for safety purposes in neighborhoods”*

*“Bike lanes and pedestrian paths are really needed from Lakeridge Elem. all the way to the new light rail station! Currently, Bike lanes are hit and miss and veer off towards the high school- very dangerous for students on e-bikes and scooters. Don't stop the bike lane construction on mid-island like it is currently planned, continue the path all the way from Lakeridge elem to the new light rail station. Bike lane path should start at Lakeridge Elementary, go north past IMS, head east past the south end shopping center, north at Pioneer park on Island crest way, turn west onto 40th, then to north onto 80th Ave SE. We need a north to south bike/pedestrian path to connect all islanders. We desperately need a round-about at the pioneer park 4 way stop. With art in the middle of the round-about to welcome everyone to the south end. Plus, the south end doesn't have much public artwork, compared to the north end.”*

*“Implement climate action! Increase density in the town center, accommodate multi-modal transportation options.”*

*“I strongly support improving bicycle infrastructure, including the ICW corridor and through the town center.”*

*“Better street lighting coverage close to parks, more pedestrian sidewalks, Traffic lights on cross walks”*

*“A vibrant walkable, bikeable city core, with restaurants, galleries, light retail, is the most important function the comprehensive plan can serve. That means re-striping streets to accommodate angle parking and bike lanes, widening sidewalks to accommodate outdoor seating for restaurants and trees and plantings to make for an attractive pedestrian environment. The current downtown core is decrepit. 1950s-era strip malls surrounded by parking lakes is not a pleasant walking environment. Think about pedestrian-only options and modern, mixed-use urbanism. Provide central public parking in place of every strip mall having its own lot. Create 10-minute loading zones to drop off or pickup small loads, like dry cleaning or quick service restaurants. Rezone retail core as mixed use and delete the at-grade parking lots. Require adequate underground or otherwise integrated parking for residential buildings, not at-grade parking lakes. Limit heights and massing of multistory buildings, and set back upper stories to not intimidate pedestrians or create canyons. Maintain open space in and around buildings. Provide more bike parking.”*

**Concerns around Growth:** With the increased growth, respondents expressed concerns about how that might affect certain aspects of Mercer Island. Some respondents fear that increased density might result in losing the parks, tree cover, and open space. Other concerns with increased density included increased congestion, less parking, decreased safety, and increased noise.

#### Parks, Tree Cover, and Open Space:

*“Single family neighborhoods along with parks are the allure of MI.”*

*“Don’t reduce lot size, don’t increase permissible impervious surface area, and do preserve trees and parks.”*

*“Please maintain the single-family zones. This includes trees and house to lot size. Please don’t rezone or develop our parks.”*

#### Congestion and Parking

*“We don’t want to change our predominantly single family community into a crowded concrete jungle of high rise buildings, congested roadways and overtaxing our already aging infrastructure to allow for massive congestion.”*

*“Priority parking permits should be distributed to mercer island residents so they can use the parking facilities related to mass transit. It is too unpredictable to reliably use for commuting.”*

# Findings

Based on the survey and public open house, the following outreach findings are provided:

- **Mercer Island's Livability.** Respondents enjoy Mercer Island for being safe, centrally located, and having a sense of community. Most respondents agree that Mercer Island is a good place to live and have housing that meets their needs.
- **Enthusiasm for Parks and Trees.** Respondents enjoy the city's parks, open space, and outdoor environments. Additionally, they have concerns about loss of mature trees and landscaping when new development occurs. Nearly a half of respondents think that new housing should be near parks and open spaces.
- **Limited Housing Availability.** Many respondents agree that there is limited available housing to upsize or downsizing, and housing costs are high.
- **Future Housing Goals.** Many of respondents want to live in a single-family home in the future. Though, a sizeable number of respondents also want to live in senior housing, townhomes, and larger apartment buildings.
- **Diverging Results for Diverse Housing Types.** Respondents are split over the importance of availability of different housing types, with over half of respondents thinking that the availability of rental housing is unimportant. Respondents are also split over the importance of diversifying housing types across income levels. Some express support for allowing affordable housing types for the workforce but are less in favor of providing low-income housing.
- **Diverse Housing Supply in Mixed-Use Commercial Area.** The majority of respondents agree that it is important to have housing options in mixed-use commercial areas. However, respondents had varying opinions on where that housing could be located. Respondents' preferred strategies to expediate affordable housing development include allowing multifamily in C-O zones, while others strongly favor focusing multifamily housing in the Town Center. Additionally, respondents note that supporting proximity to transit hubs for affordable housing is important.
- **Middle Housing Concerns.** Respondents note that parking and walkability will become challenged if middle housing is built in their neighborhoods. Others also expressed that it may threaten the parks, tree canopy, and open space in residential neighborhoods.
- **Transportation.** More than half of respondents note that off-island transportation options is either very important or important. Additionally, for respondents who drive and do not use other transportation options, they cite frequency, transit coverage area, and safety as the barriers preventing them from adopting to other transportation options.
- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure.** Respondents note that nonmotorized travel options are important. They advocated for the increase of sidewalks and streetlights for safety, as well as the expansion of the bicycle infrastructure particularly along school routes and the "last-mile" to the light rail station

# Appendices

# Appendix A

## Comprehensive Plan Community Open House Sign in Sheets

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE: SIGN IN



NAME	EMAIL
1 John Hall	JKLDOCKE@COMCAST.NET
2 Gary Robinson	Dgarobinson@COMCAST.NET
3 Lori Robinson	MRS.ROBINSON@COMCAST.NET
4 Daniel Baker	daniel@danielbaker.com
5 Olivia Baker	oliviabaker2@gmail.com
6 Boreth (Terry) Long	terry.long.re@gmail.com
7 Tara Senn	tana.senn@lp.wa.gov
8 Robert Lewandowski	robert@lewandowski.com
9 Ying Lei	ying.lei@live.com
10 Ryan Smith	rsmith@martinsmith.com
11 Michele Asmuth	MASMUTH12@gmail.com
12 Lucia Pirzio Bironi	lucia@ectypos.com
13 Peter Struck	StruckMI@aol.com
14 Christa Nielsen	csnielsen@comcast.net
15 Kenneth Loen	loenk@hotmail.com
16 Tom Acker	<del>Tom Acker</del> GNGUNDR@Comcast.net

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE: SIGN IN



	NAME	EMAIL
1	MATT GOLDBACH	BLKSHIP@YAHOO.COM
2	GREG TADLOCK	GT@TSRI.COM
3	Joanna Sheppard	jshppard@nwshppard.com
4	Emily Tadlock	emily@newcastlelog.com
5	TED WEINBERG	ted.weinberg@mercerisland.gov
6	Dani Thompson	clanie12thompson@hotmail.com
7	SAM NICE	SAM.NICE@MERCERISLAND.GOV
8	Kirstyn Strauss	strausskirstyn@gmail.com
9	Salah Fefeh	fefehsah@gmail.com
10	ASHLEY DIMICK	ashleytdimick@gmail.com
11	CONNOR DIMICK	connordimick95@gmail.com
12	Marie Bender	marie.bender@mbender.com
13	Ben Manger	mangerb@gmail.com
14	Bill Severson	bill.severson1120@gmail.com
15	Meredith Lehr	meredith.lehr@outlook.com
16	Cristina Martinez	cristina@famisanmar.com

# Appendix B

## Comprehensive Plan Open House Handout



Welcome to Tonight's Open House  
May 1, 2024 | 6:00-8:00 PM

### Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

Thank you for joining us tonight to learn about the **periodic review of Mercer Island's Comprehensive Plan**. Washington State's Growth Mangement Act(GMA) requires this periodic review every 10 years to ensure compliance with state law and reflect changes in the community. This periodic review updates must be completed by the end of 2024, with a new 20-year planning horizon extending to 2044.

Tonight is an opportunity to **learn about** the progress and findings of this periodic review and the **proposed amendments** updating existing elements, as well as the inclusion of **two new elements: Economic Development & Parks and Open Space**.

↩ Flip the page to explore the timeline of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update!



Welcome to Tonight's Open House  
May 1, 2024 | 6:00-8:00 PM

### Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

Thank you for joining us tonight to learn about the **periodic review of Mercer Island's Comprehensive Plan**. Washington State's Growth Mangement Act(GMA) requires this periodic review every 10 years to ensure compliance with state law and reflect changes in the community. This periodic review updates must be completed by the end of 2024, with a new 20-year planning horizon extending to 2044.

Tonight is an opportunity to **learn about** the progress and findings of this periodic review and the **proposed amendments** updating existing elements, as well as the inclusion of **two new elements: Economic Development & Parks and Open Space**.

↩ Flip the page to explore the timeline of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update!

### Have questions or want to learn more?

Visit the Let's Talk Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review's webpage [letstalk.mercergov.org/comprehensive-plan-periodic-update](http://letstalk.mercergov.org/comprehensive-plan-periodic-update)

Find:

- **Public Review Drafts** of each amended element and the two new elements.
- **Technical Documents** containing analysis and supporting information developed during this periodic review, used to evaluate proposed updates
- **Take the Survey** open until May 8 & review prior surveys

We appreciate your time attending this Open House and completing the survey.

### Have questions or want to learn more?

Visit the Let's Talk Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review's webpage [letstalk.mercergov.org/comprehensive-plan-periodic-update](http://letstalk.mercergov.org/comprehensive-plan-periodic-update)

Find:

- **Public Review Drafts** of each amended element and the two new elements.
- **Technical Documents** containing analysis and supporting information developed during this periodic review, used to evaluate proposed updates
- **Take the Survey** open until May 8 & review prior surveys

We appreciate your time attending this Open House and completing the survey.

### Scan to view the Project Website and Take the Survey



Have a Public Comment or Question?

Email  
[Comp.Plan@mercerisland.gov](mailto:Comp.Plan@mercerisland.gov)

### Scan to view the Project Website and Take the Survey



Have a Public Comment or Question?

Email  
[Comp.Plan@mercerisland.gov](mailto:Comp.Plan@mercerisland.gov)



# Appendix C

## Mercer Island City Staff Open House Presentation Slides







# MERCER ISLAND 2044 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Open House

May 1, 2024  
City of Mercer Island, WA  
Community Planning and Development

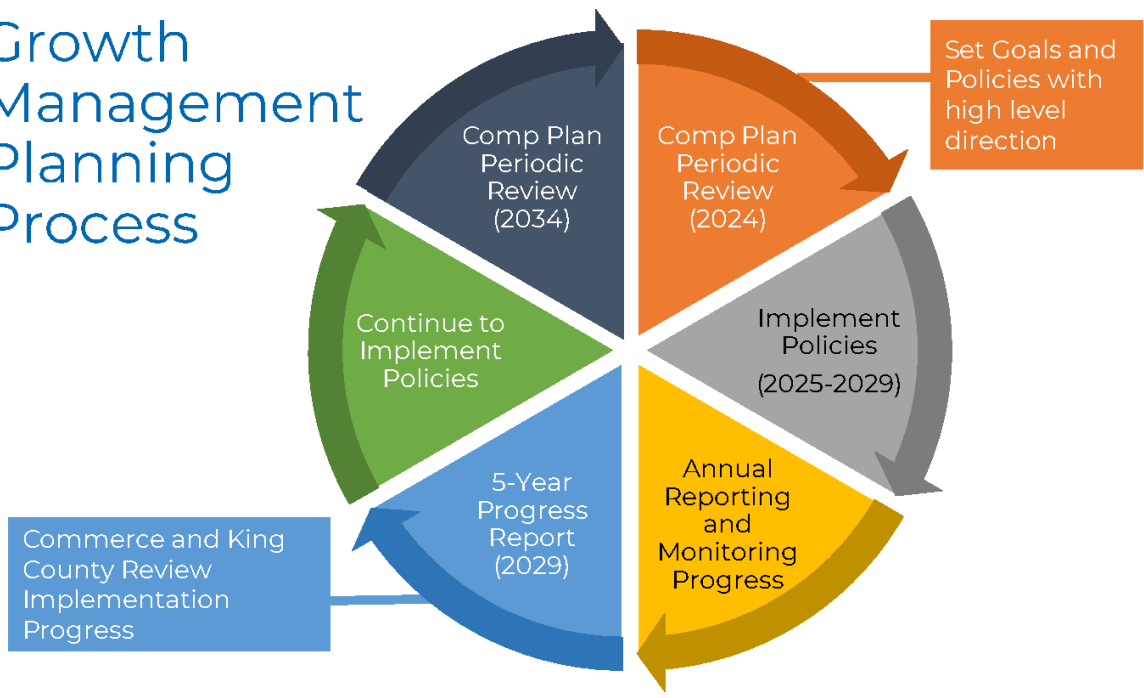


# Presentation Outline

-  Background and Project History
-  Updated Comprehensive Plan Elements
-  Next Steps
-  Open House Program



# Growth Management Planning Process



## What is a Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review?

- Cities and counties in Washington are required to adopt and periodically review a comprehensive plan under the Growth Management Act (GMA)
- Since the last update, the WA Legislature has established several specific requirements for local comprehensive plans.
- Periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan's 20-year horizon (2024-2044).
- Address new GMA requirements, particularly for housing.
- Periodic review must be completed by December 31, 2024.



# Mercer Island Growth Targets

- New growth targets established by King County in 2022 based on the projected 20-year population forecast.
- The Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan must accommodate these growth targets.

## 2044 GROWTH TARGETS

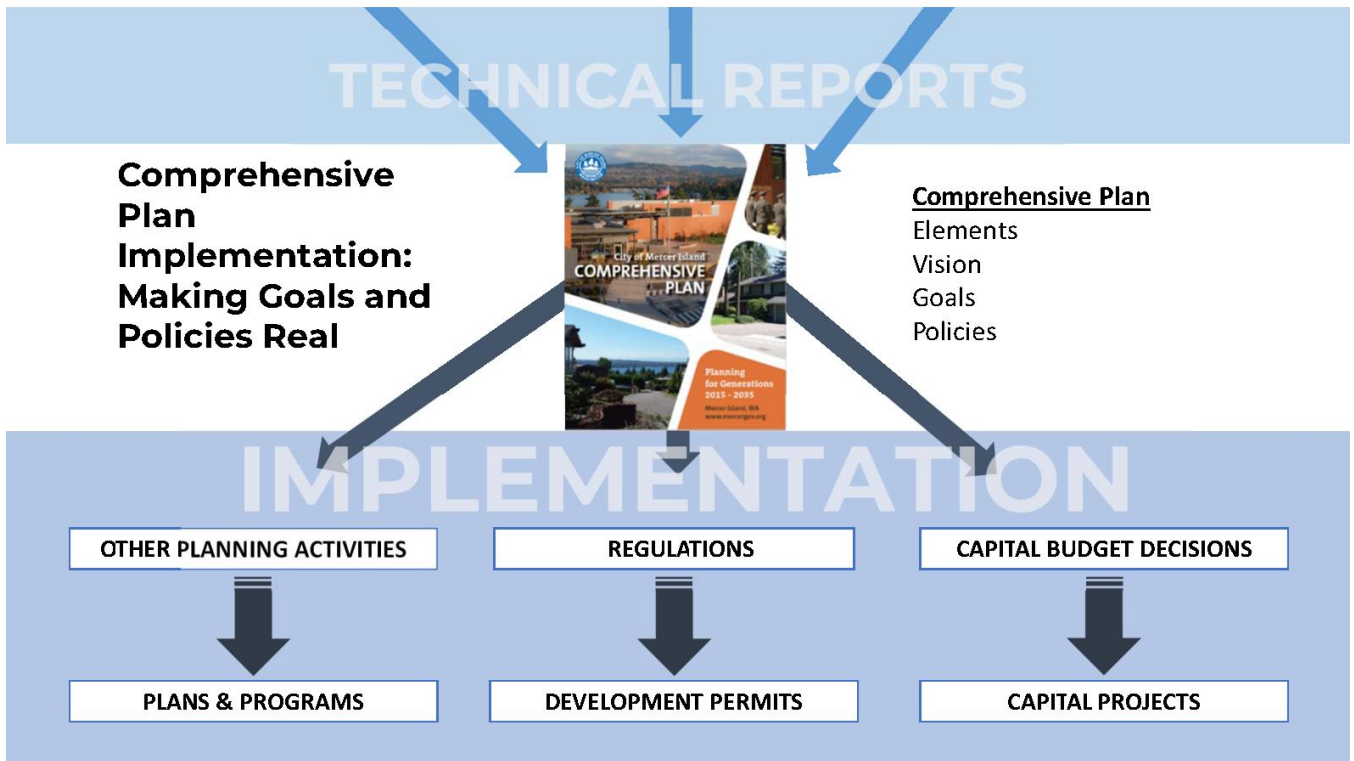


**1,239**  
new dwellings

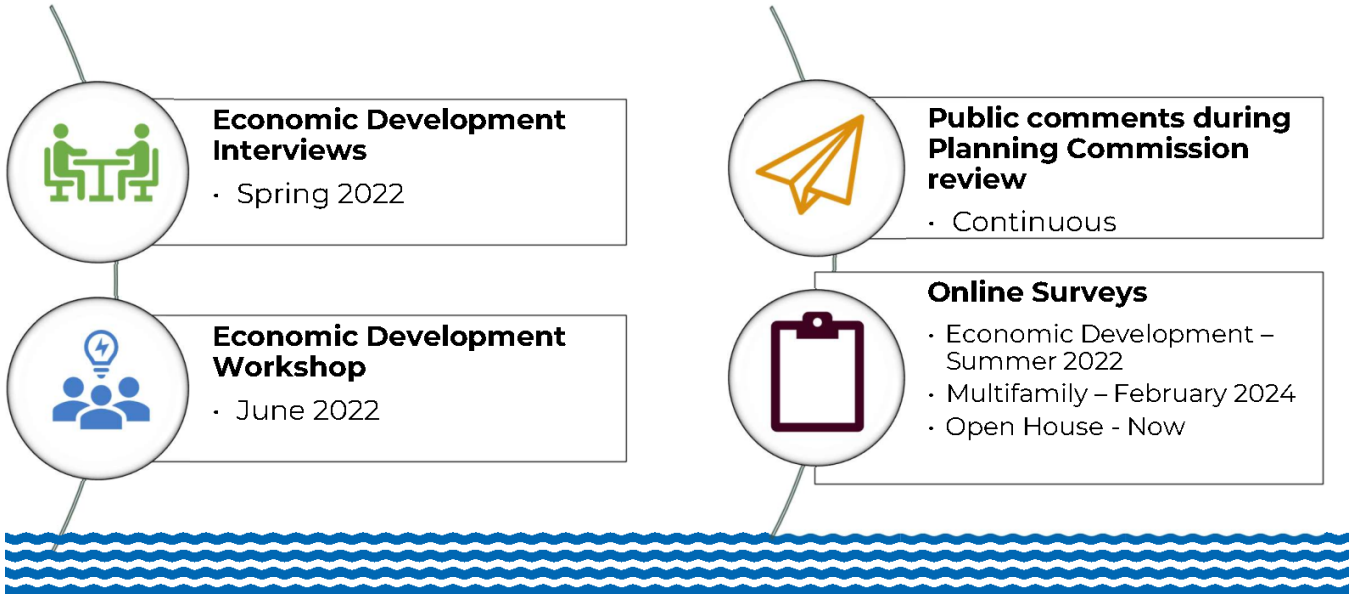


**1,300**  
new jobs

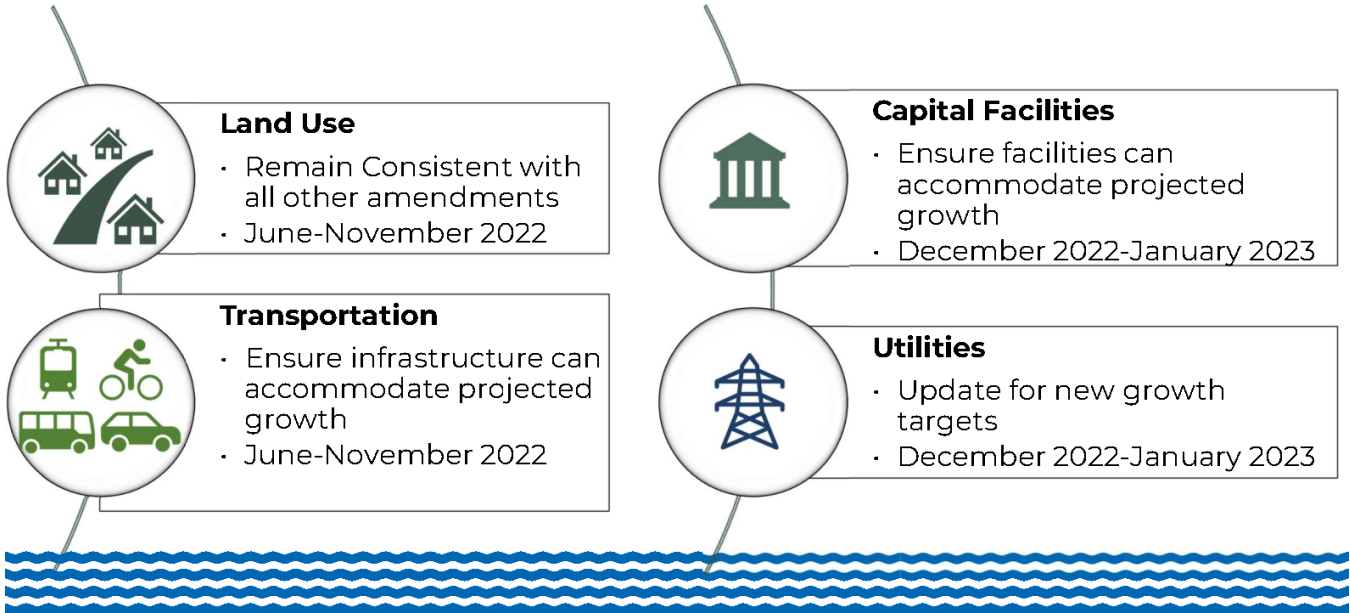




# Public Participation To Date



# Plan Elements Updates

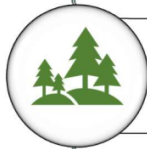


# New or Rewritten Plan Elements



## **Economic Development (New)**

· June 2023-November 2023



## **Parks and Open Space (New)**

· March-April 2024



## **Housing (Rewritten)**

· January-March 2024





# Economic Development Element Drafting Process



## **Public Input and Data Collection**

- Interviews, workshop, online survey
- Economic Analysis
- May 2022 – November 2022



## **Economic Development Work Group Drafting**

- Joint PC/Council subcommittee prepared initial draft
- Oct. 2022 – June 2023



## **Planning Commission Review**

- Refined the draft Element
- June-November 2023







## Housing Element: New Requirements

### **Statewide legislation and Countywide Planning Policies set new requirements:**




- The City is required to plan for nearly all its growth target (1,239 new housing units) to be affordable for people with incomes below the area median income (AMI).
- Therefore, new policies are focused on steps to increase the supply of affordable housing units.
- Cities must also conduct an RDI Evaluation, conduct a LCA supplement, and identify areas at risk of displacement.







# Housing Element Drafting Process

## Technical Reports

-  Housing Needs Assessment  
· June 2022-November 2022
-  Land Capacity Analysis Supplement  
· August 2023-January 2024
-  Racially Disparate Impacts Evaluation  
· August 2023 – January 2024

## Draft Preparation

-  Housing Work Group (HWG)  
· Joint PC/Council Subcommittee  
· January-March 2024
-  Planning Commission Review  
· Refine HWG Draft  
· March 2024



# Housing Element: Capacity

More multifamily/mixed-use development capacity is needed to accommodate affordable housing needs, prompting two changes directed by the City Council:

1. Allowing multifamily/mixed-use development in the Commercial Office Zone
2. Targeted increase to maximum building height in Town Center

## Commercial Office Zone



Source: Title 19 Mercer Island City Code, Appendix D  
[https://library.municode.com/wa/mercer\\_island/codes/city\\_code?nodeId=CIC00R-TIT19UNLADECO\\_UNLADEAP-APXDZOMA](https://library.municode.com/wa/mercer_island/codes/city_code?nodeId=CIC00R-TIT19UNLADECO_UNLADEAP-APXDZOMA)

## Schedule and Next Steps

<b>May 8-29</b>	Planning Commission: Open Space Zone and Comprehensive Plan Tune Up
<b>May 29</b>	Public Hearing on Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review
<b>June 12</b>	Targeted conclusion of Planning Commission process and recommendation
<b>July 16</b>	City Council briefing on the Planning Commission recommendation
<b>Sept-Oct</b>	Council deliberation and adoption

# Open House Program



## **Topic-Specific Stations**

- Find out more about different topics in the Comprehensive Plan



## **Survey**

- Available here and on the project Website through May 10



## **Staff Available for Questions**

- City staff and consultants are available for questions at each station



## **Planning Commissioners and City Councilmembers**

- Available for questions and input



Post public comments on the project website




[letstalk.mercergov.org/comprehensive-plan-periodic-update](https://letstalk.mercergov.org/comprehensive-plan-periodic-update)



### Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review

[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [e](#)



**MERCER ISLAND 2044  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The WA State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires the City of Mercer Island to review and update its Comprehensive Plan in a twenty-year periodic review process. This project is part of the Comprehensive Plan periodic review process.

The City's Comprehensive Plan is the City's primary focus of this Comprehensive Plan for the

Click Here to Post a Comment

**What's Happening**    Ask a Question    **Post A Public Comment**

Comprehensive Plan Multifamily Housing Survey

# Thank You

More information  
on the project  
website



[letstalk.mercergov.org/comprehensive-plan-periodic-update](http://letstalk.mercergov.org/comprehensive-plan-periodic-update)



# Appendix D

## Comprehensive Plan Community Open House Comment Box Submissions


Please add this preamble to the Housing Chapter:

Mercer Island is principally a single-family zone community. Large minimum lot sizes and a lower gross floor area to lot ratio with yard setbacks and limits on impervious surfaces contribute to the rural character of the single-family zones Islanders cherish, and the retention of mature trees and vegetation that allow carbon to be captured, limit solar heat, and provide homes for birds and woodland animals. In 2017, new regulatory limits were adopted for our single-family zone after a years-long process of citizen involvement and extensive public process, and those adopted regulatory limits including minimum lot size, height limits, impervious surface limits, yard setbacks, gross floor area to lot area ratios, and onsite parking minimums that preserve the rural character of our single family zone will not be changed as part of these amendments to our comprehensive plan.

  
Printed Name

Please add this preamble to the Housing Chapter:

Mercer Island is principally a single-family zone community. Large minimum lot sizes and a lower gross floor area to lot ratio with yard setbacks and limits on impervious surfaces contribute to the rural character of the single-family zones Islanders cherish, and the retention of mature trees and vegetation that allow carbon to be captured, limit solar heat, and provide homes for birds and woodland animals. In 2017, new regulatory limits were adopted for our single-family zone after a years-long process of citizen involvement and extensive public process, and those adopted regulatory limits including minimum lot size, height limits, impervious surface limits, yard setbacks, gross floor area to lot area ratios, and onsite parking minimums that preserve the rural character of our single family zone will not be changed as part of these amendments to our comprehensive plan.

  
Printed Name

Please add this preamble to the Housing Chapter:

Mercer Island is primarily a single-family zoned community. Large minimum lot sizes and a low gross floor area to lot ratio, combined with yard setbacks and limits on impervious surfaces, contribute to the rural character of the single-family zones that Islanders cherish. These regulations also support the retention of mature trees and vegetation, which capture carbon, limit solar heat, and provide habitats for birds and woodland animals. In 2017, new regulatory limits were adopted for our single-family zone after a years-long process involving extensive citizen participation and public processes. These adopted regulatory limits, including minimum lot size, height limits, impervious surface limits, yard setbacks, gross floor area to lot area ratios, and onsite parking minimums, preserve the rural character of our single-family zone and will not be changed as part of these amendments to our comprehensive plan.

  
Printed Name

Please add this preamble to the Housing Chapter:

Mercer Island is principally a single-family zone community. Large minimum lot sizes and a lower gross floor area to lot ratio with yard setbacks and limits on impervious surfaces contribute to the rural character of the single-family zones Islanders cherish, and the retention of mature trees and vegetation that allow carbon to be captured, limit solar heat, and provide homes for birds and woodland animals. In 2017, new regulatory limits were adopted for our single-family zone after a years-long process of citizen involvement and extensive public process, and those adopted regulatory limits including minimum lot size, height limits, impervious surface limits, yard setbacks, gross floor area to lot area ratios, and onsite parking minimums that preserve the rural character of our single family zone will not be changed as part of these amendments to our comprehensive plan.

  
Printed Name

Please add this preamble to the Housing Chapter:

Mercer Island is primarily a single-family zoned community. Large minimum lot sizes and a low gross floor area to lot ratio, combined with yard setbacks and limits on impervious surfaces, contribute to the rural character of the single-family zones that Islanders cherish. These regulations also support the retention of mature trees and vegetation, which capture carbon, limit solar heat, and provide habitats for birds and woodland animals. In 2017, new regulatory limits were adopted for our single-family zone after a years-long process involving extensive citizen participation and public processes. These adopted regulatory limits, including minimum lot size, height limits, impervious surface limits, yard setbacks, gross floor area to lot area ratios, and onsite parking minimums, preserve the rural character of our single-family zone and will not be changed as part of these amendments to our comprehensive plan.

*Kyoto Matsuda*

Printed Name

Something has to be done to stop all the mature trees from being cut down for development. And there should not be allowed a fee-in-lieu for being allowed to remove trees, and the the penalty & fees need to be <sup>in the</sup> 1000's not 100's

- Allow multifamily housing in more areas of the city
- Please don't place all multifamily housing directly adjacent to the highway.
- Consider at least 5 to 6 stories for multifamily housing, up to 8 stories would be ideal to allow affordability
- Ensure mixed-use zoning near new affordable housing for access to amenities
- Upzone more areas near transit. Especially 1/2 mile radius near light rail station.

- Kill the off-island PC idea!

- AB1110 needs to be considered as part of the growth targets while 1220 is the pacing item, we still need to plan for the end of single family zoning.

- Island Crest "missing link" is a TIP priority.

- I'd like to see pockets of multi-family to include townhouses and duplexes in the single family zones where it makes sense.

What type of data will inform your decision on the Island Crest Corridor between Island Park and 68<sup>TH</sup> ?

Put flashing pedestrian lights on 84<sup>TH</sup> & 75<sup>E</sup> by JMS. Signs are hard to see and kids use this corridor to walk to school

Is there some economically feasible way to use stormwater runoff to water beach areas (grass) at Cleveland Park. - Need Reservoir & pipes

Do not put gravel next to bike paths. Cyclists will ride in the center of the path to avoid it and avoiding slipping on the gravel

We need fiber internet on the Island. We should add piping & potential conduit <sup>everytime</sup> ~~when~~ we replace utility pipes, going forward.

Increase public charging stations!

### Bike Lanes

- They aren't used on the Mercers because materials that cause flats and accidents are in them.
- Bike lanes on 84th are never used. People (Adults) ride in Street. Youth drive on sidewalks. This is a waste of funds.

### Commercial Office Zone

The city lacks the infrastructure needed (broad band) to attract companies to Mercer Island.


By alerting the community of counting - you can skew the results.

- What is your control group.
- Reason for communication was to reduce calls.
- How many calls do you receive?

Do not remove the trees on the west side of ICW between Island Park elementary and 68th. These provide a barrier between cars and pedestrians

Please add this preamble to the Housing Chapter:

Mercer Island is primarily a single-family zoned community. Large minimum lot sizes and a low gross floor area to lot ratio, combined with yard setbacks and limits on impervious surfaces, contribute to the rural character of the single-family zones that Islanders cherish. These regulations also support the retention of mature trees and vegetation, which capture carbon, limit solar heat, and provide habitats for birds and woodland animals. In 2017, new regulatory limits were adopted for our single-family zone after a years-long process involving extensive citizen participation and public processes. These adopted regulatory limits, including minimum lot size, height limits, impervious surface limits, yard setbacks, gross floor area to lot area ratios, and onsite parking minimums, preserve the rural character of our single-family zone and will not be changed as part of these amendments to our comprehensive plan.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Hall Printed Name

Please add this preamble to the Housing Chapter:

Mercer Island is primarily a single-family zoned community. Large minimum lot sizes and a low gross floor area to lot ratio, combined with yard setbacks and limits on impervious surfaces, contribute to the rural character of the single-family zones that Islanders cherish. These regulations also support the retention of mature trees and vegetation, which capture carbon, limit solar heat, and provide habitats for birds and woodland animals. In 2017, new regulatory limits were adopted for our single-family zone after a years-long process involving extensive citizen participation and public processes. These adopted regulatory limits, including minimum lot size, height limits, impervious surface limits, yard setbacks, gross floor area to lot area ratios, and onsite parking minimums, preserve the rural character of our single-family zone and will not be changed as part of these amendments to our comprehensive plan.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CATHIE HARE Printed Name


Please add this preamble to the Housing Chapter:

Mercer Island is primarily a single-family zoned community. Large minimum lot sizes and a low gross floor area to lot ratio, combined with yard setbacks and limits on impervious surfaces, contribute to the rural character of the single-family zones that Islanders cherish. These regulations also support the retention of mature trees and vegetation, which capture carbon, limit solar heat, and provide habitats for birds and woodland animals. In 2017, new regulatory limits were adopted for our single-family zone after a years-long process involving extensive citizen participation and public processes. These adopted regulatory limits, including minimum lot size, height limits, impervious surface limits, yard setbacks, gross floor area to lot area ratios, and onsite parking minimums, preserve the rural character of our single-family zone and will not be changed as part of these amendments to our comprehensive plan.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

Please add this preamble to the Housing Chapter:

Mercer Island is primarily a single-family zoned community. Large minimum lot sizes and a low gross floor area to lot ratio, combined with yard setbacks and limits on impervious surfaces, contribute to the rural character of the single-family zones that Islanders cherish. These regulations also support the retention of mature trees and vegetation, which capture carbon, limit solar heat, and provide habitats for birds and woodland animals. In 2017, new regulatory limits were adopted for our single-family zone after a years-long process involving extensive citizen participation and public processes. These adopted regulatory limits, including minimum lot size, height limits, impervious surface limits, yard setbacks, gross floor area to lot area ratios, and onsite parking minimums, preserve the rural character of our single-family zone and will not be changed as part of these amendments to our comprehensive plan.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

For help setting the stage  
so people understand what  
AMI %s really mean, maybe we  
can call some of the multi-family  
"Teacher Housing"

You are not aware of toxic  
herbicides please do  
something Thank  
you

6

We should get fiber internet for the entire island, not just the middle + high school.

# Appendix E

## Comprehensive Plan Community Open House Display Boards

# 2024 - 2044 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

## OPEN HOUSE

May 1, 2024 | 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Welcome!

Please sign in and fill out a nametag at the table.  
A brief presentation will begin at 6:20 PM.

### WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?

The City of Mercer Island has conducted a periodic review of its Comprehensive Plan to update information and comply with state laws. Updates proposed to the comprehensive plan will guide how the city will accommodate growth over the next 20 years.

Learn about the proposed updates and revisions to existing elements for the 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan and the proposal to add two new elements.

### AGENDA

- 6:00-6:20 PM: Welcome & Sign-In
- 6:20-6:40 PM: Staff Presentation
- 6:40-8:00 PM: Open House

*City staff will be available at stations to answer questions and explain changes proposed in the Comprehensive Plan elements.*

### LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Check out the project webpage

Take our Survey!

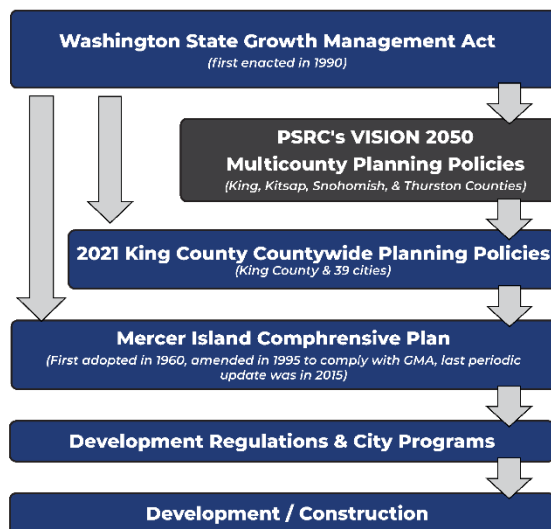


Have a public comment?

Email [Comp.Plan@mercerisland.gov](mailto:Comp.Plan@mercerisland.gov)



## Growth Management & Comprehensive Plans



### WHAT IS THE GMA?

The GMA, or Growth Management Act, is a state law that outlines strategies for managing growth and directing development in counties and cities. For cities like Mercer Island, it mandates the creation of a Comprehensive Plan with a 20-year planning horizon. This plan must undergo review and potential revision every decade to ensure alignment with any updates to the GMA and to stay current with evolving needs and priorities.

The GMA requires that certain elements be addressed in every Comprehensive Plan. For Mercer Island, those elements are:

Land Use	Transportation	Parks and Recreation
Housing	Economic Development	Shorelines
Capital Facilities Plan	Utilities	Climate Change & Resiliency*

\*The Climate Change and Resiliency element was added in 2023 as a mandatory element, the deadline for Mercer Island to add a climate change is June 30, 2029.

### WHAT IS VISION 2050?

Vision 2050 is the plan for growth, in the Puget Sound region. Adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), it serves as the blueprint for growth and transportation investments across the four-county region. This plan provides guidance for countywide planning policies and regional allocation of growth. With the region's population projected to reach 5.8 million people by 2050, Vision 2050 will direct infrastructure investments and concentrate growth accordingly.

### WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan is the centerpiece of local long-range planning, projecting ahead over a 20-year planning horizon. It contains a vision, goals, objectives, policies, and implementation actions to guide decision-making by elected officials and staff. The GMA emphasizes implementation, recognizing that achieving a plan's objectives requires regulatory and financial support, including zoning regulations, program initiatives, and both capital and non-capital spending. Development regulations and capital budget decisions must align with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

### HOW MUCH WILL MERCER ISLAND GROW BY 2044?



By 2044, Mercer Island is expected to have **1,239** new households and **1,300** new jobs than in 2019.

# The Comprehensive Plan

## MERCER ISLAND'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TODAY

The GMA, or Growth Management Act, is a state law that outlines strategies for managing growth and directing development in counties and cities. For cities like Mercer Island, it mandates the creation of a Comprehensive Plan with a 20-year planning horizon. This plan must undergo review and potential revision every decade to ensure alignment with any updates to the GMA and to stay current with evolving needs and priorities.

The GMA requires that certain elements be addressed in every Comprehensive Plan. For Mercer Island, those elements are:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Capital Facilities
- Shoreline Master Program Policies

The individual elements of the Comprehensive Plan must align with each other; consequently, adjustments to one element to adhere to changes in state law may necessitate amendments in other elements to maintain internal consistency.

### WHAT'S NEW?

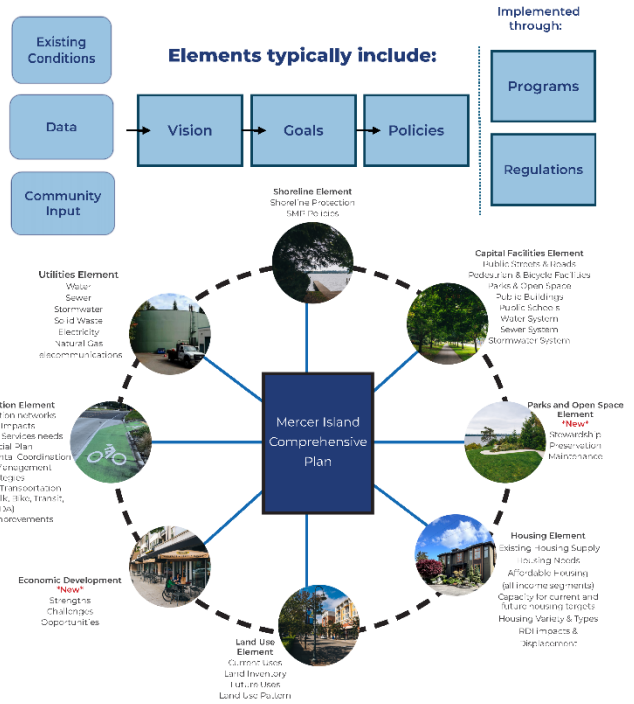
Washington State, the region, and Mercer Island are constantly changing and evolving, influenced by various influences and factors. As such, the City's Comprehensive Plan requires regular review and amendments to meet new state mandates, fulfill regional growth requirements set forth by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and align with the community's vision.

Mercer Island is required to periodically review and, if necessary, update its comprehensive plan every ten years, with the current deadline set for December 31, 2024.

During this Periodic Update, the City will introduce two new elements:

- Economic Development
- Parks and Open Space

Additionally, the existing Housing Element has undergone significant rewriting to ensure compliance with new state and regional requirements.



# Timeline

- Interviews
- City Council Presentation
- Planning Commission Review
- Survey
- Community Workshop Open House

Element	2022			2023				2024				
	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
	Drafting Stage							Finalizing & Adopting Stage				
Economic Development												
Land Use												
Housing												
Other Elements - Transportation - Capital Facilities - Utilities - Parks & Recreation												
Comprehensive Plan												

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- May 8 Planning Commission Open Space Zone Briefing
- May 29 Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing
- June 5 Planning Commission Recommendation to the City Council
- June 12
- July 16 (tentative) City Council Briefing on the Planning Commission Recommendation
- Dec 31 Deadline to adopt the Comprehensive Plan

# Land Use Element

## THE LAND USE ELEMENT:

- Provides direction for the city's land use and its physical development.
- Emphasizes and encourages a mix of land uses.
- Supports and accommodates future growth in a sustainable manner.
- Is consistent and interrelated with other Elements

## WHAT'S NEW IN KEY GOALS?

### Outside of the Town Center

**LU-15 & LU-16 Policies. UPDATED** to be consistent with substantially rewritten Housing Element.

**LU-17. UPDATED.** The allowed uses in commercial and mixed-use zones balance the City's economic development and housing needs.

**LU-19 Policies:** Amendments to be consistent with the Parks and Open Space Element.

**LU-20 Policies:** Policies either moved to other Land Use Goals or removed because they were addressed in the Parks and Open Space (PROS) Element.

**LU-26: Climate Change. UPDATED** to align with the Climate Action Plan.

**LU-27. NEW.** Reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions.

**LU-28. UPDATED** to align with the Climate Action Plan.

**LU-29 Policies. UPDATED** to describe the implementation process for the Land Use Element

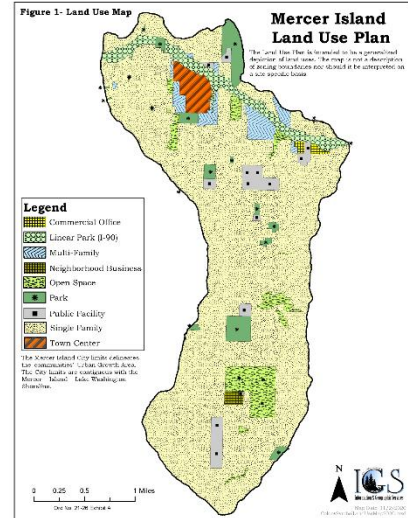
## INTERCONNECTED

The Land Use Map is interconnected with other elements in the Comprehensive Plan. Changes to land use affects those elements, including:



## \*COMING SOON\*

The Land Use Map will see some minor changes and updates to align with the new Parks and Open Space Element.



# Housing Element Changes: HB 1220

## What is HB 1220?

HB 1220 amended the Growth Management Act to require local governments to **“plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all income levels.”**

To comply, Mercer Island must make the following updates:

- **Plan for sufficient land capacity to address the housing needs** of all economic segments in the community.
  - identifying housing types and areas in the City with capacity to accommodate housing units at each affordability level
- **Incorporate provisions for moderate-density housing types** (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, townhomes).
- **Adopt policies, identify programs, and implement strategies** to support and enable the production of housing units to accommodate projected housing needs for all economic segments as allocated by income segments by King County to Mercer Island consistent with the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) VISION 2050 and the GMA.
- **Identify racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion** in housing policies and regulations and take steps to undo any impacts; and identify areas at higher risk of displacement and include anti-displacement policies.



## How is Mercer Island's housing growth target determined?

King County developed Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs), a shared framework for how to manage regional growth and its adopted growth targets for the region.

King County allocates these growth targets to each jurisdiction and directs each jurisdiction to address affordable housing needs and the condition of its existing housing supply.

Established by the King County CPPs, each jurisdiction must plan for and accommodate its allocated share of countywide future housing for moderate-, low-, very low-, and extremely low-income households.

# Housing Element

## PURPOSE

- Provides the policy approaches the City will take to manage projected growth and accommodate its housing needs.

## WHY WAS IT REWRITTEN?

Changes in state laws related to housing have resulted in redrafting this element to:

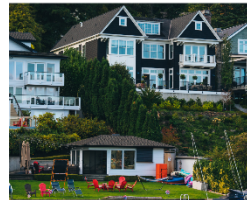
- Comply with HB 1110.** Requires cities to allow multiple middle housing units on a single lot
- Comply with HB 1220.** Requires cities to plan and accommodate housing that is affordable to all income levels. This includes:
  - Planning for sufficient land capacity for all economic segments,
  - Allowing for moderate density housing, and
  - Identifying racially disparate impacts (RDI), taking measures to address these impacts, and reduce the risk of displacement.

## KEY GOALS

- Overall: NEW.** Provide housing affordable for all income levels.
- Affordable Housing: NEW.** Households of all income levels can afford to live in Mercer Island because of the housing mix.
- Racially Disparate Impacts (RDIs): NEW.** Undo identified RDIs, avoid displacement, and eliminate exclusion in housing.
- Anti-Displacement: NEW.** Reduce and mitigate displacement risk as regulations change and development occurs.
- Residential Regulation:** Balanced regulations that safeguard public health, safety and welfare.
- Implementation:** Implement the Housing Element in a timely & efficient manner.

## WHAT'S NEW?

- Element completely rewritten due to Washington State HB 1110 and HB 1220.
- By 2044, an expected growth of **1,239 households**.
- Existing land capacity: **1,429 additional housing units**.



# Housing Element Changes: HB 1220

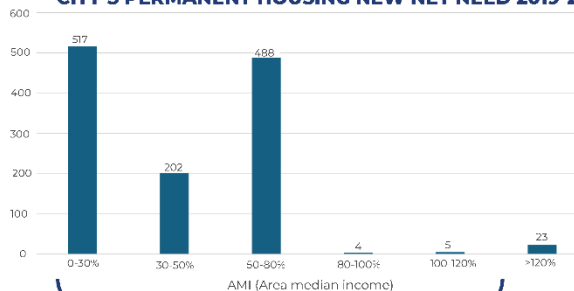
## WHAT IS HB 1220?

“plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all income levels.”

- Plan for sufficient land capacity to address the housing needs of all economic segments in the community.
- Incorporate provisions for moderate-density housing types
- Adopt policies, identify programs, and implement strategies
- Identify racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing policies and regulations

**Land Capacity**  
Citywide Capacity:  
1,428 new units  
Multifamily Capacity:  
1,073 new units  
Multifamily Need:  
1,216 new units  
Multifamily Deficit:  
**143 units**

CITY'S PERMANENT HOUSING NEW NET NEED 2019-2044



Given high costs, affordable housing for households with income between 0 - 120% AMI are likely to be accommodated in zones that permit multifamily and mixed-use development.

To provide more capacity for multifamily dwelling units, the city must increase capacity in zones that permit multifamily housing units (Town Center, Commercial Office) or allow multifamily housing in other zones where it is not currently allowed.

### To address this shortfall, the city proposes:

- allowing multifamily residential uses in the Commercial Office (C-O) Zone, and
- increasing the maximum building height in some Town Center subareas by an additional story.



## KEY FINDINGS FROM THE CITY'S RACIALLY DISPARATE IMPACTS EVALUATION

- Renters have a 20 percent higher cost burden than homeowners, regardless of race.
- Households of color are 8 percent more likely to face housing cost burdens compared to White households.
- Black or African American households in Mercer Island are experiencing severe housing cost burden at more than double the rate of any other racial group.

# Housing Types & Needs

**1,239 new homes** are required to fulfill Mercer Island's housing growth targets from 2019 to 2044.

Mercer Island's housing needs are distributed among different income groups based on the area median income (AMI) and the # of dwelling units (DU) allocated for each income group.

**HOUSING NEED DISTRIBUTION BY INCOME GROUP**

0-30% AMI	31-50% AMI	51-80% AMI	81-90% AMI	91-125% AMI
517 DUs	202 DUs	488 DUs	5 DUs	4 DUs
39%	16%	42%	<1%	<1%

Source: King County 2022 Countywide Planning Policies Ordinance 19600 Public Hearing

**City of Mercer Island - Housing Costs**

Housing Type	Sale Price or Monthly Rent	Monthly Cost	Annual Income Needed
Single-Family	\$2.62 Million	\$15,867	\$634,680
Condominium	\$662,179	\$4,085	\$163,400
Apartment	\$2,578 / month	\$2,528	\$101,120

Source: Washington Center for Real Estate Research (WCRE). Mercer Island Land Capacity Analysis (LCA) Supplemental (AB 0395)

### HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

- 26% of the 9,758 households in Mercer Island are either cost burdened (1,114) or severely cost burdened (1,469). Households are generally considered cost burdened if housing expenses, including utilities, cost more than 30% of their income. Severe cost burden is when a household's housing costs are greater than 50% of their income.
- Renters experience higher rates of housing cost burden than owners. Severe cost burden is borne by both very low- and very high-income homeowners.
- Mercer Island has 102 total rent-restricted units available.



Due to the high housing costs on Mercer Island, those who earn less than 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI) are likely to be accommodated in areas of the city where multifamily housing is permitted.

\*2024 Mercer Island Land Capacity Analysis (LCA)

### HOUSING SUPPLY

- Almost two-thirds of Mercer Island's housing stock are detached single family units.
- Nearly half of the city's homes have 4+ bedrooms.
- Most of Mercer Island's homes are 40- to 60-years old.

### HOUSING MARKET TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

- Home prices are near the highest in the region.
- The average sale price of condominiums and townhomes is affordable to households earning 112 percent of the area median income.
- Only 6% of housing units in Mercer Island are valued at less than \$500,000.
- Growth in home value outpaced growth in income.
- The average monthly rent is affordable to households earning around 70% of the AMI.

The Area Median Income (AMI) for King and Snohomish Counties in 2024 is **\$147,400 for a family of four.**

### WHAT IS MODERATE DENSITY HOUSING?

**DUPLEXES**

**TOWNHOUSES**

**COTTAGE HOUSING**

**COURTYARD APARTMENTS**

**STACKED FLATS**

**TRIPLEXES - SIXPLEXES**

### WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

No more than **30% of a household's monthly income** goes to housing costs including utilities.

# Housing Types

**Single Family Home**

**Single Family Home with ADU**

**Duplex**

**Triplex**

**Fourplex**

**Five- to Sixplex**

**Cottage Housing**

**Townhouse**

**Courtyard Apartment**

**Stacked Flats**

**Condominium**

**DADU / Cottage**

**Directions**

- What kind of housing do you live in now? Place a **green dot**.
- What kind of housing would you consider living in the future? Place **1-3 orange dots**.

Use **sticky notes** to write comments.

**Other Housing Types**

Place sticky notes below

# Transportation

## THE TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

- Ensures that planning for all modes of transportation in the City aligns with the broader, long-term goals and policies of the other elements with a focus on accommodating housing and job growth permitted in the Land Use Element.
- Reflects concurrency, a requirement that transportation facilities are consistent and adequate enough to serve new development based on level-of-service (LOS) standards for performance. As the City grows, the transportation facilities keep pace with changes in demand.
- Goals and policies include:
  - Land Use Assumptions for estimating travel patterns
  - Traffic Impacts for assessing traffic effects on I-90
  - Facilities and Services needs
  - Financial Plan
  - Intergovernmental Coordination efforts
  - Demand Management Strategies
  - Nonmotorized transportation components



### UPCOMING PROJECTS

Check out the City's 2024-2029 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for upcoming transportation upgrades and improvements. Updated annually, it covers city roadway, pedestrian, bicycle, and other transportation projects



Provide your feedback and comments through June 4.

## GOALS

- T-1.** Encourage the most efficient use of the transportation system through effective management of transportation demand and the transportation system.
- T-2.** Receive the maximum value and utility from the City's investments in the transportation system.
- T-3.** Minimize negative transportation impacts on the environment.
- T-4.** Provide transportation choices for travelers through the provision of a complete range of transportation facilities, and services.
- T-5.** Comply with local, regional, state and federal requirements
- T-6.** Ensure coordination between transportation and land use decisions and development.
- T-7.** Provide a safe, convenient, and reliable transportation system for Mercer Island.
- T-8.** Preserve adequate levels of accessibility between Mercer Island and the rest of the region.
- T-9.** Balance the maintenance of quality Island neighborhoods with the needs of the Island's transportation system.
- T-10.** Maintain acceptable levels of service for transportation facilities and services on Mercer Island.
- T-11.** Ensure parking standards support the land use policies in the Comprehensive Plan.
- T-12.** Promote bicycle and pedestrian networks that safely access and link commercial areas, residential areas, schools, and parks in the City

# Utilities and Capital Facilities

**UTILITIES ELEMENT:** describes the general location, capacity, and provider of existing & proposed utilities.

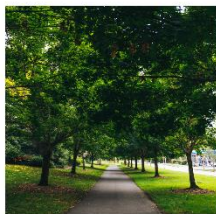
**CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT:** catalogs current public facilities. The element includes strategies for capital planning, financing, and revenue sources to support growth.

## BOTH ELEMENTS:

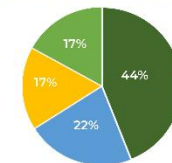
- Assess capacity to meet the current and future needs based on planned growth out to 2044.
- Discuss existing "level of service" standards, and the investment needed to achieve or maintain them.

## WHAT'S NEW?

- Updated information on current services provided, level of service, and financial assumptions to support the 20-year growth forecast
- Signed a 20-year contract in 2020 with Puget Sound Energy for carbon-free wind power to operate all City government operations.
- Adopted the PROS (Parks, Recreation and Open Space) plan in 2022.



## CAPITAL FACILITIES BUDGET FORECAST



- Utilities
- Streets, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Facilities
- Buildings, Equipment, and Technology
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

## Includes

- Parks & Open Space
- Public Buildings
- Public Schools
- Telecommunications
- Public Streets & Roads
- Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities
- Water
- Sewer
- Solid Waste
- Electricity
- Natural Gas
- Stormwater

**Directions**

- Place **green dots** on the goal you think should be top priorities.
- Use **sticky notes** to write comments.

**THE \*NEW\* ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT:**

- Articulates the City's strategy through 2044 for fostering and enhancing the local economy
- Sets goals and policy direction aimed at leveraging the city strengths, capitalizing on opportunities, and building resilience in the local economy to overcome challenges.

The Draft Element was prepared by the Economic Development Work Group (EDWG), comprising two Planning Commissioners and three City Councilmembers. The EDWG convened eleven times between June 2022 and June 2023 to develop the draft element, ultimately making a recommendation on the draft element and implementation plan on June 8, 2023.

**WHAT GOALS SHOULD THE CITY FOCUS ITS EFFORTS ON FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS?**

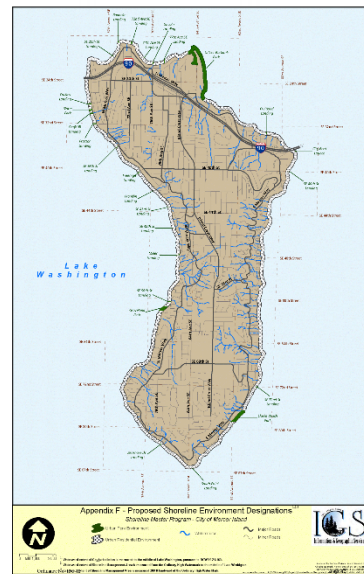
<b>SUPPORTING &amp; IMPROVING THE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM</b>	The City of Mercer Island actively fosters a healthy business ecosystem.
	Mercer Island's healthy business ecosystem attracts entrepreneurs, businesses, and investment.
	Existing businesses thrive as the cornerstone of Mercer Island's business ecosystem.
<b>REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS</b>	The business ecosystem on Mercer Island is sustainable in that it meets the social, environmental, and economic needs of residents now and in the future.
	The City actively reduces the regulatory burden created by commercial development regulations and permitting processes to support a healthy business ecosystem, entrepreneurs, and innovation in business.
<b>BUSINESS ATTRACTION</b>	The Mercer Island business ecosystem includes a diversity of goods and services enjoyed by residents and visitors.
	The commercial areas in Mercer Island, and especially the Town Center, are lively, vibrant gathering places for the community and visitors.
<b>CUSTOMER ATTRACTION</b>	Commercial areas are attractive and inviting to the Mercer Island community and visitors.
	Public space in Town Center is plentiful, providing residents and visitors places to gather, celebrate, and socialize.
	Mercer Island residents and visitors can safely access commercial areas.

**THE SHORELINE ELEMENT:**

- Contains the goals and policies of the City's approved Shoreline Master Program (SMP)
- The SMP was last updated in 2020, with modified standards regarding the repair of existing piers, no changes were made to the goals or policies since that last periodic update in 2015.

**GOALS**

- SMP-1 - Public Access:** 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 unique or fragile areas are not adversely affected
- SMP-2 - Conservation and Water Quality:** The resources and amenities of Lake Washington are to be protected and preserved for use and enjoyment by present and future generations.
- SMP-3 - Specific Shoreline Uses and Activities:** Ensure that the land use patterns within shoreline areas are compatible with shoreline environment designations and will be sensitive to and not degrade habitat, ecological systems, and other shoreline resources.
- SMP-4 - Recreational Development:** Water-dependent recreational activities available to the public are to be encouraged and increased on the shoreline of Mercer Island where appropriate and consistent with the public interest.
- SMP-5 - Residential Development:** Existing residential uses are to be recognized, and new residential construction will be subject to certain limitations where applicable..
- SMP-6 - Transportation Facilities:** A balanced transportation system for moving people and goods is to be encouraged within existing corridors.



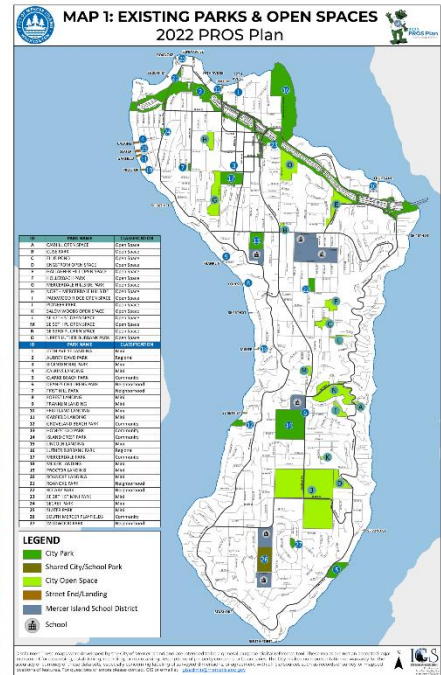
## THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

- NEW element.
- Adopts the most recent version of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan by reference.
- Policy direction to establish an Open Space zone and Park zone.

**\*NEW\* Element!**  
Provide feedback on the proposed Open Space Zone at the Planning Commission briefing on May 8

## GOAL

- **P&OS – 1.** Continue to maintain the Island's unique quality of life through the stewardship, preservation, and maintenance of parks, open spaces, trails, and recreational facilities.



**Find out more!**  
Check out our project website to view the latest drafts of the Comprehensive Plan and take our survey!



**Have questions or interested in learning more?**

Head to the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update's project webpage [letstalk.mercerisland.gov/comprehensive-plan-periodic-update](http://letstalk.mercerisland.gov/comprehensive-plan-periodic-update) to learn more about Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update process and other ongoing City projects at the City.

For background information and access to public drafts of new and amended Elements of the Comprehensive Plan, please visit the project website

## Upcoming Events

May 8	Planning Commission Open Space Zone Briefing
May 29	Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing
June 5 & June 12	Planning Commission Recommendation to City Council
July 16 <i>(tentative)</i>	City Council Briefing on the Planning Commission Recommendation
December 31	Deadline to adopt the Comprehensive Plan

**Have a Public Comment or Question?**  
Email: [Comp.Plan@mercerisland.gov](mailto:Comp.Plan@mercerisland.gov)

# Appendix F

## Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Survey Questions & Responses



# 2024 - 2044 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review Survey

---

## SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

30 April 2024 - 21 May 2024

### PROJECT NAME:

Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review



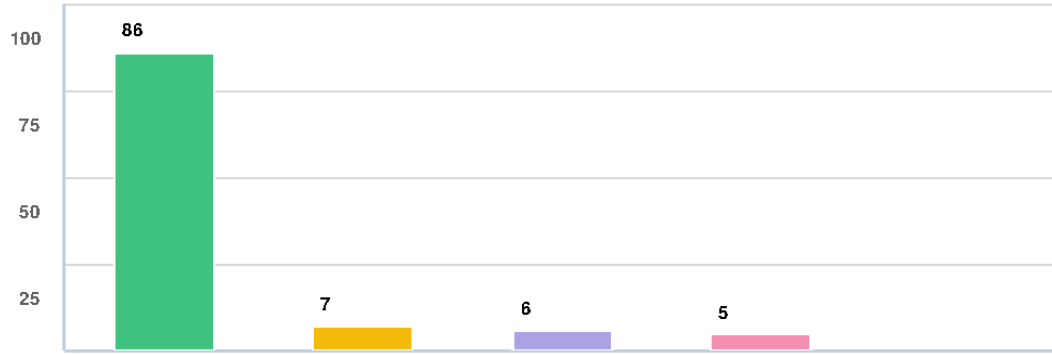
---

# SURVEY QUESTIONS

---



**Q1 What best describes your relationship with Mercer Island? Use all that apply.**

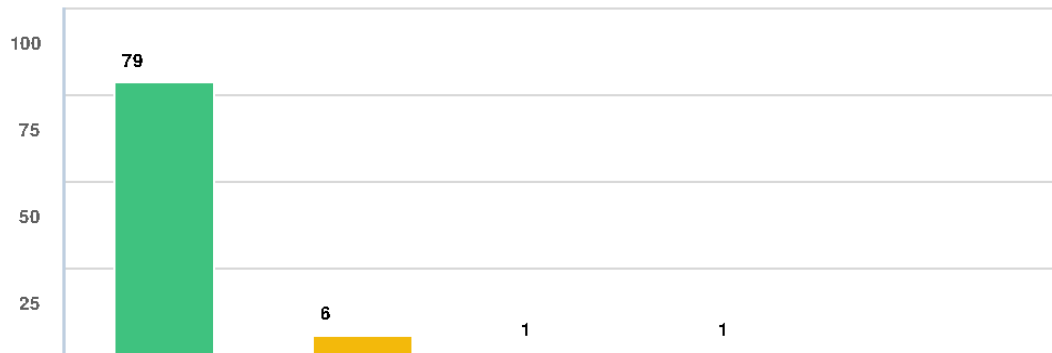


**Question options**

- I live in Mercer Island
- I work in Mercer Island
- I own a business in Mercer Island
- I visit Mercer Island for services and amenities
- Other (please specify)

*Mandatory Question (87 response(s))  
Question type: Checkbox Question*

**Q2 What best describes your current living situation? Select the best fit.**



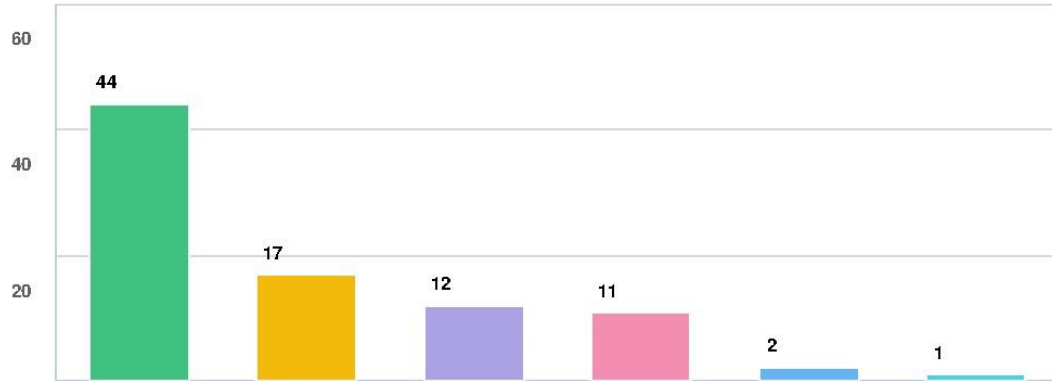
**Question options**

- Own home in Mercer Island
- Rent home in Mercer Island
- Rent home outside of Mercer Island
- Other (please specify)
- Own home outside of Mercer Island

*Mandatory Question (87 response(s))  
Question type: Checkbox Question*



**Q3 How long have you lived in Mercer Island?**

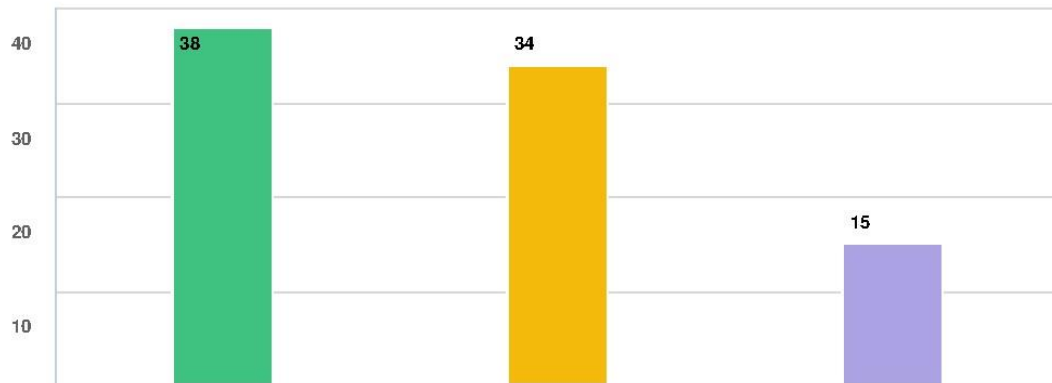


**Question options**

- Over 20 years
- 11-20 years
- 5-10 years
- 3-4 years
- Less than 2 years
- I don't live in Mercer Island

*Mandatory Question (87 response(s))  
Question type: Checkbox Question*

**Q4 What part of Mercer Island do you spend the most time in?**



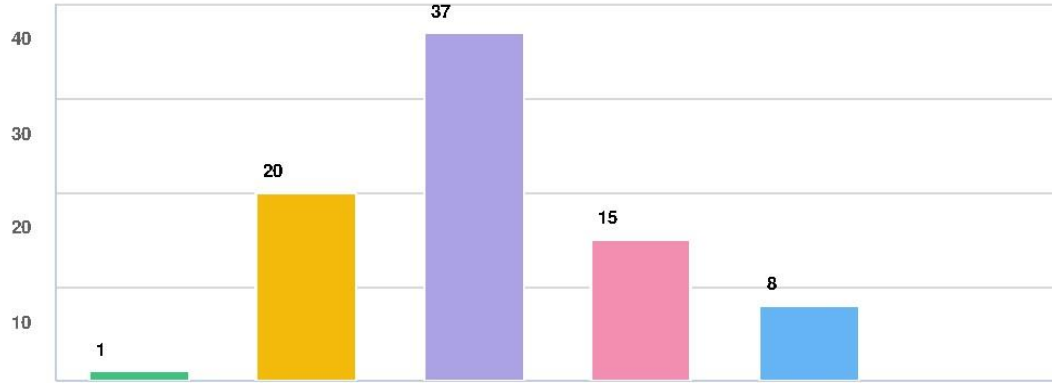
**Question options**

- North-end: North of SE 40th Street
- Mid-Island: Between SE 40th & SE 68th Street
- South-end: South of SE 68 Street

*Mandatory Question (87 response(s))  
Question type: Checkbox Question*



**Q5 What is your age? (optional)**

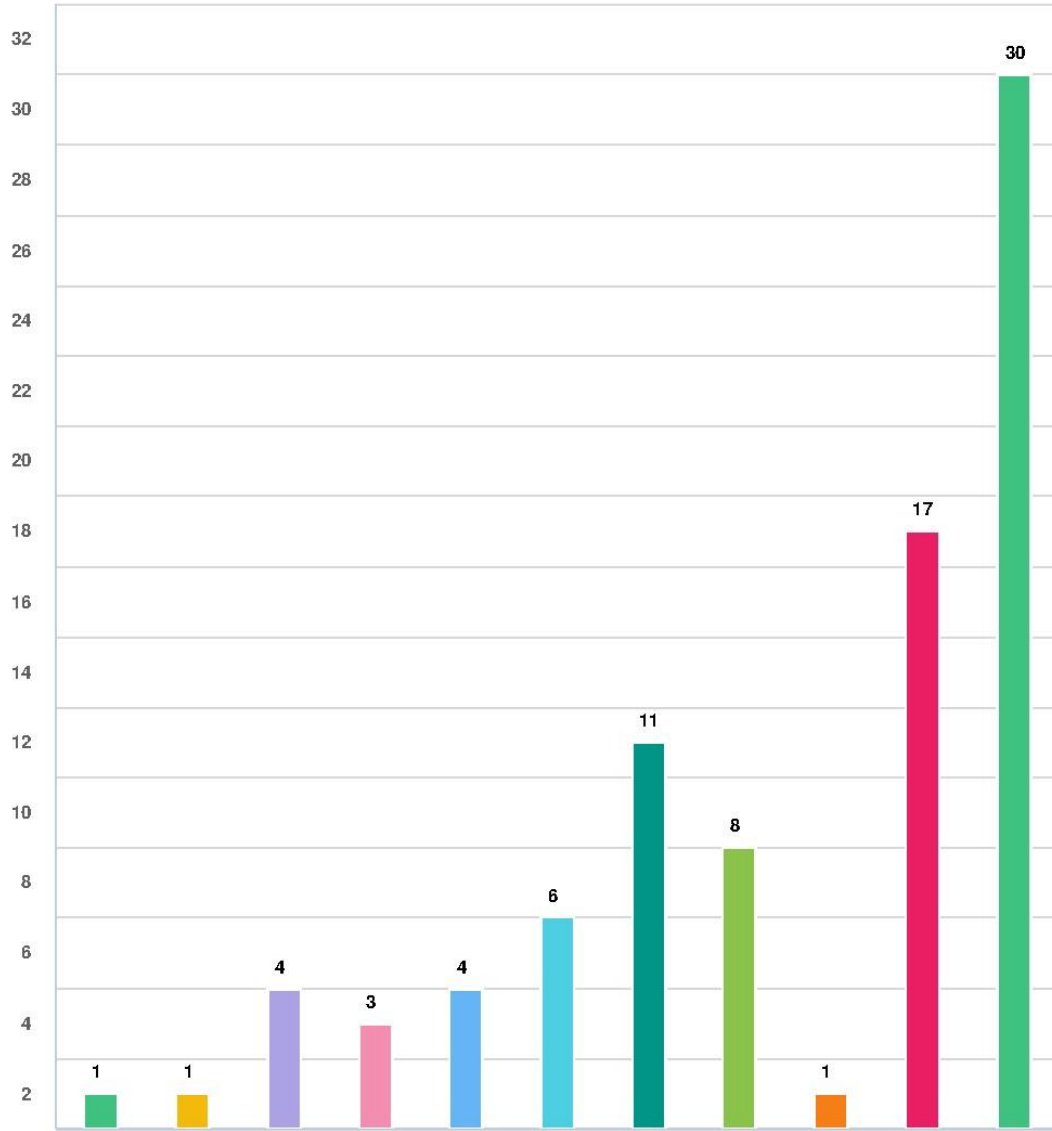


**Question options**

- Under 18
- 24 to 44
- 45 to 65
- 65 to 74
- Prefer not to answer
- 18 to 24

*Optional question (81 response(s), 6 skipped)  
Question type: Checkbox Question*

**Q6 Which of the following best describes your household income last year? (optional)**



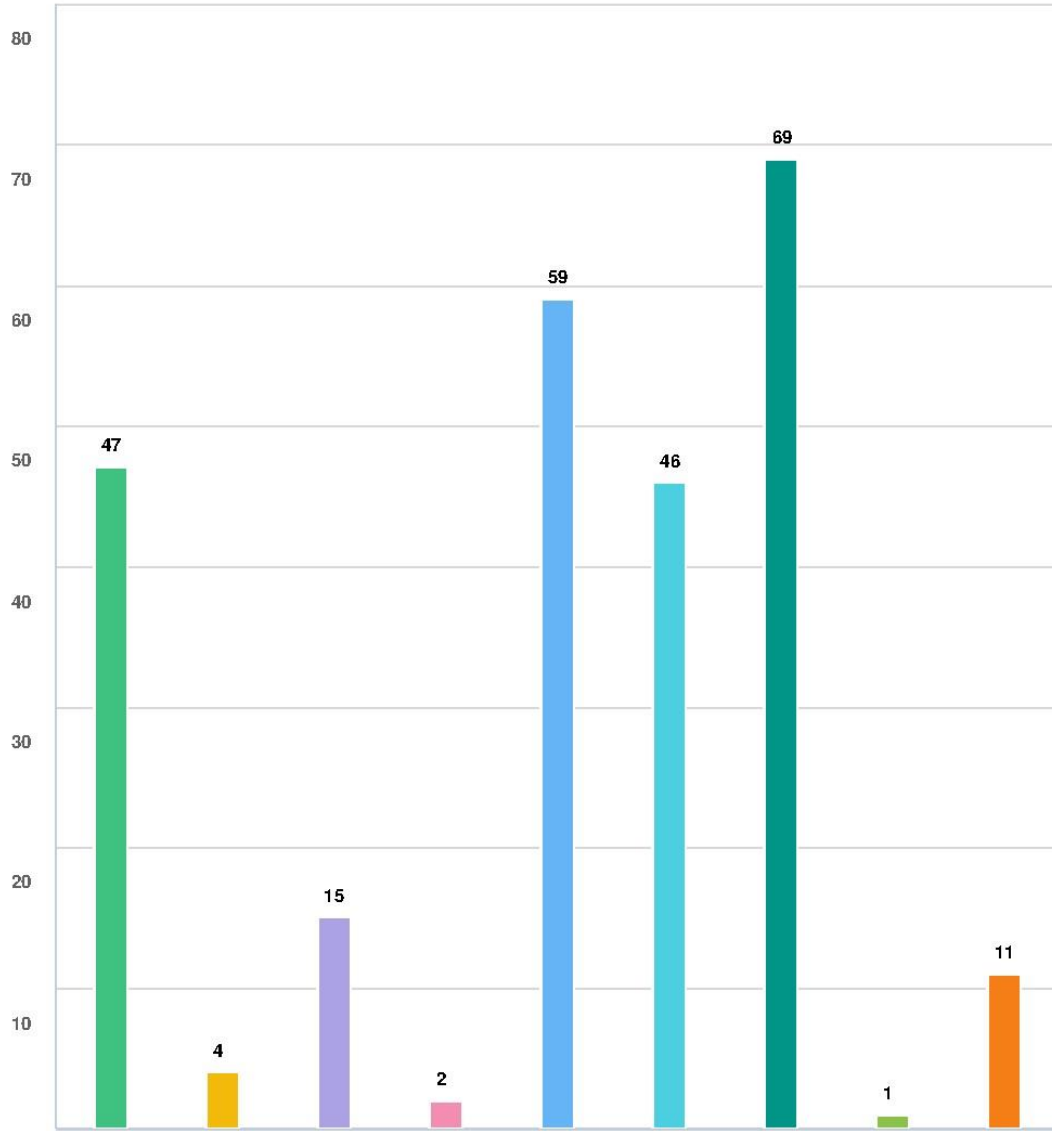
**Question options**

- \$0 to \$19,999
- \$20,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$89,999
- \$90,000-\$129,999
- \$130,000-\$149,000
- \$150,000-\$199,999
- \$200,000-\$279,999
- \$280,000-\$339,999
- \$340,000-\$399,999
- \$400,000+
- Prefer not to answer

*Optional question (86 response(s), 1 skipped)  
Question type: Checkbox Question*



**Q7** What do you love most about Mercer Island? Pick your top three.



**Question options**

- Sense of community (caring neighbors, community, and cultural events)
- Quality public services
- Short commute time and access to employment
- Housing choices and prices
- Central location in the region
- Parks and recreation opportunities
- Safe place to live
- Good roads and travel corridors
- Other (please specify)

*Mandatory Question (87 response(s))*

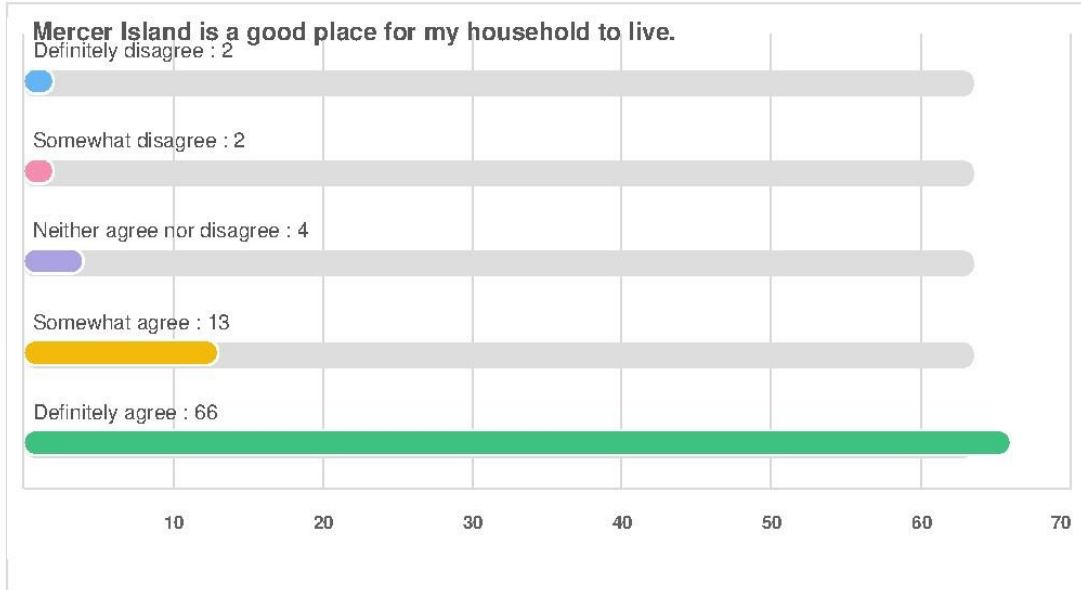
*Question type: Checkbox Question*

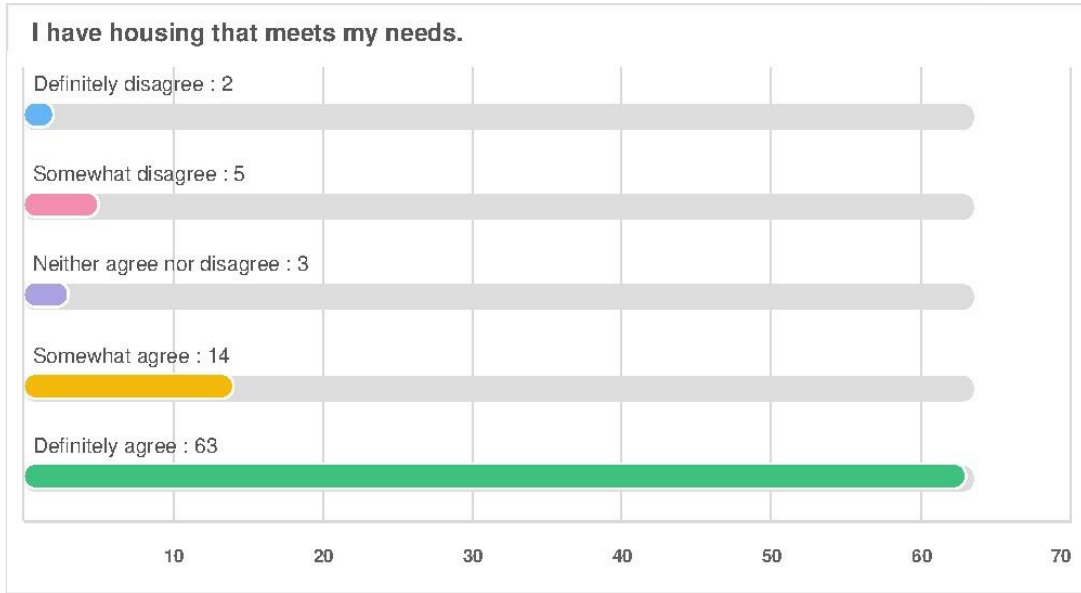
**Q8 Mercer Island strives to be Puget Sound's most livable residential community. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree...**

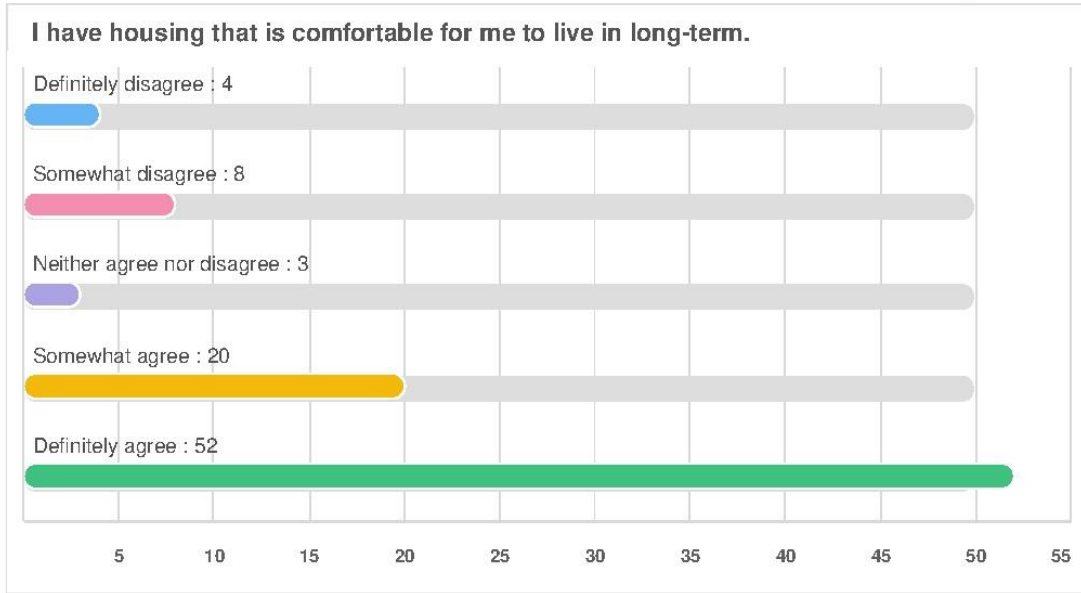


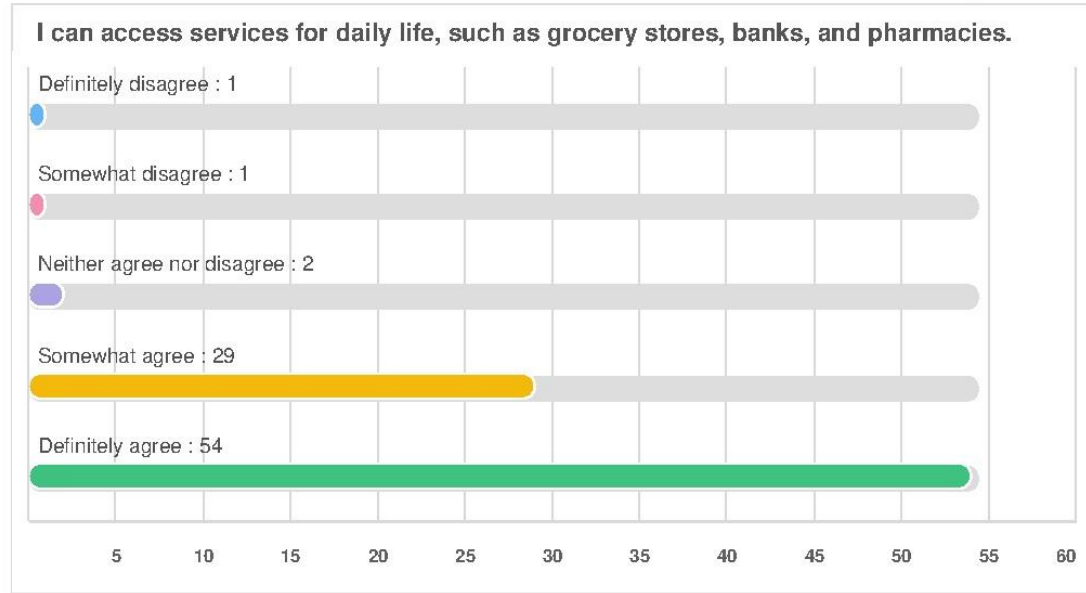
Mandatory Question (87 response(s))  
Question type: Likert Question

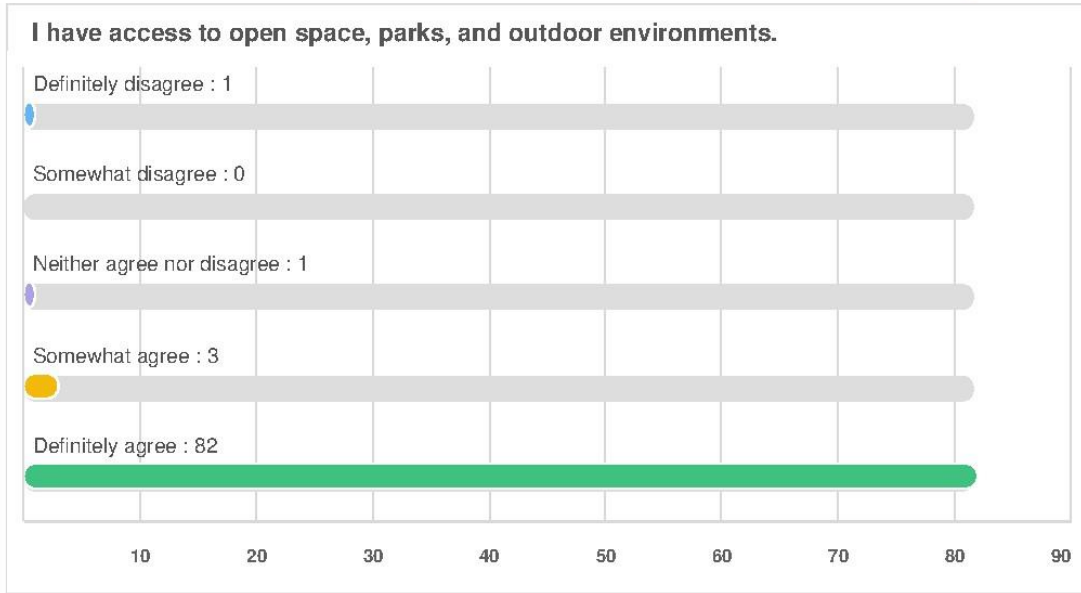
**Q8 | Mercer Island strives to be Puget Sound's most livable residential community.**  
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree...

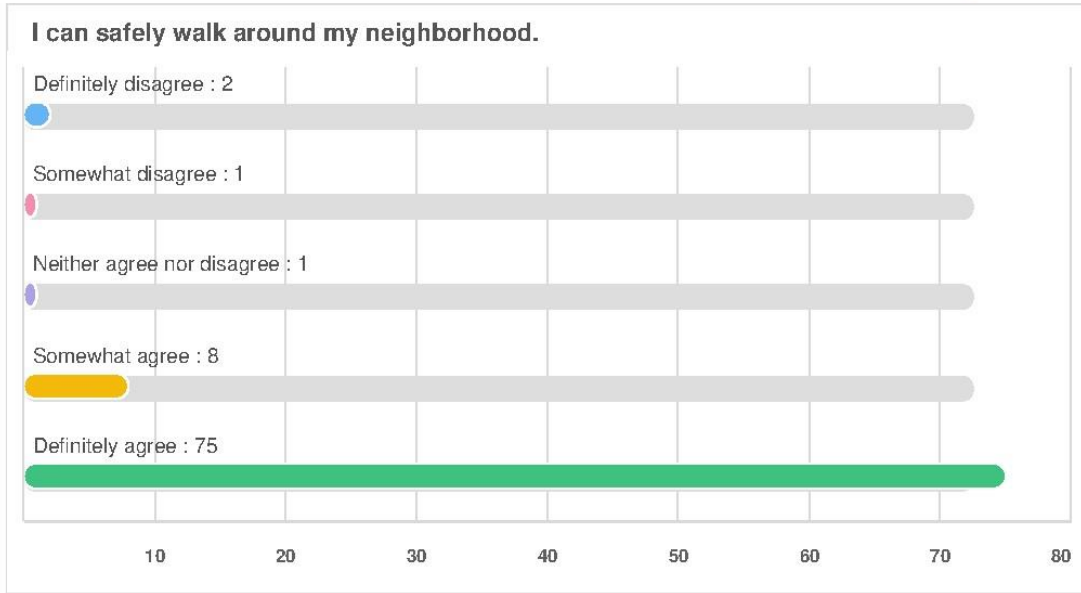


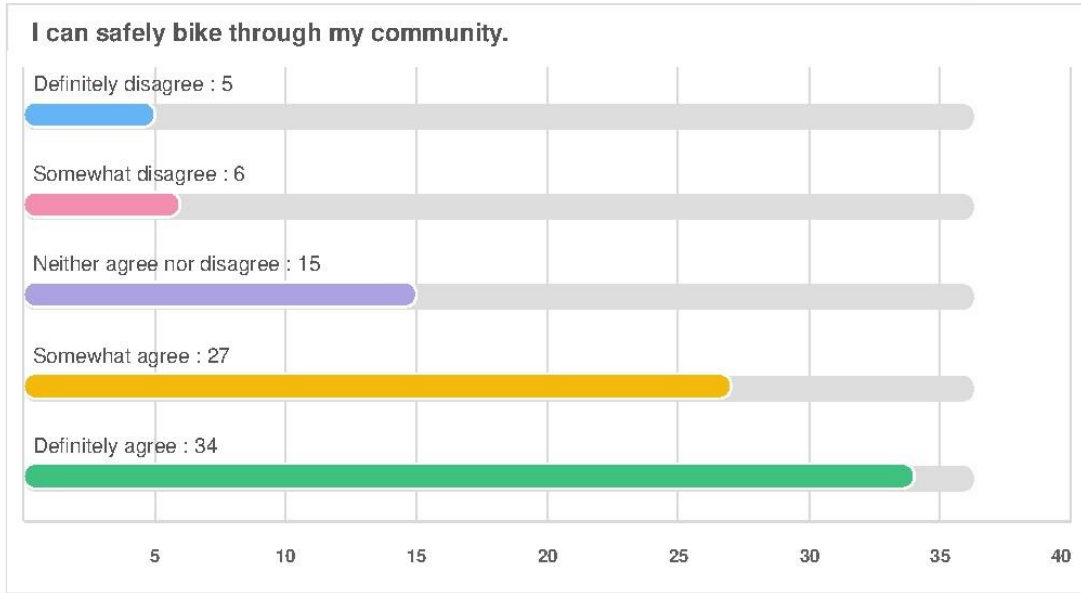


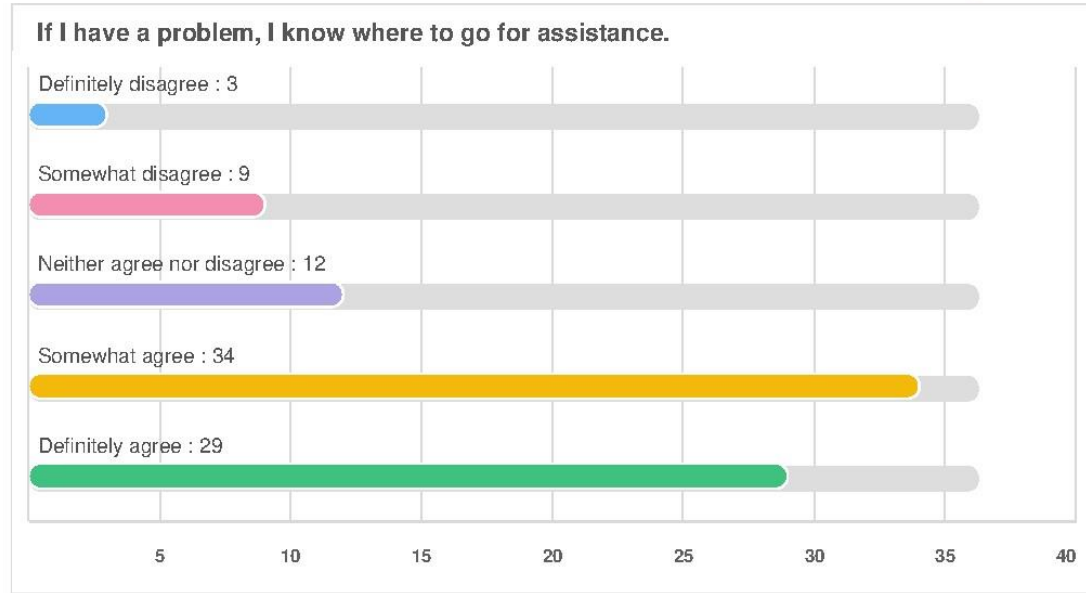




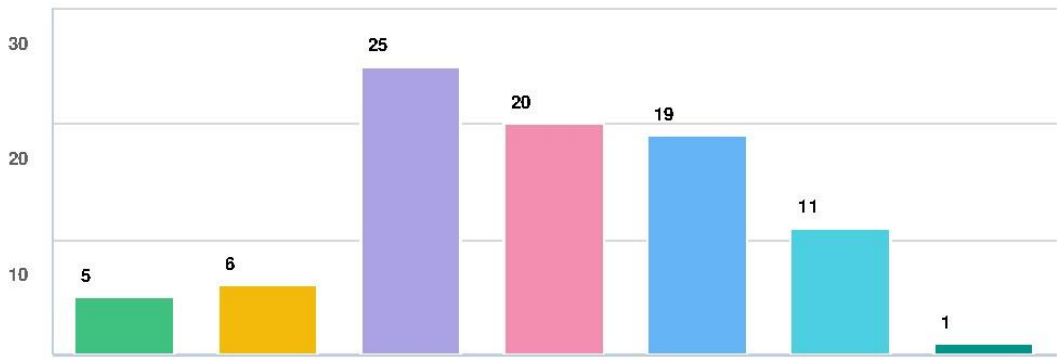








**Q9 I plan to stay in my current Mercer Island home for:**

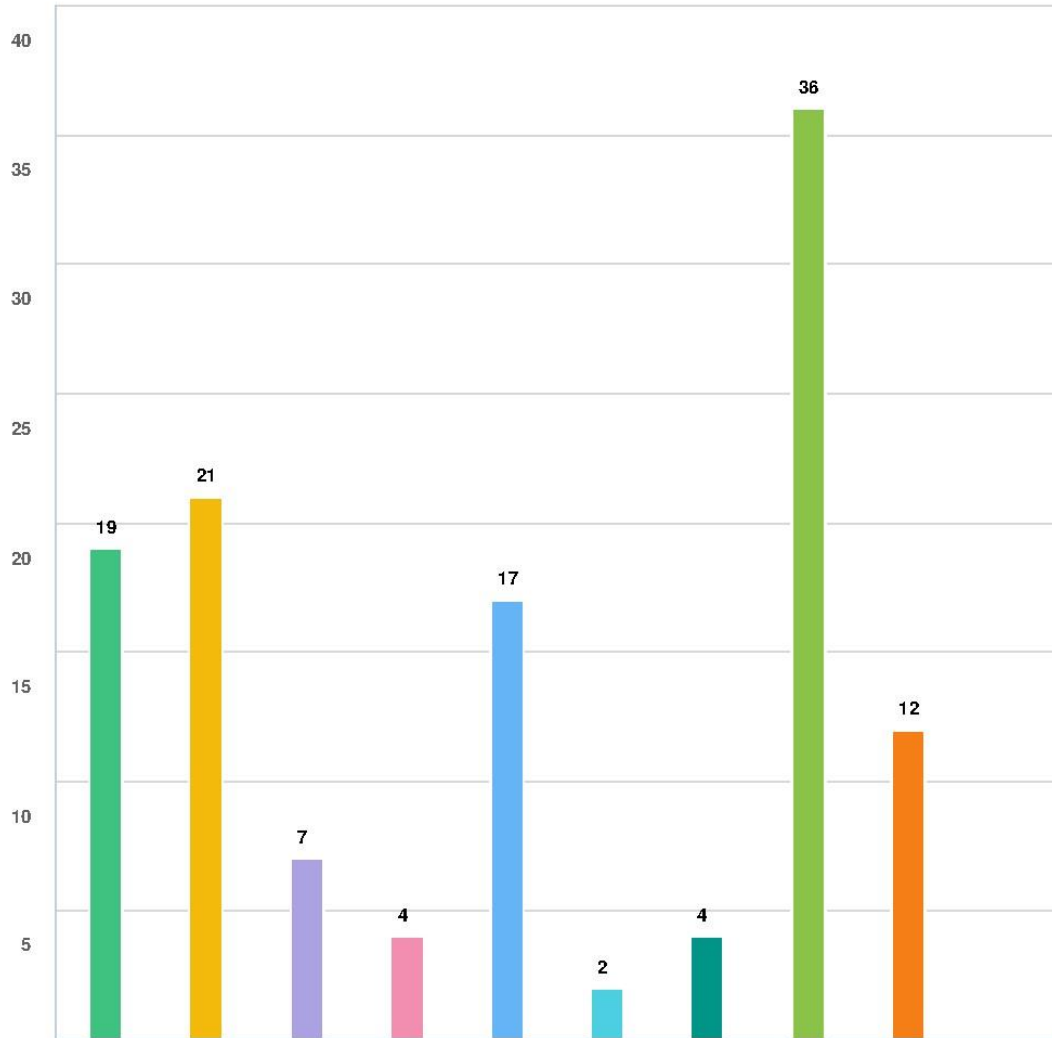


**Question options**

- I don't live in Mercer Island
- Unsure
- Over 20 years
- 11-20 years
- 5-10 years
- 3-4 years
- Less than 2 years

*Mandatory Question (87 response(s))  
Question type: Checkbox Question*

**Q10 Do you foresee a time when you may need to sell your home or move out of your home and leave Mercer Island due to one or mo...**



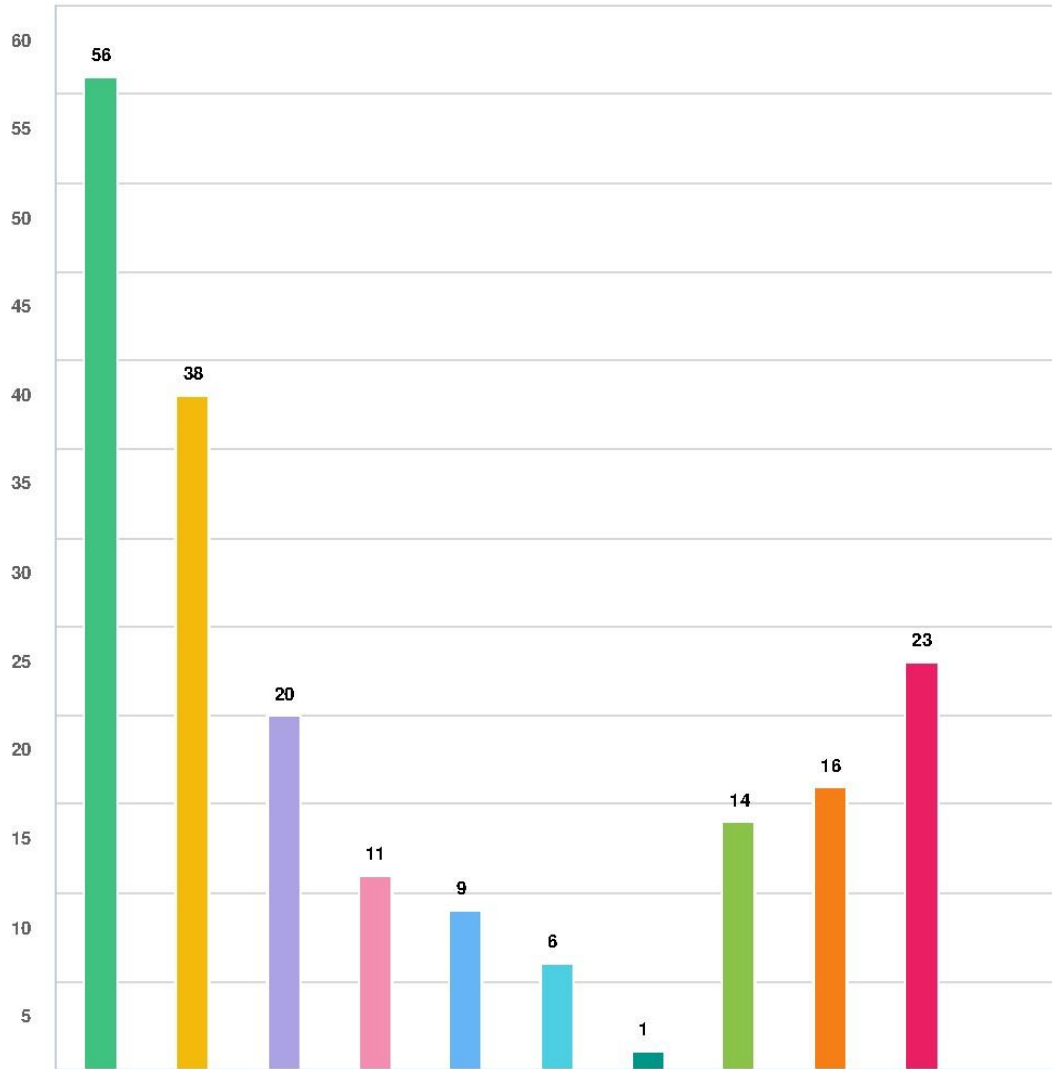
**Question options**

- Eviction or foreclosure
- Other (please specify)
- None of these
- Housing needs repairs I can't afford, or my landlord won't address
- Low quality of available housing
- Size or layout of available housing is not suitable for me or my family
- Housing not available in the areas I want to live
- High cost of renting a home
- Limited housing available that would allow me to upsize or downsize from where I currently reside
- High cost of owning a home

Optional question (87 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

**Q11** Within the next 20 years, what type(s) of housing could you see your household living in? Select up to three options.



**Question options**

- Triplex
- Senior housing development
- Apartment or condominium located in a larger, mixed-use building (as found in the Town Center)
- Apartment or condominium in a smaller complex (five to twelve units)
- Fourplex
- Duplex
- Cottage home
- ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) or backyard cottage
- Townhome
- Single family home retrofitted for aging in place
- Single family home

Mandatory Question (87 response(s))  
Question type: Checkbox Question

**Q12 As you anticipate your housing needs and how they may change over the next 20 years, please indicate the importance of the ...**

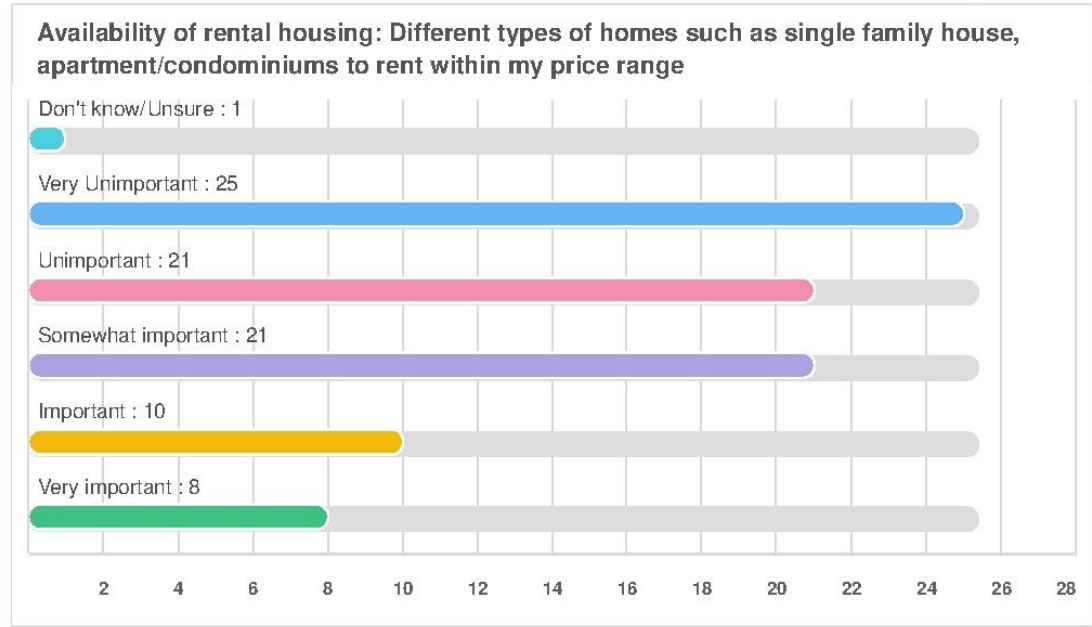


Optional question (87 response(s), 0 skipped)  
Question type: Likert Question

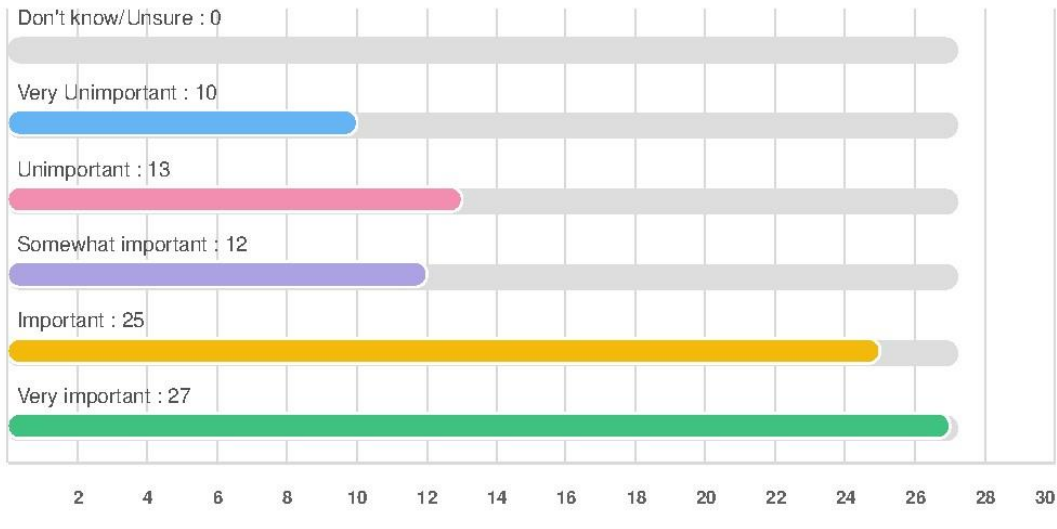
**Q12** As you anticipate your housing needs and how they may change over the next 20 years, please indicate the importance of the ...

**Availability of different types of housing to purchase: Single family detached house, townhouse, apartment/condominiums to purchase within my price range**

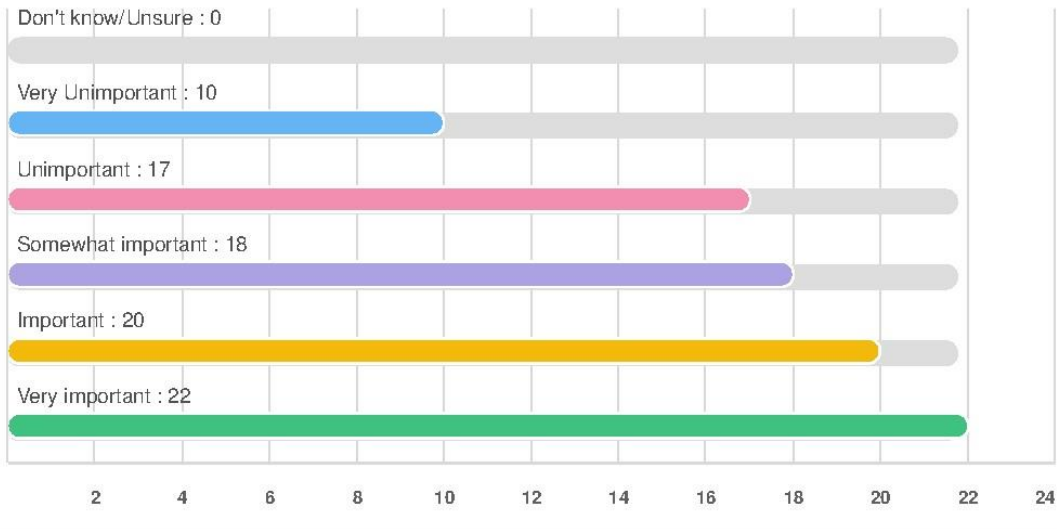


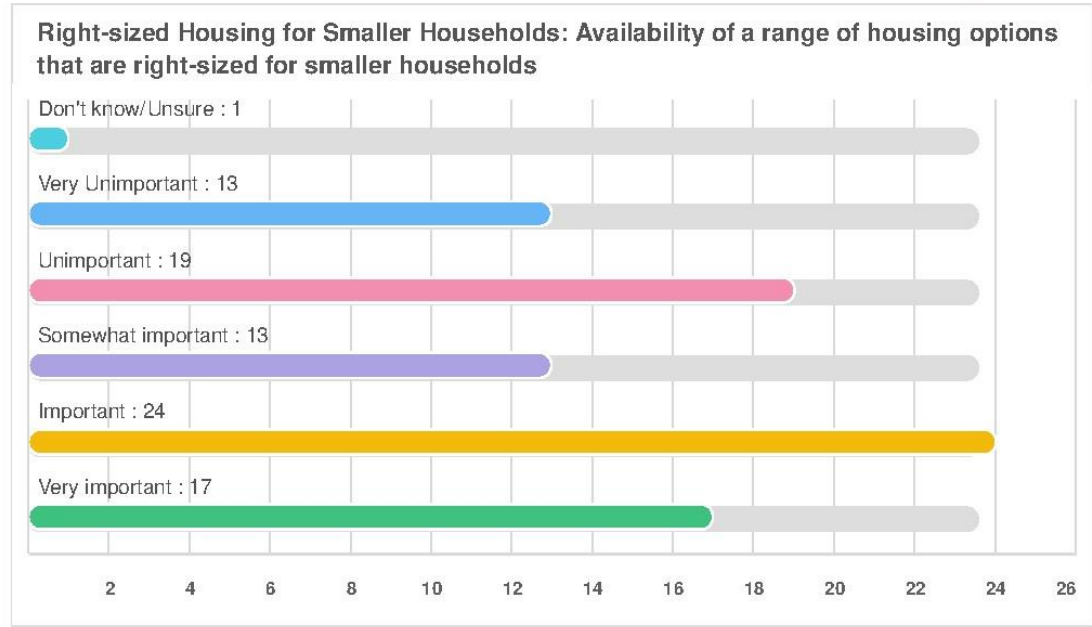


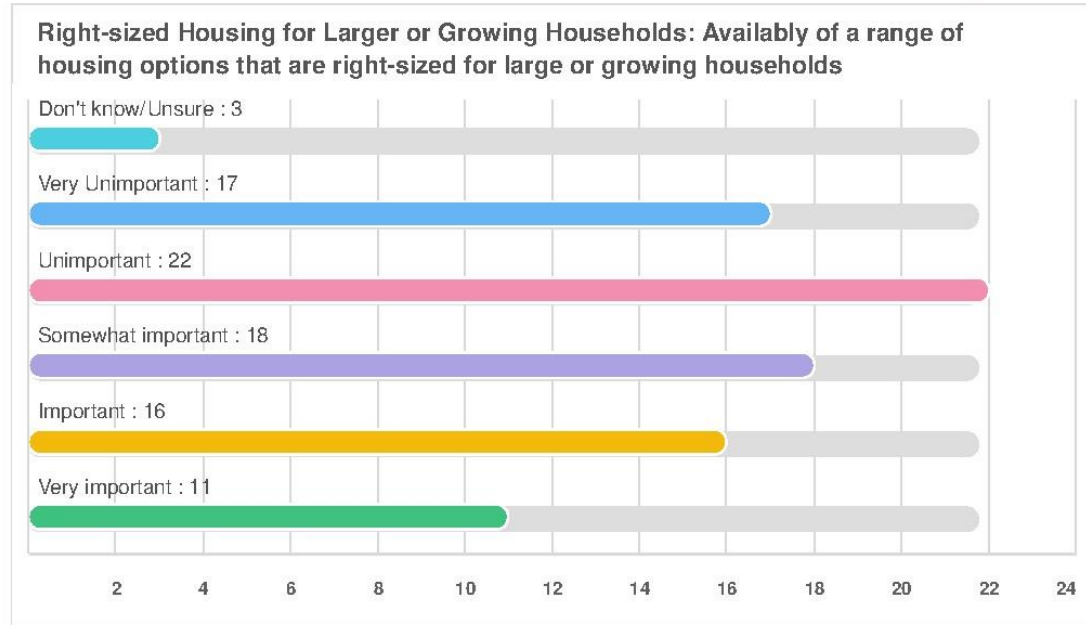
**Proximity to Essential Amenities: Housing options within walking distance to the light rail station, bus stops, work, shopping, restaurants, schools**



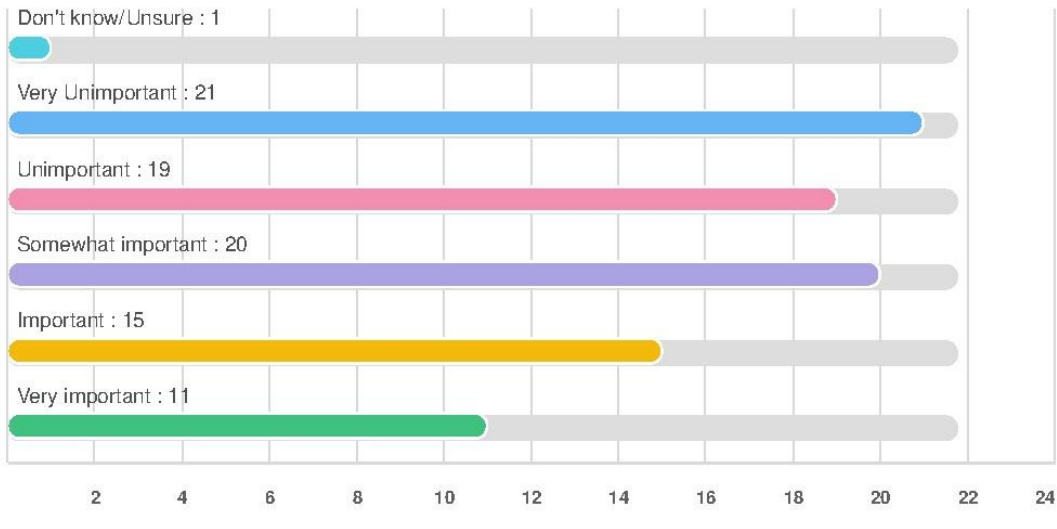
### Housing Options in Commercial Areas: Housing in mixed-use areas with shopping or restaurants

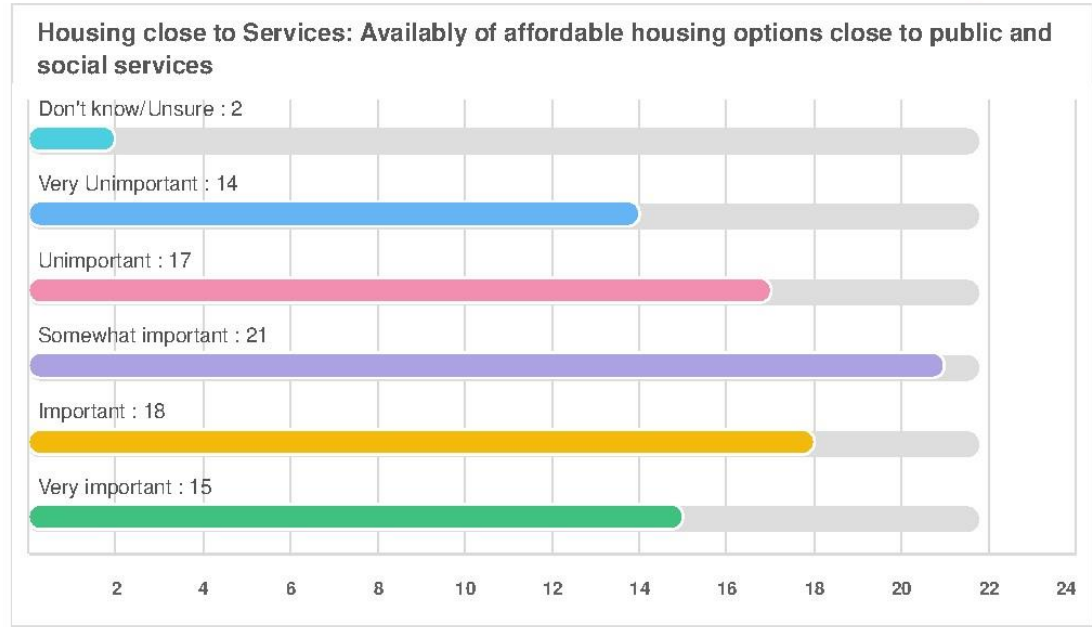


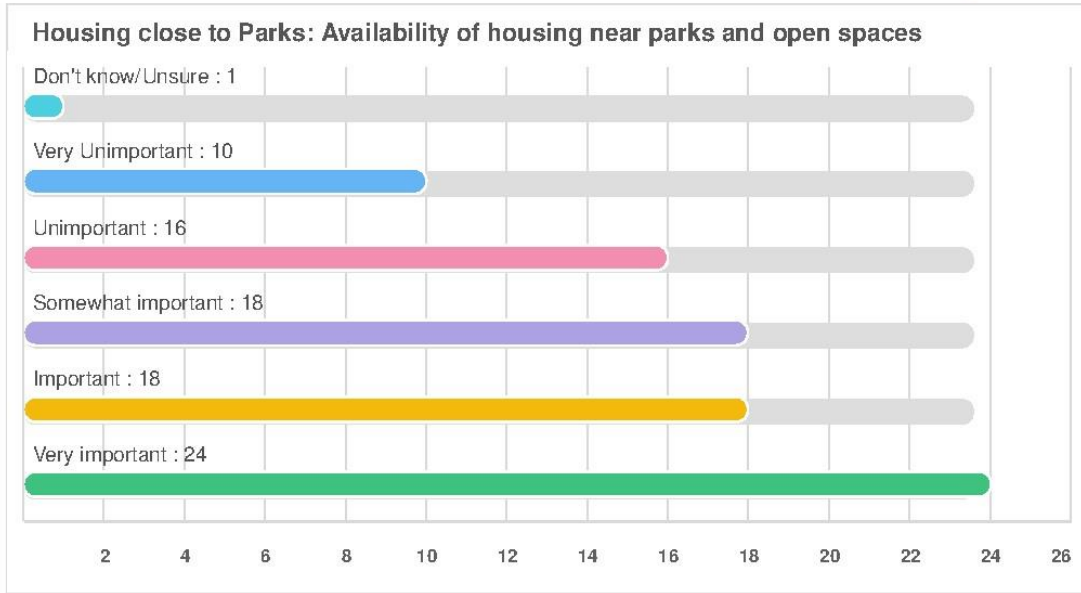




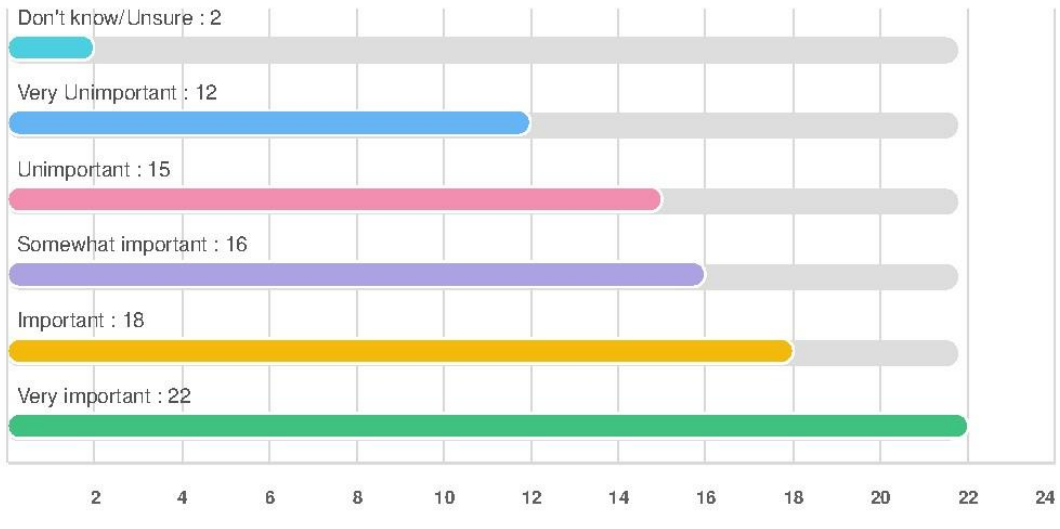
**Diversity of Housing Types Across Income Levels: Available of affordable housing for sale or rent across all income levels.**



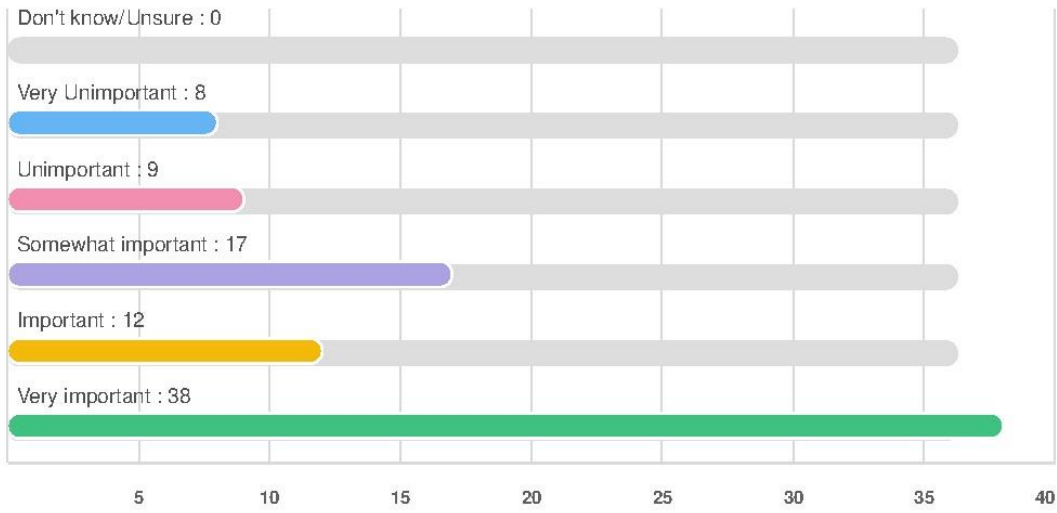




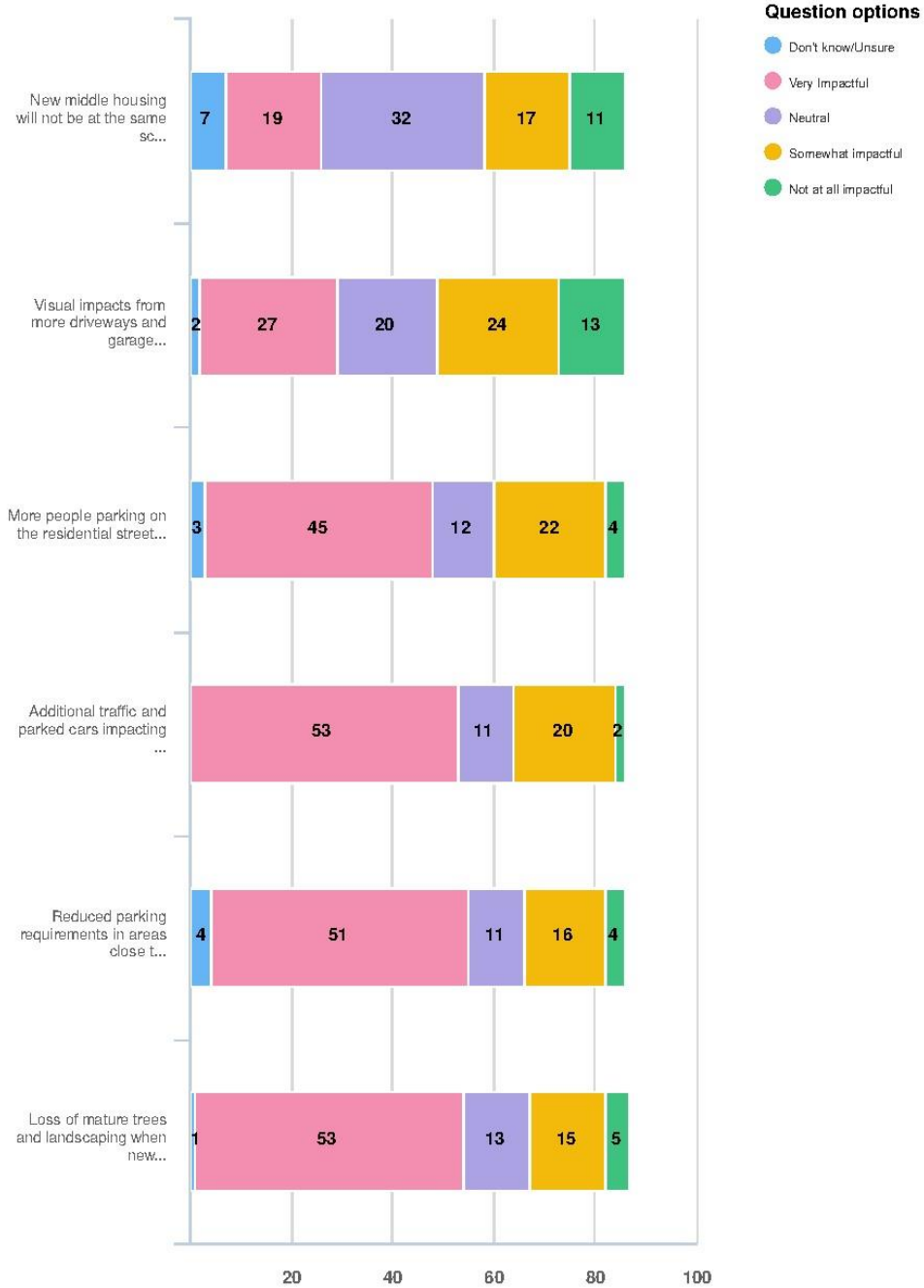
**Off-Island Transportation Options: Housing located near convenient options to access off-island transportation.**



**Nonmotorized Travel Options: Safety and ease of walking & biking within and between areas of the City from where I reside.**

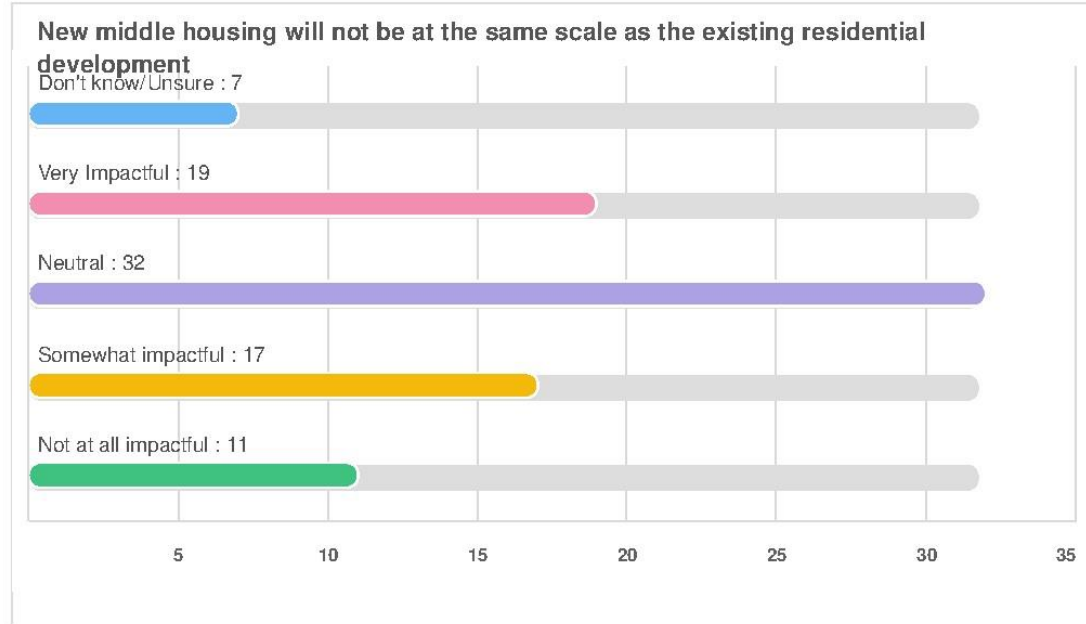


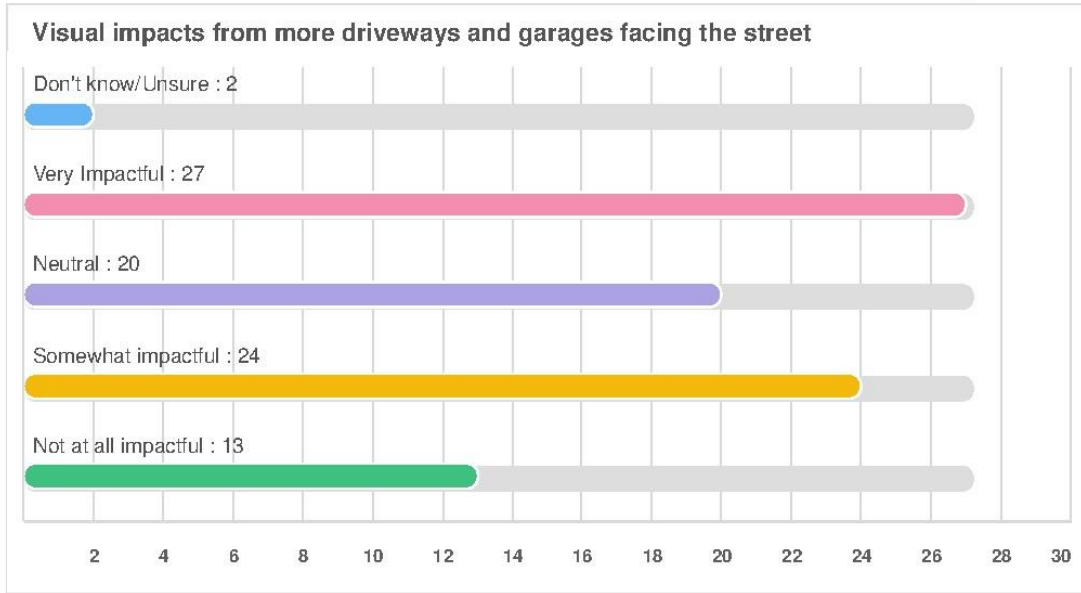
**Q13** As you envision middle housing development occurring in Mercer Island, what do you foresee being the most impactful?

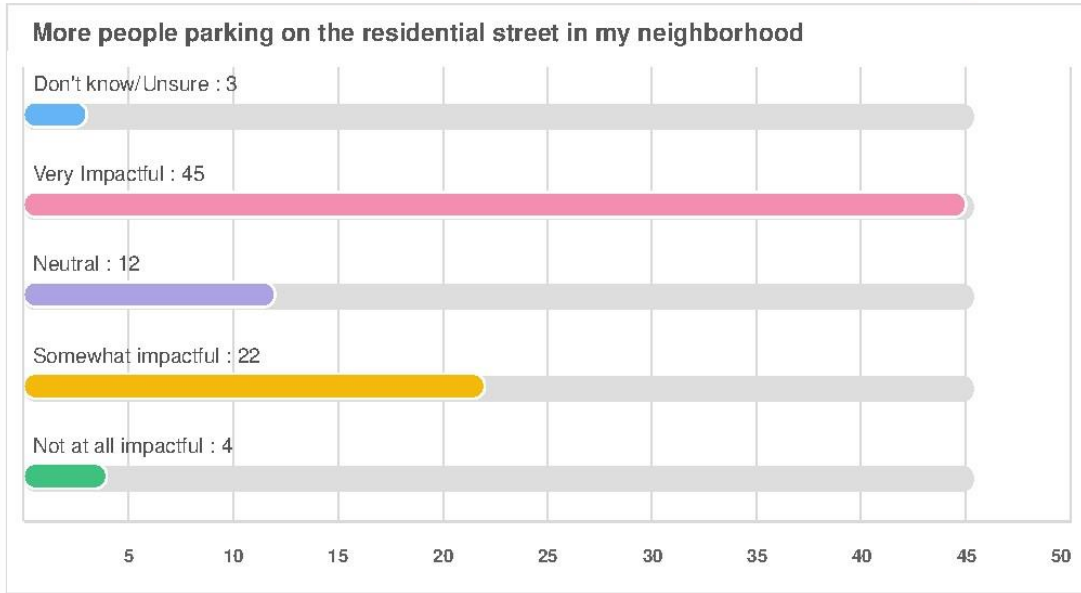


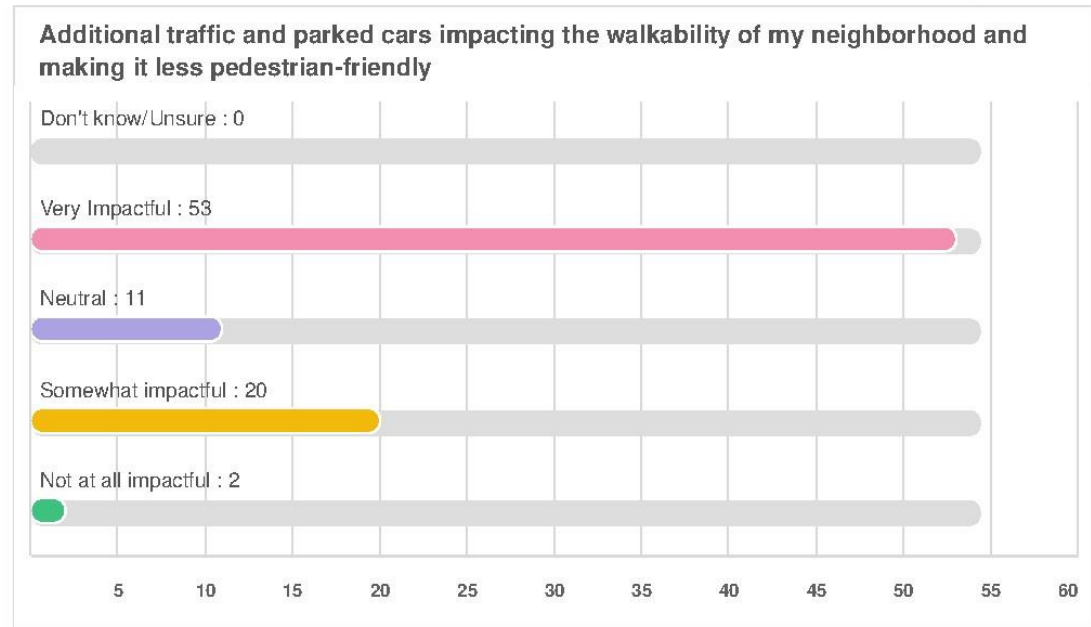
Optional question (87 response(s), 0 skipped)  
Question type: Likert Question

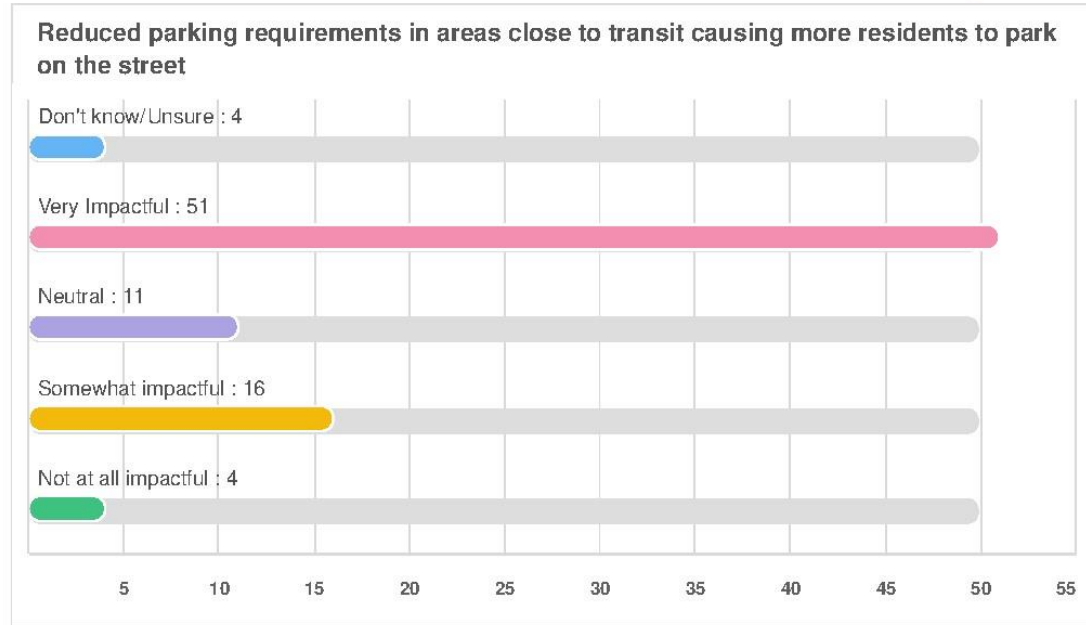
**Q13 | As you envision middle housing development occurring in Mercer Island, what do you foresee being the most impactful?**

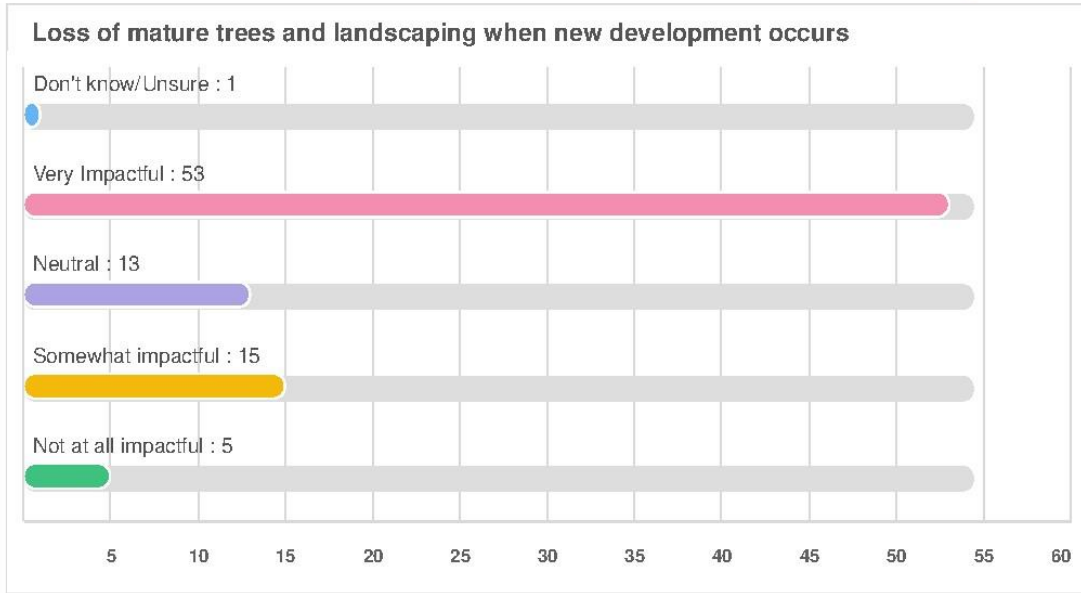




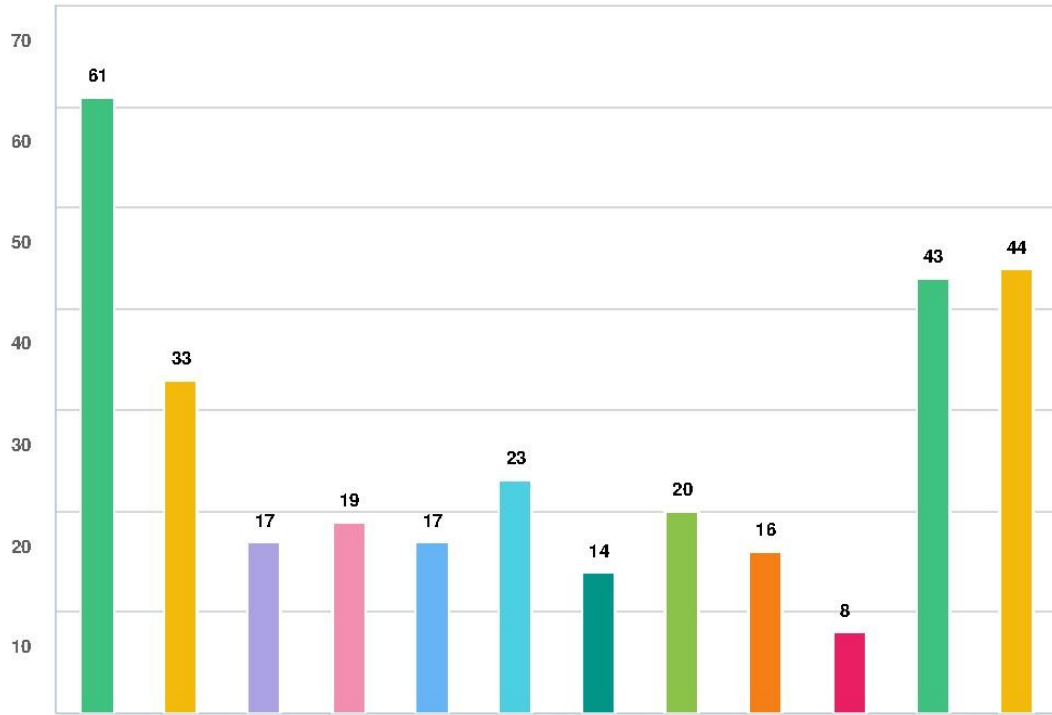








**Q14 Mercer Island is committed to fostering a more diverse range of housing options that are affordable to households at all in...**



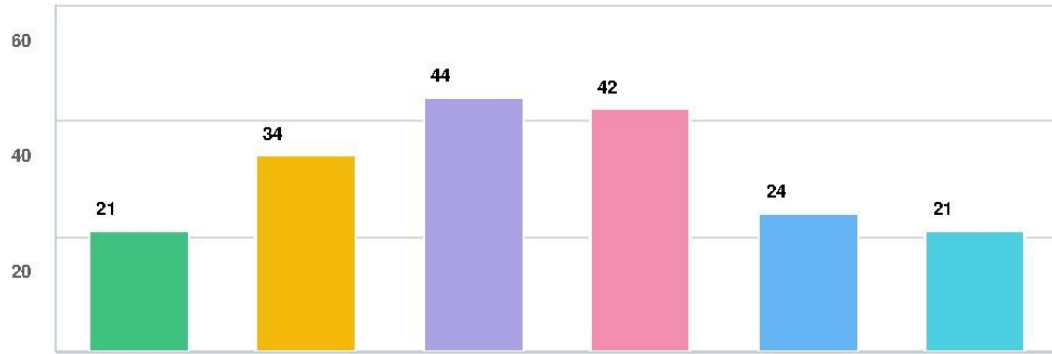
**Question options**

- Allow Multifamily in C-O zone: Permit mixed-use and multifamily development in areas of the city zoned Commercial-Office (C-O) if they incorporate affordable housing units within the development.
- Town Center Focus: Concentrate the development of affordable housing units in Town Center zones by increasing the maximum allowable height for multifamily or mixed-use developments inclusive of affordable housing.
- Parking Requirement Reduction: Reduce parking requirements for affordable housing units.
- Fee Reduction for Affordable Units: Decrease or eliminate permit fees for developments with affordable housing units.
- Simplify Design Review: Simplify design review requirements and processes for multifamily and mixed-use developments that include affordable housing units.
- Bonuses for Affordable Housing: Allow height bonuses for developments that incorporate affordable housing units.
- Mandatory Inclusion in New Development: Require the inclusion of affordable housing units in all new multifamily or mixed-use development.
- Incentivize Affordable Housing Integration: Offer incentives that encourage the integration of affordable housing units within new construction.
- Develop Partnerships to Reduce Costs: Forge partnerships aimed at reducing the expenses associated with building and maintaining affordable housing in Mercer Island.
- Introduce Cost-Reduction Programs: Implement programs and incentives to lower the overall cost of building and preserving affordable housing.
- Streamline Permit Processes: Reduce permit review times and fees for new development that include affordable housing units.
- Support Proximity to Transit Hubs: Foster the development and preservation of affordable housing within walking distance of the Link Light Rail Station and the Mercer Island Transit Station.

Mandatory Question (87 response(s))

Question type: Checkbox Question

**Q15** What are some of the barriers that prevent you from using transportation modes other than driving alone? Choose all that ap...



**Question options**

- Other (please specify)
- Infrastructure (bike lanes, sidewalks, etc.)
- Transit coverage area
- Frequency of Service
- Safety
- Geography

*Mandatory Question (87 response(s))*  
*Question type: Checkbox Question*

**Q16** A goal for traveling in the Central Puget Sound Region is to increase options so more people can safely choose walking, bik...

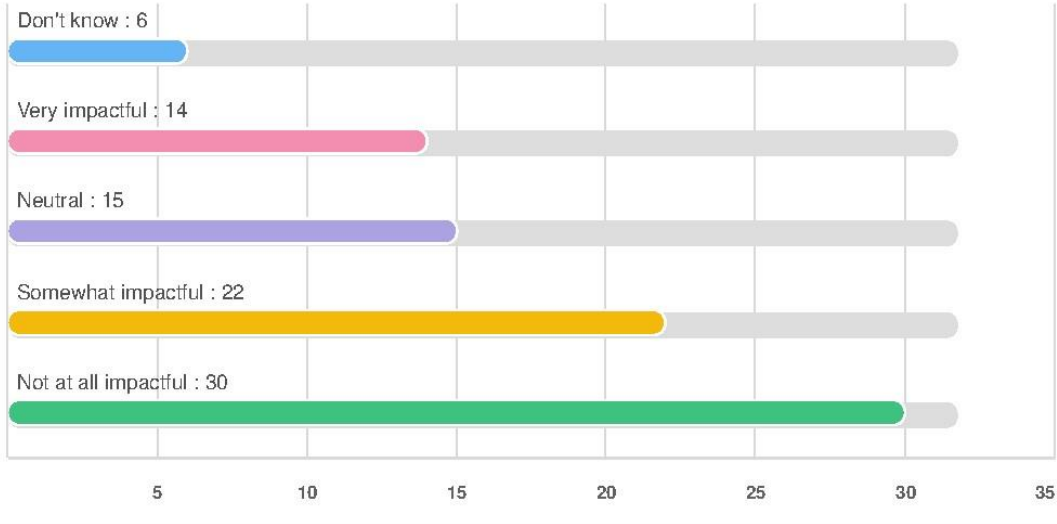


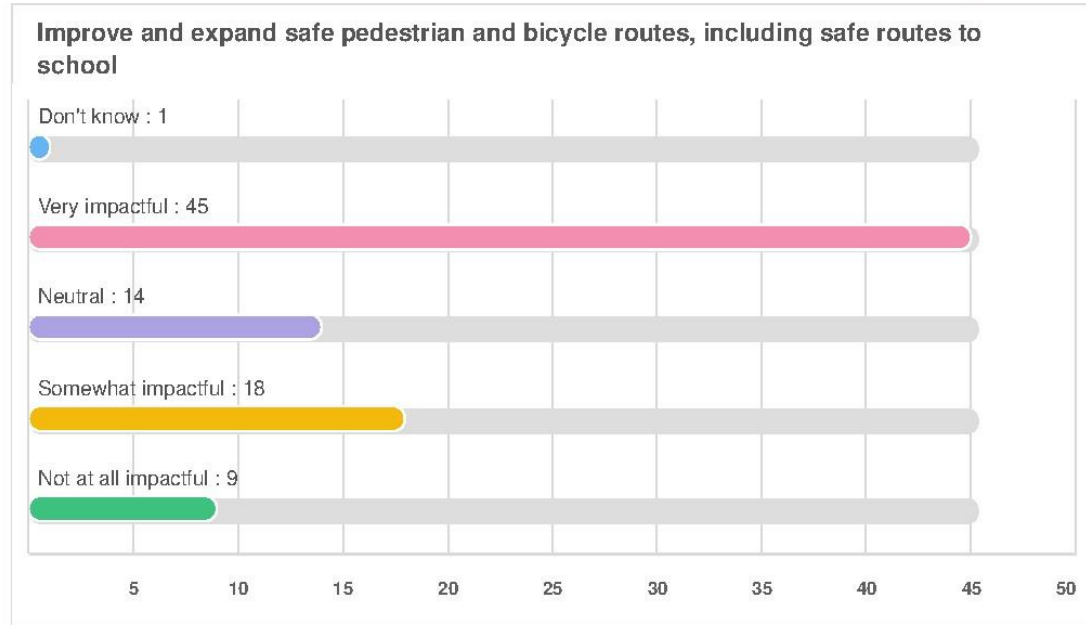
Mandatory Question (87 response(s))  
Question type: Likert Question

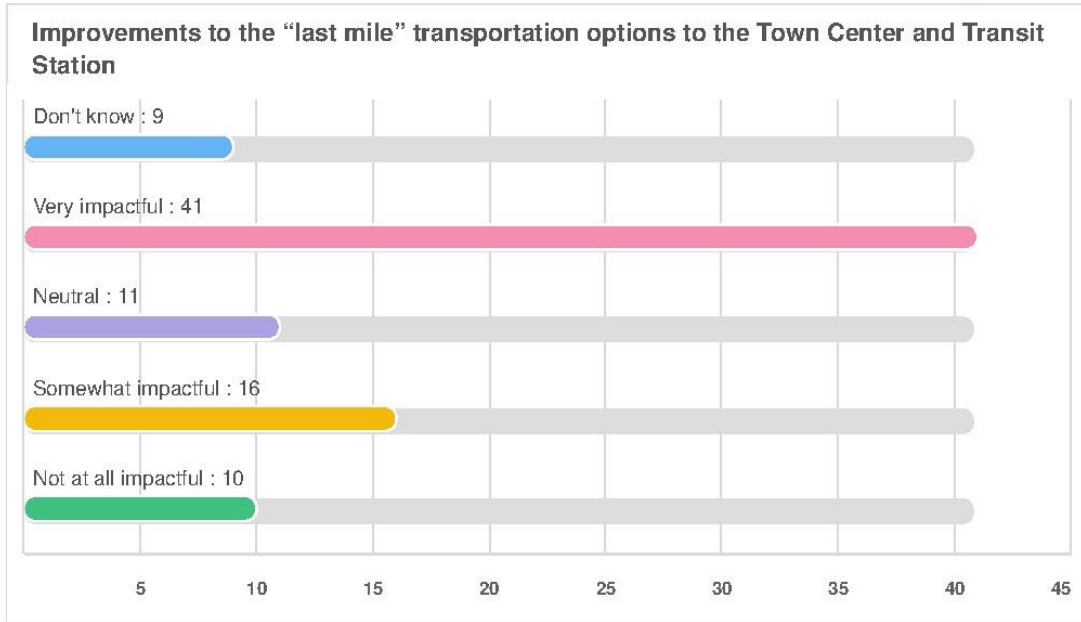
**Q16 | A goal for traveling in the Central Puget Sound Region is to increase options so more people can safely choose walking, bik...**



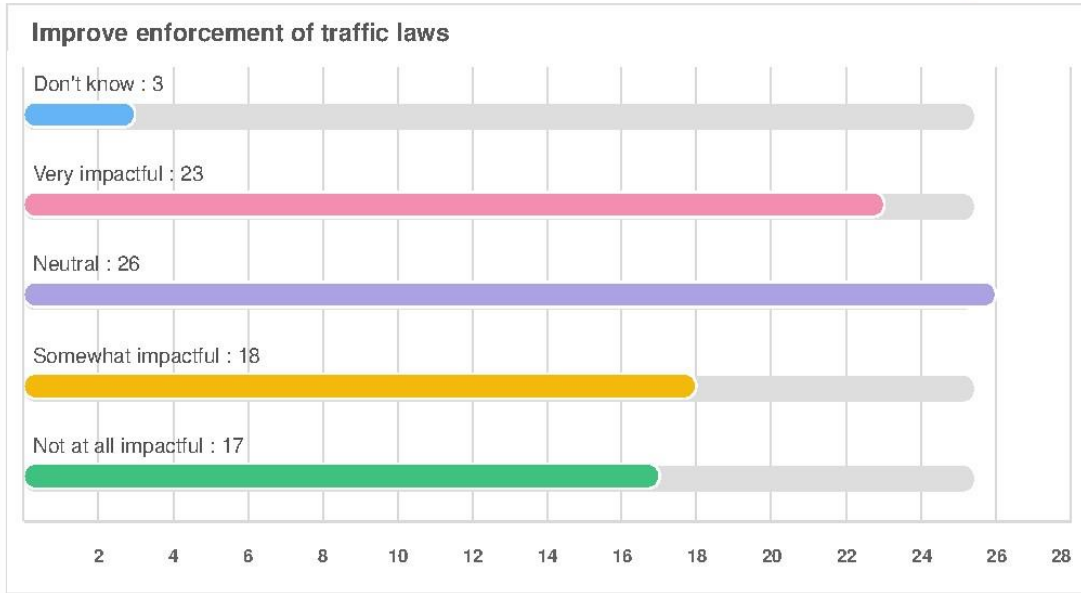
**Increase public education programs about buses, light rail, and other transportation options, in conjunction with the opening of the Mercer Island light rail station**

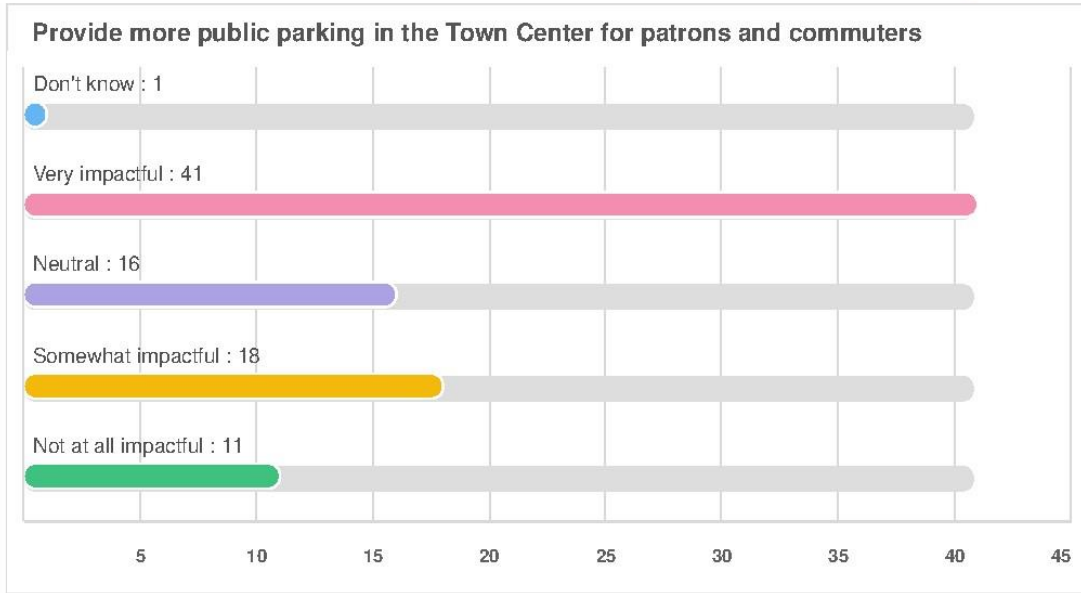


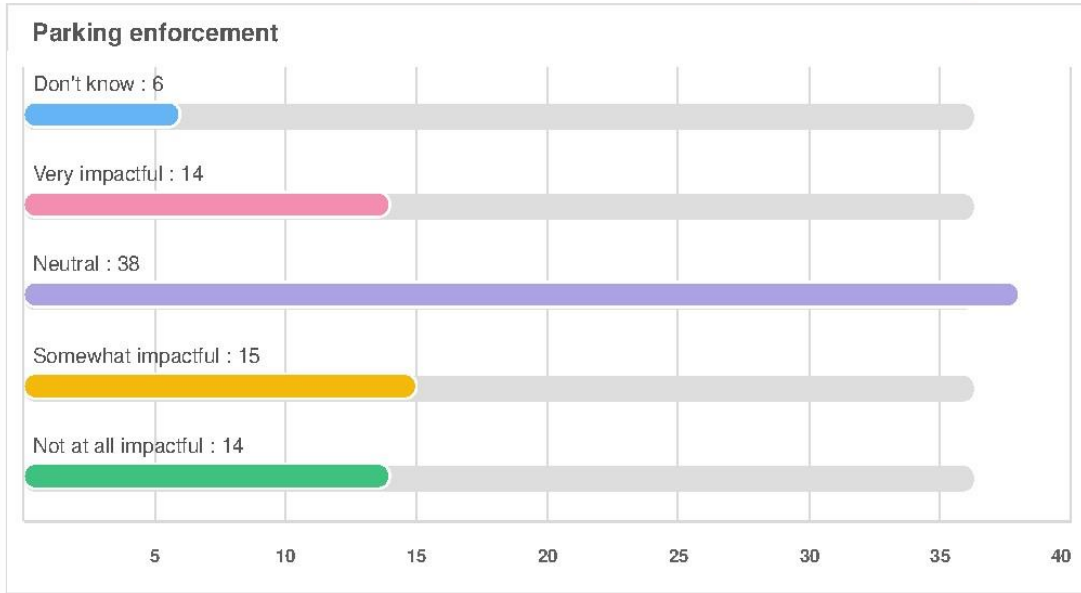


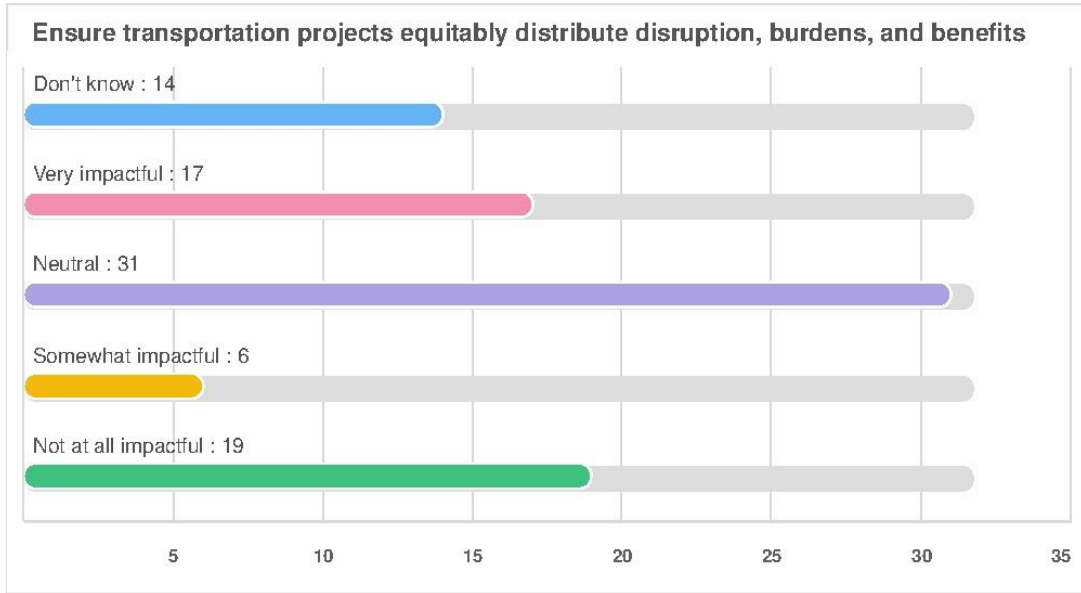














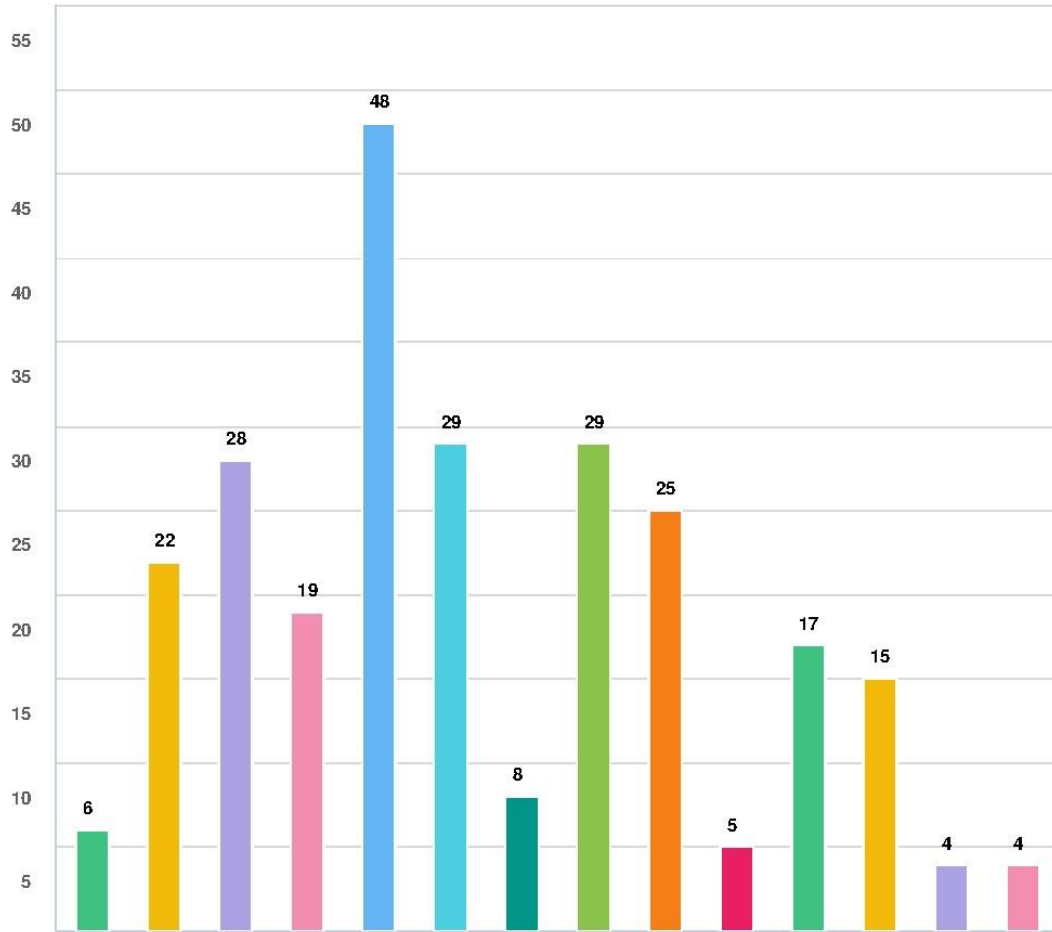
**Q17 | As the City of Mercer Island strives to foster a robust economic environment and enhance the commercial areas to attract pe...**

OPTIONS	AVG. RANK
Attracting high-wage employers	4.28
Partnering with community organizations to market Mercer Island as a favorable place to do business	4.72
Developing a guide to doing business on Mercer Island to assist entrepreneurs in navigating city processes and finding additional resources for starting a new business	4.93
Conducting a food truck pilot program in the Town Center	5.22
Development of satellite offices and coworking spaces	5.39
Supporting the Chamber of Commerce to initiate a "Shop Mercer Island" marketing campaign aimed at attracting more people to the island's commercial areas	5.62
Facilitating a mentorship program to connect Island business owners, entrepreneurs, and retirees with individuals interested in starting a new business	5.79
Studying the feasibility of relocating City Hall facilities to the Town Center	6.08
Periodically distributing a business newsletter to local business owners and community organizations	6.33
Partnering with community organizations and developers to facilitate the construction of affordable housing for employees who commute to Mercer Island due to the unavailability of affordable housing on the island	6.63

*Mandatory Question (87 response(s))  
Question type: Ranking Question*



**Q18** What improvements and investments should the City of Mercer Island prioritize in the next 10 years? Please select your top three priorities from the list below:



**Question options**

- Other (please specify)
- Youth and Family Services –individual, couples, and family counseling, help with emergency rent, utilities assistance, access to food, senior services, etc.
- Transportation options – walking and bicycling paths
- Transportation options – increased transit access, improved bus service, protected bicycle lanes, etc.
- More sense of community (events, cultural awareness, etc.) ● Public safety
- Quality infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, streetlights, sewer, etc.)
- Design of buildings and public spaces (quality of materials, look of buildings, etc.) ● More variety of retail and other businesses
- Maintaining city services (police, fire, stormwater, water, sewer) ● Housing variety and affordability
- Protection of natural resources ● Parks and recreation opportunities ● Job opportunities and economic development

Mandatory Question (87 response(s))

Question type: Checkbox Question



**Q19 | Is there anything else you would like to share with us?**

Screen Name Redacted  
5/01/2024 07:47 PM

The proposed C-O zone should be for multi family housing and the city should not make it nearly impossible to build there because of the proximity to single family housing. More townhomes, condos, and affordable single family homes are needed. There is so much underutilized storefronts in the downtown core and the city needs to do more to attract businesses and make it easier to have a business on mercer island, it is sad to see it so empty.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/01/2024 08:31 PM

The recently passed housing legislation in WA state is absolutely bananas. It doesn't work for small suburban communities like ours, nor do we want to change our predominantly single family community into a crowded concrete jungle of high rise buildings, congested roadways and overtaxing our already aging infrastructure to allow for massive congestion. People move to MI for a reason and the cost to live here reflects that. Please don't ruin our beautiful haven by turning us into another ugly congested Seattle, Bellevue or Redmond.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/02/2024 04:46 PM

We love it here and are committed to staying here for my son's top notch education. We live in an apartment and have no chance of getting a condo here with HOA fees, etc. A small 2 bedroom condo that is affordable on a teacher's salary would be a game changer for us.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/03/2024 02:39 PM

please maintain single family neighborhood- limit density there- keep it in the town center

Screen Name Redacted  
5/04/2024 05:06 PM

I truly hope that Mercer Island continues to ground planning decisions on what is truly in the best interests for the overall community. Many of us moved here to be a safe place to raise our children. Let's keep Mercer Island that special place and not destroy it because folks got too greedy.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/05/2024 05:54 PM

Growth is necessary and inevitable, and we need some more affordable housing for those who otherwise have to commute - but PLEASE, keep the investments, safety, peace, and overall quality of life needs of those who have already lived and supported MI for years at the forefront of decisions made. There's no putting the toothpaste back in the tube once we've made these very important and impactful decisions. Over the past 10-15 years, there have been a number of



MI development decisions made that have weakened, rather than strengthened, our position and desirability relative to some of our neighboring cities. In many ways, MI is unique and it's difficult to compare. Residents would like to keep it that way, but for the right reasons, positive reasons. Not traffic/congestion, lack of parking and retail options, increased crime and noise pollution, cookie cutter neighborhoods lacking trees and open space, and a visually unappealing or uninviting town center.

Screen Name Redacted

5/05/2024 05:58 PM

yes, on the economic survey -the whole scale, 1-10 was not available to choose. Some questions were limited to a couple of numbers which did not represent my choices.

Screen Name Redacted

5/06/2024 07:28 AM

Develop a non biased survey - not aimed at density. Save the SFH neighborhoods.

Screen Name Redacted

5/07/2024 10:05 AM

Please do not encourage multi-family housing development in the C-O zone. Traffic is already troublesome there and there are no public transit options. Keep multifamily development in and around the Town Center where it already exists and where public transportation options already are present. This concentration of housing in Town Center will support retail. Studying small-scale retail in residential zones is a horrible idea as retail needs density and single family neighborhoods along with parks are the allure of MI. Do not destroy our Single Family Neighborhoods chasing a pipe dream. It is okay that Mercer Island is a suburb and not an urban center. It is ok that it is a bedroom community with walkable, safe, single family neighborhoods with abundant tree cover.

Screen Name Redacted

5/07/2024 01:25 PM

Keep the single-family characters and don't turn Mercer Island into Capitol Hill, where I moved from.

Screen Name Redacted

5/07/2024 08:51 PM

As someone that has conducted surveys, I find that your paragraph about housing gap is non-objective and is pushing a progressive agenda. That is not good survey design and will likely skew/influence the results. In addition, studying small scale in single family neighborhoods is not something the city should be spending money on. Protecting our single family neighborhoods is key to the city's continued success and those neighborhoods are the majority of the island and why many moved here. Also, the CO zone by the JCC and French School already has bad traffic and no high speed transit options - it is NOT the place to encourage multifamily housing. Multifamily housing should be limited to the Town Center, existing



zones, and areas near the light rail - this will provide the density that will foster a revitalized retail environment.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/08/2024 06:07 PM

Increase density & height limits in the town center to increase housing supply and attract more businesses - and move city hall there rather than rebuilding it in place. Open up the rest of the island to higher density housing options, including ADUs and fourplexes, with reduced or eliminated parking minimums. Expand bike and walking paths and add shuttles to make it easy for people to get to transit without having to drive.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/09/2024 07:27 PM

The comprehensive plan must go farther on housing -- by adopting a limited, slow growth plan, we're harming the region by keeping housing prices high. If we allow more market-rate housing here, it will prevent gentrification and displacement in other areas. We should increase zoning beyond the minimum requirements mandated by the GMA and state legislation.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/09/2024 08:47 PM

Please restore lifeguards.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/10/2024 03:58 PM

Mercer Island's high value to me is totally associated with its uniform Single Family nature and its concomitant safety. The current Washington State assault on that (middle housing and other affordability mandates, and assault on Single family zoning broadly) is highly ideologically driven from the left. As a former planning manager for our largest city, I foresee ever increasing ideological pressure in that direction. I oppose this uniform mandate and our comprehensive plan should do everything to thwart these mandates and protect our current wonderful character. I have little faith that it will.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/10/2024 04:15 PM

Yes. My number one issue is we NEED more affordable housing. note, i don't want low income housing. I don't want rental assistance. i just want us to build more dense units downtown. Condos, townhouses, etc. The entry level house on Mercer Island shouldn't be \$2mn. There are reasons why our elementary school attendance is down. One big one is who can afford \$2+mn with young kids. Again, I'm not saying build low income housing. 2-3 bedroom condo units. \$1.2-1.5mn townhomes. People want to live here! approve buildings that work for Upper class families with young kids.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/10/2024 06:12 PM

There are too many car racing along the EMW during the summer time. Please make sure to police and issue tickets.



Screen Name Redacted  
5/10/2024 08:32 PM

Pretty much everything in question 18 should be on the list! Please make it easier to get around the island quickly.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/11/2024 06:42 AM

Better street lighting coverage close to parks more pedestrian sidewalks Traffic lights on cross walks Stop increasing property taxes with double digits every year Distributed more funding in expanding tech and science education in public schools Attract more restaurants, family businesses offering kids services Offer more kids play and education programs options

Screen Name Redacted  
5/11/2024 12:11 PM

Mercer Island is a unique community positioned between two major cities. I would love to see a community plan that reflects inclusion, diversity and equitable solutions. We should be caring for all of our neighbors and be an inviting place for all (not just those who can afford to live here), and there are residents like myself who do want change in my own back yard. The housing crisis is real and as a community, we can be part of incremental change. Thank you for taking time to collect input from the residents.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/11/2024 12:39 PM

Priority parking permits should be distributed to mercer island residents so they can use the parking facilities related to mass transit. It is too unpredictable to reliably use for commuting.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/11/2024 12:46 PM

If there is a way to supporting housing for educators particularly those teaching at our schools that would have a strong positive multiplier on many aspects of Mercer island life.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/11/2024 02:21 PM

More sidewalks

Screen Name Redacted  
5/11/2024 04:08 PM

Please gather as much research as possible about which strategies for affordable housing have measurable results. If a strategy hasn't been successful elsewhere we shouldn't try to make it work here.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/11/2024 05:51 PM

A vibrant walkable, bikeable city core, with restaurants, galleries, light retail, is the most important function the comprehensive plan can serve. That means re-striping streets to accommodate angle parking and bike lanes, widening sidewalks to accommodate outdoor seating for restaurants and trees and plantings to make for an attractive pedestrian environment. The current downtown core is decrepit.



1950s-era strip malls surrounded by parking lakes is not a pleasant walking environment. Think about pedestrian-only options and modern, mixed-use urbanism. Provide central public parking in place of every strip mall having its own lot. Create 10-minute loading zones to drop off or pickup small loads, like dry cleaning or quick service restaurants. Rezone retail core as mixed use and delete the at-grade parking lots. Require adequate underground or otherwise integrated parking for residential buildings, not at-grade parking lakes. Limit heights and massing of multistory buildings, and set back upper stories to not intimidate pedestrians or create canyons. Maintain open space in and around buildings. Provide more bike parking.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/12/2024 05:55 PM

Not everyone here has a multi-million dollar home and a Tesla, some of us are just getting by.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/12/2024 06:18 PM

There is very little available land for development of smaller homes. Of there are places that can infill smaller affordable homes that would be great.

Screen Name Redacted  
5/12/2024 06:24 PM

I am unhappy with the quality of this survey, particularly when I am required to choose options to complete questions when I am against all of the options. Particularly the question that required I endorse 5 housing options I opposed. Also question 17 required rankings and the software repeatedly rejected my rankings ....

Screen Name Redacted  
5/12/2024 08:04 PM

Bike lanes and pedestrian paths are really needed from Lakeridge Elem. all the way to the new light rail station! Currently, Bike lanes are hit and miss and veer off towards the high school- very dangerous for students on e-bikes and scooters. Don't stop the bike lane construction on mid-island like it is currently planned, continue the path all the way from Lakeridge elem to the new light rail station. Bike lane path should start at Lakeridge Elementary, go north past IMS, head east past the south end shopping center, north at Pioneer park on Island crest way, turn west onto 40th, then to north onto 80th Ave SE. We need a north to south bike/pedestrian path to connect all islanders. We desperately need a round-about at the pioneer park 4 way stop. With art in the middle of the round-about to welcome everyone to the south end. Plus, the south end doesn't have much public artwork, compared to the north end. Thank you for making Mercer Island a great community to live - both north, south east and west.

Screen Name Redacted

Implement climate action! Increase density in the town center,



5/12/2024 08:38 PM

accommodate multi-modal transportation options.

Screen Name Redacted

5/13/2024 08:34 AM

I strongly support improving bicycle infrastructure, including the ICW corridor and through the town center.

Screen Name Redacted

5/13/2024 09:20 AM

Focus on the basics, the very purpose of a city. Health, safety, & infrastructure. Clean water, clean streets, clean parks.

Screen Name Redacted

5/13/2024 02:31 PM

Please maintain the single-family zones. This includes trees and house to lot size. Please maintain parking minimums so cars don't park in the streets forcing kids and pedestrians into the street. Please don't rezone or develop our parks. The only place affordable housing makes any sense is in the town center, but even then with the cost of land and construction developers can't go below 80% AMI for affordable housing or they won't build. Increased density does not benefit existing residents. It only benefits builders, and strains our already strained infrastructure from water to sewer to roads to police to fire.

Screen Name Redacted

5/13/2024 05:21 PM

Yes, the rents are too high - both residential and retail. Older buildings should be grandfathered in, developers should not be allowed extra stories for nothing, and we don't want micro-housing or co-sharing opportunities anywhere on the island.

Screen Name Redacted

5/14/2024 08:39 AM

Town center development is a big challenge. We would like to have a better selection of retail, especially restaurant options. However, there is also a need for affordable housing and parking is severe problem. Lack of proper repair and maintenance in some existing apartment buildings in the town center is also a problem.

Screen Name Redacted

5/14/2024 09:56 AM

Yes, with regards to the questions in 17., I am sorry, but they all should get "10" on a scale, not make us have to put in a number in order of how important. What you are missing is the fact that we are losing so much commercial retail and restaurants and bars in the Town Center in exchange for multifamily residential buildings with no on-street parking which no-one wants and which goes against what we want. And the City are not listening to citizens even more, even with our filling out survey after survey. And there is a push for micro-housing and co-sharing housing, just make sure that there is something in The Comprehensive Plan which makes it that there is a limit on density. We want affordable housing, but not at the cost of making people live like sardines all packed into small units to make it



look like they are affordable.

Screen Name Redacted

5/14/2024 01:19 PM

The biking community (including e-bikes and e-scooters) on Mercer Island is quite large. I'd like to see this group better represented when important planning decisions are made.

Screen Name Redacted

5/14/2024 03:35 PM

Please do not destroy the single family neighborhoods of Mercer Island. That and its parks are what make it unique. Any mandated increase in density or creation of affordable units should be limited to the Town Center and existing multifamily areas and near the Light Rail Station. And for the love of God don't even entertain the idea of putting a parking garage in Mercerdale....that battle was already fought on Kite Hill - seriously!!!!

Screen Name Redacted

5/14/2024 04:48 PM

I am concerned with the arrival of public transit to Mercer island that our Island will become less safe. Make sure this does not happen.

Screen Name Redacted

5/14/2024 08:37 PM

This survey's wording leads to a bias toward a particular result. There is ambiguity of meaning in some groups of questions.

Screen Name Redacted

5/16/2024 09:25 AM

Do not put the City Hall in Town Center. Putting the City Hall simply makes it more difficult for your customers to access City Hall and it displaces tax paying businesses with tax absorbing government there by transferring more tax burden on the SF residences there by making the Island less affordable.

Screen Name Redacted

5/16/2024 02:02 PM

Yes engage with the community

Screen Name Redacted

5/16/2024 03:33 PM

Section 17 is terrible. I don't want any time or money spent on ANY of these priorities, but I could not complete the survey without filling in all of the blanks. Finally I had to fill them in arbitrarily to get to through the survey. I think ALL of the results in section 17 are invalid for the reason that the results do not represent the true opinions of residents who do not want time or money spent on any of these options.

Screen Name Redacted

5/16/2024 04:49 PM

The city should re-establish Citizen use of the Community Center without cost to citizen sponsors and users.

Screen Name Redacted

Completely tear down and rebuild CPD



5/17/2024 11:37 AM

Screen Name Redacted

5/17/2024 12:11 PM

Please do nothing to change the character of the residential areas of the island. Don't reduce lot size, don't increase permissible impervious surface area, and do preserve trees and parks.

Screen Name Redacted

5/19/2024 09:55 PM

Allow homeowners to use more than 40% of their property to do home remodels. Please add sidewalks and please add street lights for safety purposes in neighborhoods

**Optional question** (47 response(s), 40 skipped)

**Question type:** Essay Question