



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 6716
July 1, 2025
Regular Business

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6716: Parks Zone Code Amendment (Ordinance No. 25C-16 First Reading)	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Schedule Ordinance No. 25C-16 for second reading on July 15, 2025.	

DEPARTMENT:	City Manager
STAFF:	Jessi Bon, City Manager Carson Hornsby, Management Analyst II Alison Van Gorp, CPD Deputy Director
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	1. Ordinance No. 25C-16 2. Planning Commission Recommendation - Parks Zone Code Amendment 3. Planning Commission / Parks & Recreation Commission Recommendation Matrix
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	2. Sustain and enhance our natural environment, especially parks and open spaces, to benefit this generation and others that follow.

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to conduct the first reading of Ordinance No. 25C-16 (Exhibit 1) to amend the Mercer Island City Code (MICC) to establish the Parks Zone Development Regulations and Zoning Map.

- The purpose of the Parks Zone is to establish land use regulations for City-owned and managed park properties to ensure the land is managed appropriately and in alignment with the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan, Mercer Island City Code (MICC), park master plans, forest management plans, and similar documents.
- The Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) developed their Parks Zone recommendation from October 2024 to April 2025. The PRC presented their recommendation to the City Council on April 15, 2025 ([AB 6660](#)), and the Planning Commission (PC) on April 23, 2025 ([PCB 25-08](#)).
- The PC held a public hearing on the Parks Zone code amendment ([PCB 25-09](#)) and began the legislative review process at the May 28, 2025 PC meeting.

- The PC finalized their code amendment recommendation to the City Council at the June 10, 2025 PC special meeting. The PC recommendations are summarized in a memo from the PC Chair (Exhibit 2).
- A side-by-side comparison of the Parks Zone code amendment recommendations from the PRC and PC is provided in Exhibit 3.

BACKGROUND

Development of a new Parks Zone was added to the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review scope of work by the City Council in 2022 with [Resolution No. 1621](#). Adoption of the Parks Zone requires amendments to MICC Title 19, the Zoning Map, and the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map and Land Use Designation Table.

Early in the development process, the Parks Zone was split into two separate zones: one zone for City-owned and managed Open Space Lands and a second zone for City-owned and managed Park properties. The decision to develop two zones was made based on feedback from the community and a recommendation from the PRC. The Open Space Zone was developed first by the PRC, Open Space Conservancy Trust (OSCT) Board, and PC, and adopted by the City Council in 2024 with [Ordinance No. 24C-15](#).

After adoption of the Open Space Zone, the PRC shifted focus to development of the Parks Zone. The PRC developed their Parks Zone recommendation from October 2024 to April 2025. The PRC presented their recommendation to the City Council on April 15, 2025 ([AB 6660](#)), and the PC on April 23, 2025 ([PCB 25-08](#)).

The PC held a public hearing for the Parks Zone code amendment ([PCB 25-09](#)) during the May 28, 2025 PC meeting and presented their code amendment recommendation to the City Council at the June 10, 2025 PC special meeting.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

Planning Commission Code Amendment Recommendation

After receiving the PRC's Parks Zone recommendation ([PCB 25-08](#)), the PC began legislative review of the Parks Zone code amendment and approved several revisions to include in the PC recommendation. Ordinance No. 25C-16 (Exhibit 1) includes the PC's recommended Parks Zone development regulations and Zoning Map. The PC's revisions to the PRC recommendation are summarized below:

1. 19.05.050(A) – Purpose revised to reference “shoreline access” and “social spaces for individuals and gatherings.”
2. 19.05.050(C)(4) – “Multipurpose facilities” added to Uses Permitted.
3. 19.05.050(C)(9) – Parking revised to “parking for park-related uses” in Uses Permitted.
4. 19.05.050(C)(10) – Temporary uses and structures in Uses Permitted revised to add the following sentence: “Temporary uses shall conform to the development standards in MICC 19.05.060.”
5. 19.05.060(C)(3) – Kiosk standard revised to specify the limit of 22 square feet of surface area applies “per side.”
6. 19.05.060(G)(1) – Impervious Surface standard revised to add “PROS Plan” and “Capital Improvement Program” as examples of planning documents that include a public process and City Council approval that may be used to approve projects that add net new impervious surface in the Parks Zone.
7. 19.05.060(G)(1) – Synthetic turf athletic fields and public trails removed from the Impervious Surface standard exemptions.
8. 19.05.060(G)(1)(e) – Temporary structures added to Impervious Surface standard exemptions.

9. 19.05.060(H)(1) – General Lighting Requirements revised to add the following sentence: “Lighting must be designed to maintain adequate illumination for pedestrian safety, visibility, and compliance with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.”
10. 19.05.060(H)(2)(c) – General Lighting Requirements exemption for pathway and landscaping lighting fixtures producing less than 200 lumens revised to specify 200 lumens “per fixture.”
11. 19.05.060(H)(3) – New section added: “Ecological and Low-Impact Lighting Standards”
12. 19.16.010 – Definition of “Public Art” revised to add the following sentence: “Public art can be implemented in standalone art installations or incorporated into other structures.”
13. 19.16.010 – Definition of “Recreational Facilities” revised to add “shell houses” to list of examples.
14. 19.16.010 – Definition of “Recreational Uses” revised to add “water-dependent recreation” to list of examples.
15. Title 19 Appendix D – Zoning Map revised to re-zone Aubrey Davis Park from the Public Institution Zone to Parks Zone.
16. Title 19 Appendix D – Zoning Map revised to correct a technical error to remove the small Commercial Office Zone area in the ROW on SE 36th St.

Additional Planning Commission Recommendations

Along with recommended code amendments, the PC provided two additional recommendations to the City Council (see Exhibit 2):

1. The City Council should write to WSDOT and explain the allowed uses and regulatory limits in the Public Institution Zone and the proposed Parks Zone and ask whether WSDOT has any objection to Aubrey Davis Park being placed in the Parks Zone. If WSDOT has no objection, Aubrey Davis Park should be added to the Parks Zone.
2. The PC supports the PRC’s recommendation to explore opportunities for PRC involvement in the public art recommendation process for art installations in the park system.

Ordinance No. 25C-16

If adopted by the City Council, Ordinance No. 25C-16 (Exhibit 1) will establish the Parks Zone in the MICC by:

1. Creating new code section MICC 19.05.050 Parks – P.
 - Purpose: statement that summarizes the goals and objectives of the zone.
 - Designation Requirements: criteria that land must meet to be included in the zone.
 - Uses Permitted: uses and activities allowed in the zone.
2. Creating new code section MICC 19.05.060 Parks Zone Development Standards.
 - Development Standards: rules that dictate how land in the zone can be developed.
3. Amending MICC 19.16.010 Definitions.
 - Definitions: key terms used in the Parks Zone development regulations defined and added to the definitions in the Development Code.
4. Amending MICC 19.01.040 Zone Establishment.
 - Zone Establishment: Parks Zone added to the list of zones in the Development Code.
5. Repealing and replacing MICC Title 19 Appendix D – Zoning Map.
 - Zoning Map: Parks zoning designation added to the map.

Ordinance No. 25C-16 includes the draft Parks Zone code amendment as recommended by the PC. A side-by-side comparison of the Parks Zone code amendment recommendations from the PRC and PC is provided in

Exhibit 3. The proposed code amendments in Ordinance No. 25C-16 align with the amendments to the Comprehensive Plan currently under consideration by the City Council (see AB 6717 on the July 1 agenda). The code and Comprehensive Plan amendments must be adopted concurrently to ensure the Development Code and Comprehensive Plan remain consistent without any gaps in timing.

NEXT STEPS

Once the City Council completes deliberation on the Parks Zone code amendment, Ordinance No. 25C-16 will be scheduled for second reading and adoption with the same effective date as the Parks Zone Comprehensive Plan amendment (December 31, 2025).

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Schedule Ordinance No. 25C-16 for second reading on July 15, 2025.