



AB 6716: Parks Zone Code Amendment

AB 6717: Parks Zone Comprehensive Plan Amendment

July 1, 2025





Agenda

1. Parks Zone Background
2. AB 6716: Parks Zone Code Amendment
 - Ordinance No. 25C-16
 - PC Recommendations: Development Regulations and Zoning Map
3. AB 6717: Parks Zone Comprehensive Plan Amendment
 - Ordinance No. 25-17
 - PC Recommendations: Land Use Designations and Land Use Map
4. Comments from the Planning Commission Chair



Parks Zone Background



Parks Zone Background

- 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 and to the Planning Commission (PC) on April 23, 2025.
- The PC held public hearings on the Parks Zone Code and Comprehensive Plan amendments on May 28, 2025 and finalized the two recommendations to the City Council on May 28, 2025 and June 10, 2025.





Ordinance No. 25C-16 (Code Amendment)



Ordinance No. 25C-16

1. Create new section MICC 19.05.050 Parks Zone.
 - Purpose, Designation Requirements, Uses Permitted.
2. Create new section MICC 19.05.060 Parks Zone Development Standards.
3. Amend MICC 19.16.010 Definitions.
4. Amend MICC 19.01.040 Zone Establishment.
5. Repeal and replace MICC Title 19 Appendix D – Zoning Map.



Ordinance No. 25C-16

- Ordinance No. 25C-16 (Exhibit 1) includes the code amendment as recommended by the PC.
- The PRC/PC Recommendation Matrix (Exhibit 3) provides a side-by-side comparison of each recommendation.





Planning Commission Recommendations



PC Recommendations

- A. Purpose. The purpose of the Parks Zone is to preserve and maintain parks which provide green space, shoreline access, recreation and conservation opportunities, and social spaces for individuals and gatherings.



PC Recommendations

C. Uses Permitted.

1. Recreational uses.
2. Recreational facilities and recreational amenities.
3. Park maintenance facilities.
4. Multipurpose facilities.
5. City government services in the Luther Burbank Administrative Building, Luther Burbank Boiler Building, and Luther Burbank Caretakers House.
6. Public art.
7. Trails.
8. Habitat restoration and enhancement as authorized by Chapter 19.07 MICC.
9. Parking for park-related uses.
10. Temporary uses and structures compatible with the purpose of the Parks Zone, as authorized by the City Manager or designee. Temporary uses shall conform to the development standards in MICC 19.05.060.
11. Wireless communications facilities. (Only if otherwise permitted by MICC 19.06.040 – Wireless communications or MICC 19.06.070 – Small wireless facilities deployment, and subject to MICC 19.06.075 – Small wireless facility deployments design and concealment standards).
12. Utilities.

PC Recommendations

C. Signs and Kiosks.

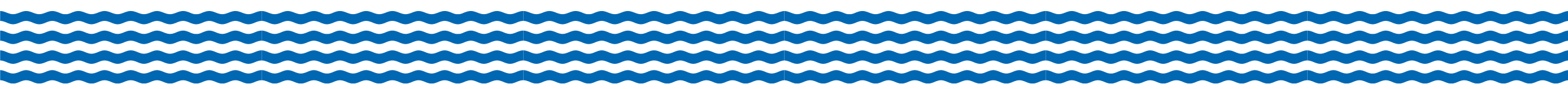
3. Kiosks shall not exceed 22 square feet of surface area per side and 10 feet in height. Surface area shall be measured as the portion of the kiosk used/usable for providing information.



PC Recommendations

G. Impervious Surface.

1. No net new impervious surface in the parks system is permitted unless it has been included in an adopted Park Master Plan (or similar planning document that includes a public process and City Council approval, such as the PROS Plan and Capital Improvement Program), the City of Mercer Island Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Plan, or specifically exempted by this section, and stormwater and other applicable requirements are met. [...] The following uses are exempt:
 - a. Emergency vehicle lanes not available for public use.
 - b. ADA parking and accessibility improvements.
 - c. Required surfaces for playground equipment.
 - d. Small park amenities 100 square feet or less in gross floor area, including but not limited to benches, picnic tables, signs, and trash cans.
 - e. Temporary structures.
 - f. Emergency maintenance and repairs.
 - g. Utilities.
 - h. Removed: Public Trails and Synthetic Turf Athletic Fields



PC Recommendations

H. Lighting.

1. General Requirements. All exterior lighting shall be designed to minimize glare, sky glow, and light trespass onto neighboring properties. Fixtures must be fully shielded and installed in a manner that prevents light trespass beyond the property line of the property on which they are located. Fully shielded means a light fixture constructed and installed in such a manner that all light emitted, either directly from the lamp or a diffusing element, or indirectly by reflection or refraction from any part of the fixture, is projected below the horizontal plane through the fixture's lowest light-emitting part. Lighting must be designed to maintain adequate illumination for pedestrian safety, visibility, and compliance with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.



PC Recommendations

H. Lighting.

2. Exemptions. The following lighting types are exempt from the requirements in subsection (H)(1):
 - a. Lighting fixtures existing prior to the effective date of this section and the repair of the same.
 - b. Emergency lighting.
 - c. Pathway and landscaping lighting fixtures producing less than 200 lumens per fixture.
 - d. Temporary seasonal lighting.
 - e. Lighting required by state or federal law.



PC Recommendations

H. Lighting. (Summarized)

3. Ecological and Low-Impact Lighting Standards.

- a. Eliminate lighting not required for wayfinding, operational use, or public safety to reduce ambient light pollution.
- b. Fixtures in or near environmentally sensitive areas (e.g., shorelines or riparian buffers) must be positioned to avoid direct illumination of water bodies, shoreline vegetation, or adjacent properties.
- c. Timers and motion sensors may be used outside of primary circulation areas or in low-traffic zones.
- d. Light levels should not exceed 3.0 foot-candles for walkways and 5.0 foot-candles for entrances and high-traffic multi-use trail intersections.
- e. Warm color temperature fixtures (3000K or less) should be used to minimize blue light impacts. Higher color temperatures may be used where needed for visibility or safety.



PC Recommendations

Definitions (summarized)

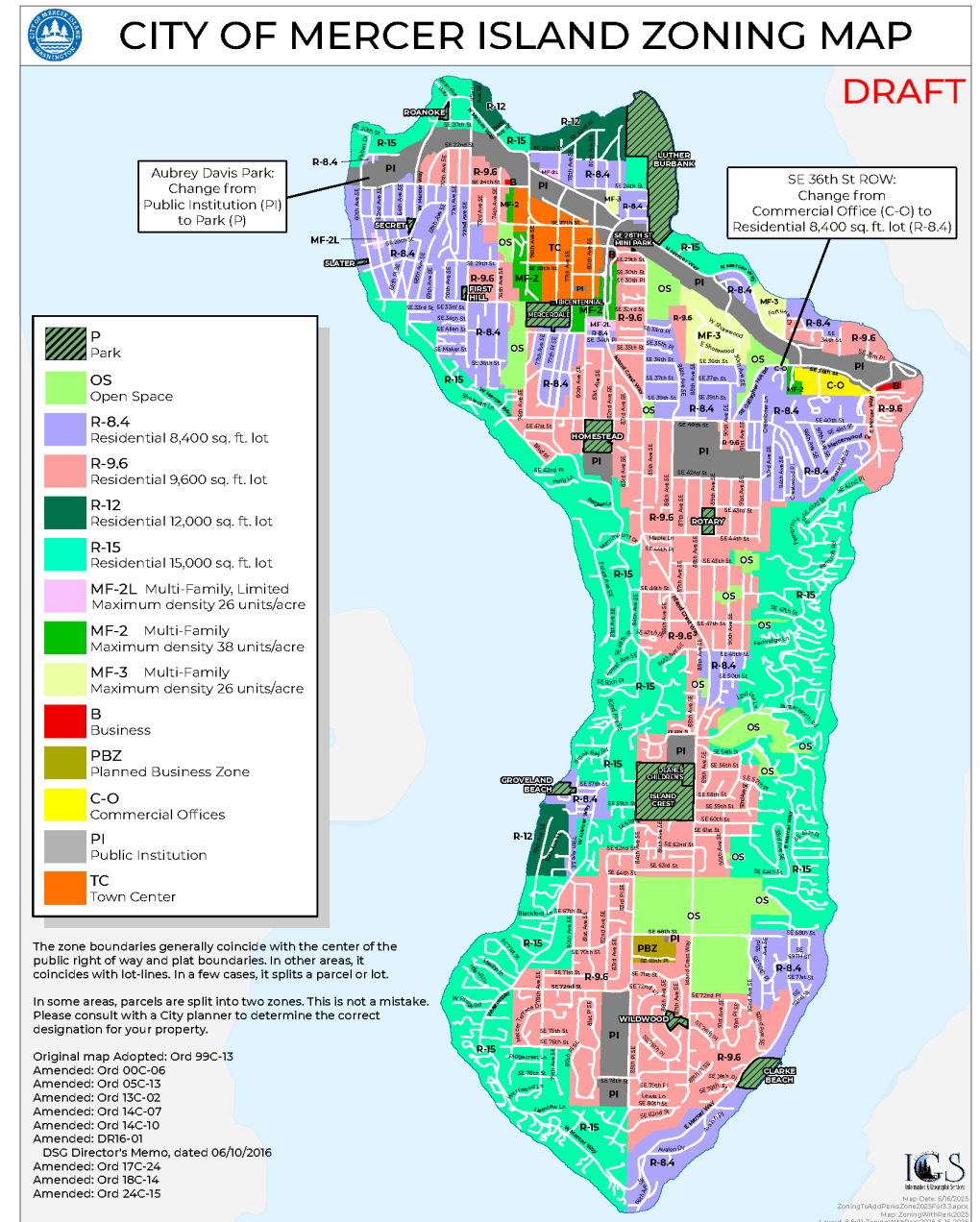
- Definition of “Public Art” revised to add: “Public art can be implemented in standalone art installations or incorporated into other structures.”
- Definition of “Recreational Facilities” revised to add “shell houses” to list of examples.
- Definition of “Recreational Uses” revised to add “water-dependent recreation” to list of examples.



PC Recommendations

Zoning Map

- Aubrey Davis Park: change from Public Institution Zone to Parks Zone.
- Remove Commercial Office Zone in ROW along SE 36th St.



PC Recommendations

Additional Recommendations

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. 25-17 (Comprehensive Plan Amendment)



Ordinance No. 25-17

- Creation of a new zone requires an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element.
- Land Use Designations ➡ Zoning Designations (MICC)
- Land Use Map ➡ Zoning Map (MICC)

Ordinance No. 25-17

1. Amend Land Use Designations
2. Amend Land Use Map





Planning Commission Recommendations



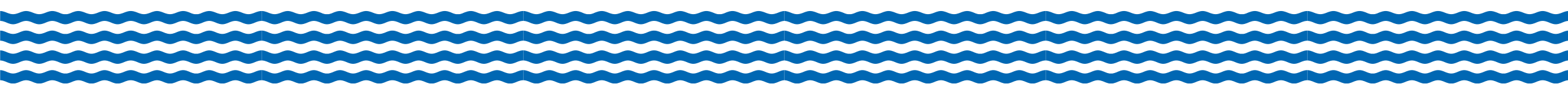
PC Recommendations

Land Use Designations

- Parks Zone added to implementing zoning designations of the Park, Linear Park, Open Space, and Public Facility land use designations.
- Updated description of the Park land use designation.

Staff Recommendation

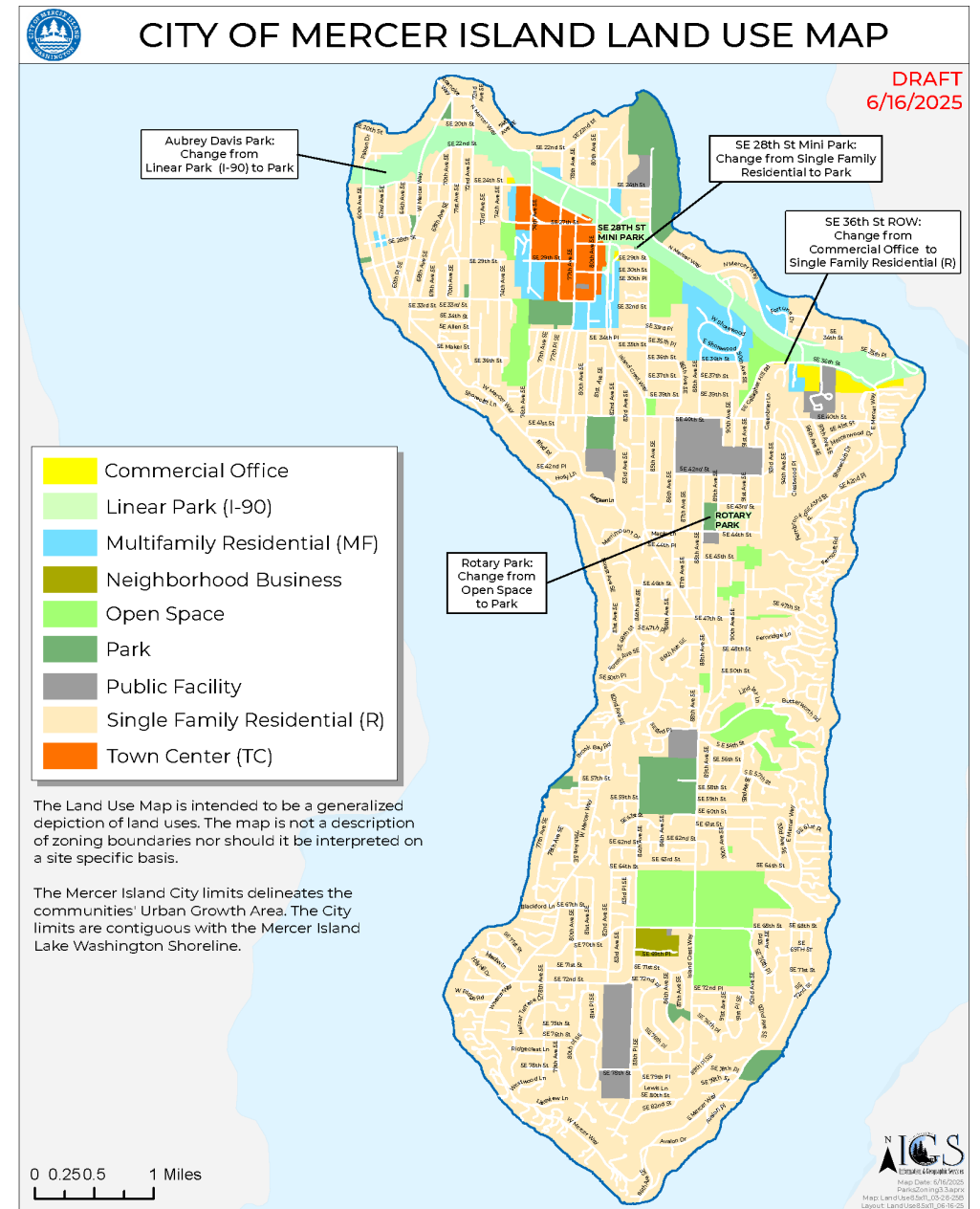
- Update description of the Open Space land use designation.
- The open space land use designation represents public land within the City that should remain as predominantly unimproved open space consistent with the adopted Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.



PC Recommendations

Land Use Map

- Land use designation of Aubrey Davis Park changed from Linear Park to Park.
- SE 36th St ROW changed from Commercial Office to Single Family Residential.





Comments from the Planning Commission Chair

