

Town Center Commuter Parking and Mixed-Use Project Ended

July 14, 2020 - A Letter to the Community from Your City Council

Dear Mercer Island Community,

In January 2020, the City announced the completion of its multi-year effort to purchase the former Tully's Property in Town Center, with the intention of providing commuter parking near the future East Link light rail station for use by Mercer Island residents.

Last summer, MainStreet Property Group was selected as the City's partner and lead developer for design and construction of a project, which included underground commuter parking and a mixed-use development with performing arts space. In the packet of documents for the July 21 City Council meeting (to be released to the public tomorrow), a resolution will be included confirming the City's decision to part ways with MainStreet over differences in our project vision that resulted in the parties reaching an impasse.

In addition to our differences, a large-scale project is not currently a viable investment for the City given our current fiscal realities of an unpredictable post-COVID-19 landscape and significant reductions in City staff. The City will consider independently pursuing a simpler solution, as an interim measure, including the possible construction of a surface commuter parking lot on the project site using Sound Transit Settlement Funds.

We know that pre-COVID-19 commuter parking for Mercer Island residents was in very short supply during the morning rush-hour. Following the completion of light rail in 2023 and after we are able to re-open our economy, we anticipate that commuter parking will eventually become scarce again, even with a greater number of people working from home.

We look forward to updating Mercer Islanders as the City addresses this evolving parking project.

-Mercer Island City Council

Mayor Benson Wong
Deputy Mayor Wendy Weiker
Councilmember Lisa Anderl
Councilmember Jake Jacobson
Councilmember Salim Nice
Councilmember Craig Reynolds
Councilmember David Rosenbaum