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# CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

## COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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## PLANNING COMMISSION

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**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Alison Van Gorp, CPD Deputy Director  
Adam Zack, Senior Planner

**CC:** Patrick Yamashita, City Engineer/Deputy Public Works Director  
Alaine Sommargren, Deputy Public Works Director

**DATE:** December 7, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Comprehensive Plan Update  
Capital Facilities Element – First Draft  
Utilities Element – First Draft

**Attachments**

- A. First Draft Capital Facilities Element
- B. First Draft Utilities Element
- C. Selected RCW, WAC, and Countywide Planning Policies

### PURPOSE

To get the Planning Commission’s comments on the first drafts of the Capital Facilities Element (Attachment A) and the Utilities Element of the Comprehensive Plan (Attachment B).

### STRIKEOUT/UNDERLINE FORMAT

The draft Capital Facilities Element in Attachment A and draft Utilities Element in Attachment B show all proposed amendments in strikeout/underline format. Strikeout/underline format is valuable because it maintains the original text. Text that is proposed to be deleted is ~~struck out~~ and new text is underlined. An example is provided below.

**Original Text:** The Land Use Element is one piece of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Strikeout/Underline:** The Land Use Element is ~~one piece~~ the second element of the Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan.

**Clean Amended Text:** The Land Use Element is the second element of the Mercer island Comprehensive Plan.

Elsewhere in the draft elements there are places where additional edits are expected when either new data are available, or another planning document is finished. These are noted in the attached draft with **green highlighting**. The note text will be deleted before the final draft.

## **COMMENTS**

Please submit written comments or questions on the Capital Facilities and Utilities Elements by 4:00 PM on January 13. Please send comments to [comp.plan@mercerisland.gov](mailto:comp.plan@mercerisland.gov). Public comments submitted by the deadline will be provided to the Planning Commission at their meeting scheduled for January 25<sup>th</sup>.

## **BACKGROUND**

The City of Mercer Island is updating its comprehensive plan as part of the periodic review required by the WA Growth Management Act (GMA). This review will be a targeted “surgical” update, focusing on technical updates required to maintain compliance with the GMA. The existing Capital Facilities and Utilities elements already meet most of the GMA requirements and only require limited technical amendments during this periodic review to maintain compliance.

The principal purpose of capital facilities and utilities elements is to ensure that public and private services will keep pace with development as it occurs. The Capital Facilities Element inventories public facilities in Mercer Island, evaluates the levels of service for those facilities, and establishes a capital improvements list that serves as the basis for capital improvement planning through the planning period. The Utilities Element inventories and evaluates capacity for utilities such as water service, sewer service, stormwater treatment, solid waste, electricity, and telecommunications.

## **CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT**

The Capital Facilities Element is central to planning for growth. This element establishes important direction for how the City will make budget decisions around capital improvements in response to changing demand for city services. The GMA requires five components be included in the capital facilities element:

- An inventory of existing public capital facilities. The inventory must show the capacities of those facilities;
- A forecast of future needs;
- The proposed locations and capacities of new or expanded facilities;
- A six-year financing plan that includes potential funding sources; and
- A requirement to reassess the land use element in case of a funding shortfall.

The Capital Facilities Element establishes the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) and Capital Reinvestment Plan (CRP) that set the project list that is the basis for the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) the City adopts each year. The CIP details what capital improvement projects the City will fund and execute each two-year budget cycle. The CIP links with the CFP and CRP to ensure that capacity and service needs account for the growth planned during the Comprehensive Plan planning period (2024-2044). In this way, the Comprehensive Plan outlines how the City’s facilities will keep pace with the increased capacity demand resulting from population growth. The project list also lists the proposed locations and capacity for those capital improvements.

Included Capital Facilities Element is a financial analysis examining the cost of capital improvements and potential funding sources. Budgeting for individual projects is conducted as projects are added to the CIP. The CIP is considered and updated annually. Policy 1.5 establishes a requirement that if there is a funding shortfall for capital improvements, the City must reevaluate the assumptions about growth in the Comprehensive Plan, including in the Land Use Element.

### Relationship to Other Plans

The Capital Facilities Element is linked to many other plans maintained by the City and Mercer Island School District. The following plans are linked with the Capital Facilities Element, set LOS standards for specific types of capital facilities, and include more detailed LOS analysis for those facilities:

- Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan;
- Water System Plan;
- General Sewer Plan;
- Comprehensive Storm Basin Review;
- Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan;
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan;
- Open Space Vegetation Plan;
- Luther Burbank Master Plan;
- Ballfield Use Analysis;
- Mercer Island School District Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan (2020-2026); and
- the Transportation Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

These plans are updated on individual timelines, as needed, for the types of facilities they plan for. For example, the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan is updated annually while the Water System Plan is updated every six years, but WAC 246-290 recently extended this to ten years.

### **UTILITIES ELEMENT**

The GMA requires cities and counties to include a utilities element in each comprehensive plan. As with the Capital Facilities Element, the Utilities Element is intended to ensure that as a city grows its utilities keep pace with the increased demand. The Utilities Element focuses more narrowly on the utilities that will support new growth: water service, sewer service, stormwater treatment, solid waste, electricity, and telecommunications. The Utilities Element gives the policy direction for how the City will address future needs for utilities. This includes outlining how the City will coordinate provision of services with utility service providers and what utility improvements may be needed with future development. The capital improvements for utility infrastructure projects are covered in the project list in Capital Facilities Element and guided by the individual utility comprehensive plans (e.g. Water System Plan).

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

The City Council approved a scope of work for the Comprehensive Plan periodic review with [Resolution 1621](#). The adopted scope of work for the Capital Facilities Element primarily focuses on the technical amendments needed to update the growth targets and maintain GMA compliance. Table 1 lists the Capital Facilities Element tasks listed in the scope of work. The amendments in the first draft of the Capital Facilities Element were based on the scope of work tasks listed in Table 1.

**Table 1. Capital Facilities Element Tasks from the Comprehensive Plan Scope of Work.**

<b>Task Number</b>	<b>Task Description</b>	<b>Required or Local Choice</b>
CF-1	Update the Capital Facilities Inventory	Required
CF-2	Ensure that capital facilities inventory, LOS, and projection of future needs are consistent with adopted growth projections	Required
CF-3	Add impact fee policies describing what impact fees pay for	Required

Utilities Element

The adopted scope of work for the Utilities Element primarily focuses on the technical amendments needed to update the growth targets and maintain GMA compliance. Table 2 lists the Utilities Element tasks listed in the scope of work. The amendments in the first draft of the Utilities Element were based on the scope of work tasks listed in Table 2.

**Table 2. Utilities Element Tasks from the Comprehensive Plan Scope of Work.**

Task Number	Task Description	Required or Local Choice
U-1	Ensure that utility capacity is consistent with growth projections	Required

**PLANNING COMMISSION FEEDBACK**

The December 14 Planning Commission meeting will be a briefing on the initial draft of amendments. Staff is requesting written comments on the initial draft from members of the Planning Commission no later than the end of the day on January 13. Staff will compile all comments for the Planning Commission to discuss at their next meeting in January.

**NEXT STEPS**

The Planning Commission can consider the comments on the Capital Facilities and Utilities elements at their January meeting.