

# AB 6351 City Hall Closure

Mercer Island City Council | October 3, 2023



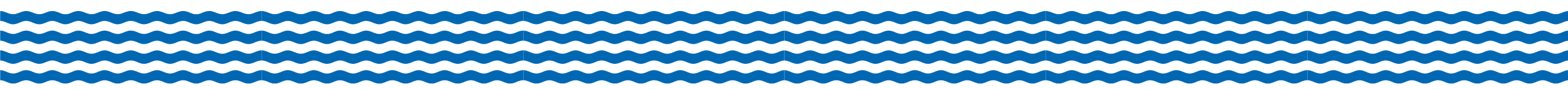


# Agenda

- Purpose
- Background
- City Hall Re-Occupancy Scenarios
- Additional Information on City Hall Conditions
- Interim Operating Measures
- Resolution No. 1650

# Purpose

The purpose of this agenda item is to review the circumstances around the City Hall closure and approve **Resolution No. 1650 (Exhibit 1) to cease City operations at Mercer Island City Hall and permanently close the building.**



# Background on City Hall Closure



# Timeline - Discovery

## April 17

- Broken tiles and tile adhesive in the basement Mechanical Room of City Hall were identified as possibly containing asbestos.
- The tiles were discovered by a staff person while inspecting the Mechanical Room and may have been in that condition for some time.
- Same-day tests confirmed that both the tiles and adhesive contained asbestos.
- The Mechanical Room also contains an air handling unit for the City Hall HVAC system.
- City Hall was immediately closed to further investigate.

**Picture:** Broken tiles in Mechanical Room



# Timeline – Early Investigation

## April 18 – April 21

- The asbestos abatement contractor performed an initial building walk through.
- Additional floor tiles on the Main Floor of City Hall also tested positive for asbestos. These tiles are intact, undisturbed, and under carpet tiles, and do not present an immediate hazard. However, they will require abatement in the event of a renovation involving the floor plate in the areas where present.
- **The contractor conducted initial air quality testing throughout the building; there were no positive tests for airborne asbestos.**

**Picture:** Asbestos-containing tiles under carpet floor tiles on first floor of City Hall.



# Timeline – In-Depth Testing

## April 21 – July 7

- The City worked with PBS Engineering and Environmental to develop and perform comprehensive testing protocols.
- Extensive testing was conducted, including **air samples, settled dust, and bulk materials.**
- A thorough investigation of the HVAC system was performed as conditions allowed.
- Other possible sources of asbestos were also evaluated.

## May 15 - 19

- Boiler room flooring materials abated (pictured)

## June 27

- Good Faith Inspection performed.

**Picture:** Basement mechanical room post-abatement.



# Testing and Results

- **No asbestos fibers were identified in any air testing samples.**
- Asbestos detected in 11 **settled dust samples** from 10 locations, including inside the HVAC system.
- **Bulk testing** identified asbestos in two HVAC system filters and one sample of flooring.
- **Good Faith Survey** of other potential asbestos containing materials in the building was positive for asbestos including undisturbed floor tiles, window putty, and 31 fire doors.

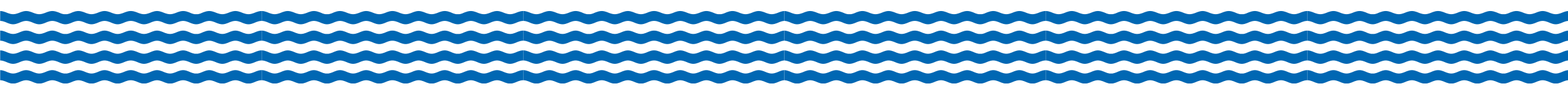
**Picture:** Air sampling performed in City Hall kitchen.





# Findings

- **It is unlikely that the basement floor tiles are the sole source of the asbestos found in the HVAC system.** However, additional sources of asbestos have not been identified.
- It is possible that the asbestos contamination within the HVAC system occurred prior to City ownership or during a renovation project in the late 1980s - early 1990s.
- Significant destructive investigation (e.g. full removal of the City Hall ceiling) is required to fully confirm conditions.
- **Requirements to abate and re-occupy the building are anticipated to be costly and extensive** and will be further detailed in the second part of the presentation.



# Re-Occupancy Scenarios

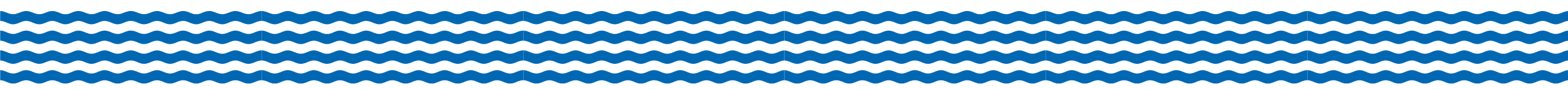


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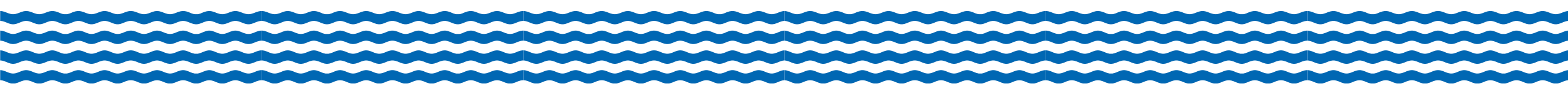
# Preliminary Re-Occupancy Cost Estimates

- Northwest Studio, the City's architect team, prepared preliminary cost estimates for two scenarios for re-occupancy of City Hall.
- The **first scenario** was a full re-occupancy of City Hall.
- The **second scenario** was investigating the possibility of temporarily re-occupying the Police Department area of the City Hall building.



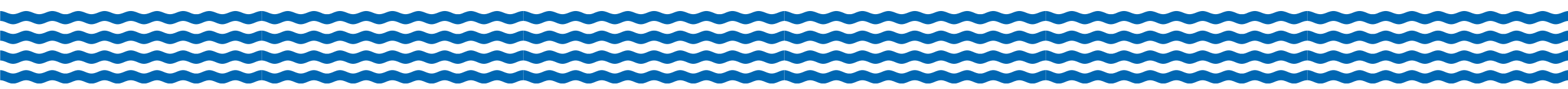
# Scenario 1: Re-Occupy City Hall

- Requires abatement of the floor tiles in the basement mechanical room (already complete), replacement of the HVAC hydronic and ventilation system, and the replacement of various building infrastructure required associated with the HVAC system (ceilings, light fixtures, cabling, etc.).
- Preliminary cost estimate is \$10 million with an estimated timeline of nearly two years to complete the work.
- This cost estimate does not include abatement costs or soft costs such as design, engineering, and project management costs.



# Scenario 2: Re-Occupy Police Department

- Partitioning the existing Police Department spaces from the remainder of the building, abating those spaces, removing the existing HVAC system, and installing a contemporary system to serve this occupancy.
- 5 to 7 years while longer-term options were investigated
- Preliminary cost estimate is \$4 million with an estimated timeline of 12-18 months to complete the work.
- This cost estimate does not include abatement costs or softs costs such as design, engineering, and project management costs.



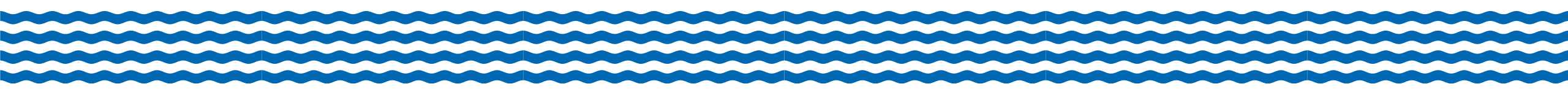
# Additional Information on City Hall Conditions



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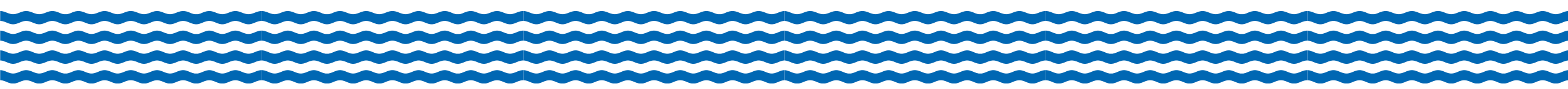


# City Hall Preliminary Conditions Assessment

- **The City began long-range facility planning work earlier this year, including performing facilities conditions assessments. There are other matters of concern related to the long-term use of the City Hall building.**
  - The City Hall building is at (or beyond) its expected lifespan. The building was originally constructed in 1957 and was last renovated in 1988.
  - City Hall does not meet current new construction energy or building code requirements, and **multiple building systems are failing** or need to be substantially replaced.
  - **Almost all interior walls have been identified as lacking lateral bracing and, unless reinforced, are at risk of failure in the event of seismic activity.**
  - Some of these walls are constructed with concrete-filled CMU (concrete masonry units/cinderblocks) and they are at risk of collapse during a seismic event, potentially rendering the building inoperable.
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# Why close City Hall?

- Age and condition of City Hall mean **there is not a high return on investment for significant cost of abating and re-occupying the building.**
- City Manager recommendation is to permanently close City Hall and focus on identifying a long-term solution for replacement.





# Interim Operating Measures



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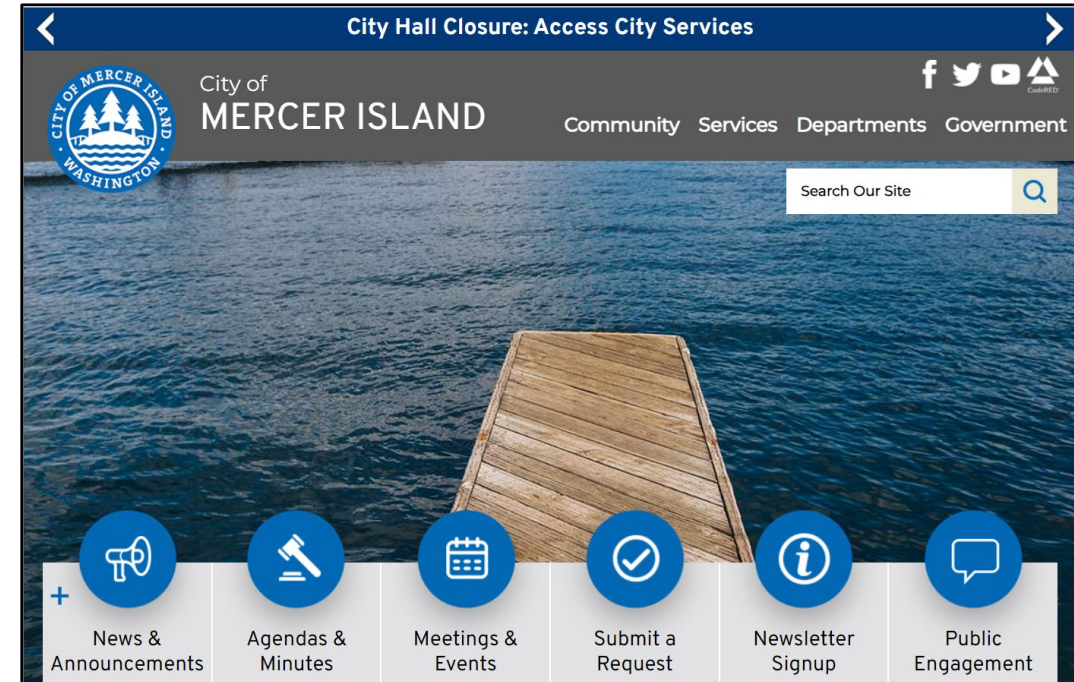
# How do you Access City services?

**Customer Service Team**  
**(206) 275-7600**

**[CustomerService@mercerisland.gov](mailto:CustomerService@mercerisland.gov)**

(staffed Mon-Fri 8:30a-5:00p, except holidays)

- For the quickest and fastest service, community members should contact the City of Mercer Island Customer Service Team.
- The City's Customer Service Team can help answer your questions about services, such as service requests, pet licensing, business licenses, or parking permits during the closure of City Hall.
- The Customer Service Team can also assist you in getting connected to other City department teams as needed.



# Let's Talk Page

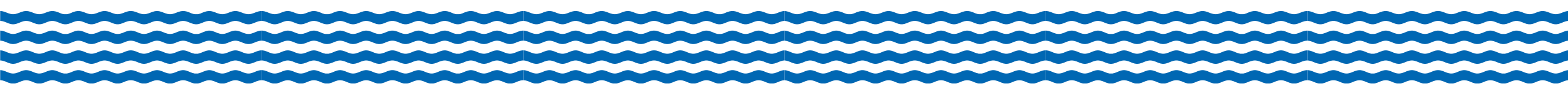
- A Let's Talk Page has been created with additional information, including:
  - Additional detail on the asbestos testing process and results
  - Additional detail on the analyzed cost estimates of re-occupancy of City Hall
  - Short-term steps on temporary facilities for City services
  - Continuous updates on long-term planning for City facilities
  - Frequently Asked Questions
  - [www.letstalk.mercergov.org](http://www.letstalk.mercergov.org)

## Long-Range Facility Planning/City Hall Closure



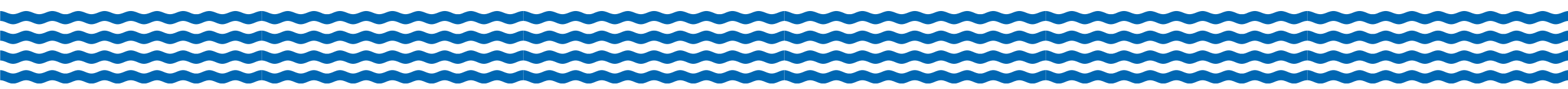
# Where are Staff Working?

- The displacement of staff from City Hall has been challenging for City teams across all departments and workgroups. We understand it has also impacted the community.
- **The top priority is to ensure continuity of public services.**
- Approximately 80% of City staff are working in-person on Mercer Island each day, including police, fire, municipal court, parks and recreation, public works engineers, youth and family services, and maintenance employees.
- The remaining staff are working from a combination of home offices and in shared/rotating office spaces and holding meetings at the Community Center or at other locations.
  - Some modified/shared workspaces have been made available in the Luther Burbank Administrative building, the maintenance building, and the Community Center.
- **Our primary focus is on relocating and stabilizing the Municipal Court and Police Department and to stand up a functional space for City Council meetings.**



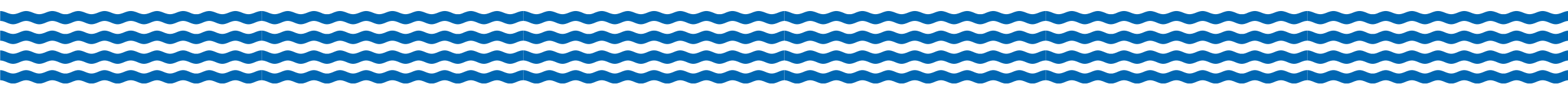
# Municipal Court Relocation

- The Mercer Island Municipal Court (includes Newcastle Municipal Court) has been holding court proceedings at the Kirkland Justice Center since June. Municipal Court staff are working from a conference room at Fire Station 91 on non-court days, which is less than ideal.
- There is not enough capacity at the Kirkland facility to house our staff and our files, so we have been looking for an alternate location to address court needs.
- After an exhaustive search for temporary leased space, the City Manager is recommending **leasing Newcastle Council Chambers for court proceedings and available office space in the Newcastle City Hall building for court staff offices.**
- This item will likely come to the City Council for consideration on October 17, 2023.



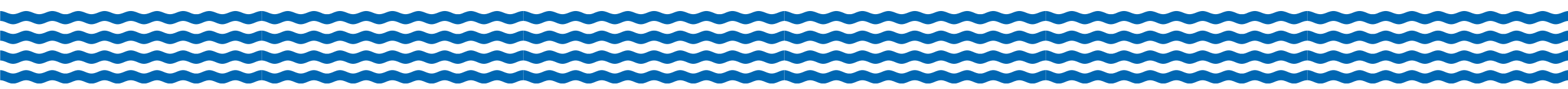
# Police Relocation

- Staff are in the process of implementing a plan to place temporary modular facilities in the City Hall parking lot for short-term support of police operations.
- Police teams have also been working out of the Community Center and the Luther Burbank Administration Building.
- Staff are analyzing medium-term options to meet Police facility needs until a long-term solution to replace City Hall is identified.
- Staff will brief City Council on the work to re-house the Police Department at a future City Council meeting.



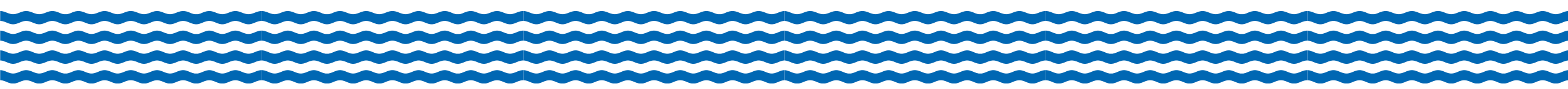
# Council Chambers Relocation

- On September 19, 2023 the City Council appropriated funds to upgrade the Slater Room at the Mercer Island Community and Event Center to host City Council meetings and other public meetings, including board and commission meetings.
- Work is underway on audio-visual upgrades and equipment procurement to host City Council meetings.
- Anticipated completion is the end of October, with the goal of hosting the November 7, 2023 City Council meeting at this location.



# City Hall Temporary Storefront/Other Offices

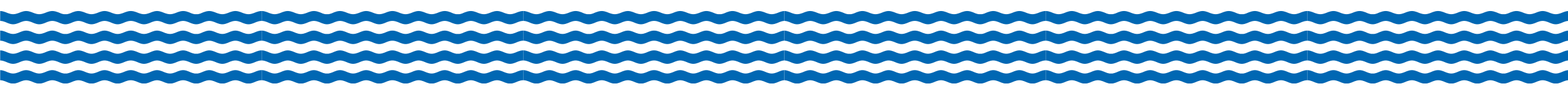
- **The top priority is continuity of public services.**
- **Our primary focus is on relocating and stabilizing the Municipal Court and Police Department and to stand up a functional space for City Council meetings.**
- Once the high priority work relocation items are addressed, we may wish to consider standing up a “storefront” for City Hall to meet day-to-day customer service needs.
- We will also need to evaluate temporary office space for the rest of the workforce.





# Next Steps

- Staff and consulting teams continue to work on the logistics of preparing City Hall for permanent closure, including planning for the storage of furniture, equipment, and supplies, managing paper records, discarding unneeded items, and retrieving personal items.
  - The HVAC system at City Hall, for example, has been inactive since mid-May and cannot be operated safely.
  - Since the building doesn't have a functional heating system, water service at City Hall has been shut off and the plumbing system drained to help avoid potential frozen pipes.
- Long-term planning work related to the replacement of City Hall is underway. Discussions with the City Council and the community are anticipated in 2024.

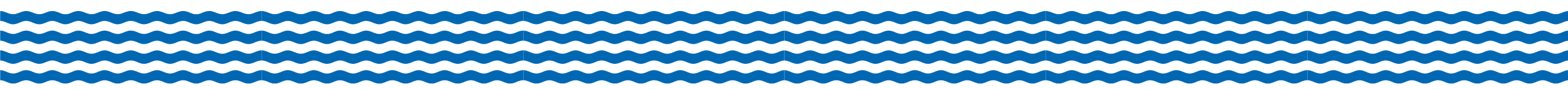


Resolution No. 1650  
Permanent Closure of  
Mercer Island City Hall



# Resolution No. 1650

- Resolution No. 1650 (Exhibit 1) directs the permanent closure of the Mercer Island City Hall building until a future decision is made by the City Council on its use or disposition.
- This is a significant decision, which if taken will redirect City resources and lead to actions that would be costly to reverse.
- Important to formalize and memorialize this decision.



# Recommended Action

- Approve Resolution No. 1650, directing the permanent closure of the Mercer Island City Hall building.

