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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:** Adam Zack, Senior Planner

**DATE:** July 19, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Comprehensive Plan Update  
Economic Development Element (EDE) – Second Draft

**Attachments**

- A. EDE (Second Draft)
- B. EDE Implementation Plan (Second Draft)
- C. EDE Comments on First Draft
- D. Planning Commission Comments, Received after July 12

### PURPOSE

To get the Planning Commission responses to comments on the first draft of the Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan and Implementation Plan (Attachments A and B). Comments were submitted between June 28 and July 12 and are provided in Attachment C. Comments received after July 12 are provided in Attachment D.

### 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). The City Council added drafting a new Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan to the project scope of work with Resolution 1621. This element will be a completely new addition to the Comprehensive Plan. The preparation of the draft Economic Development Element included additional steps, including public participation, prior to Planning Commission review. Those additional steps and more background on the Economic Development Element drafting process are discussed in more detail in a [June 28 memo to the Planning Commission](#).

### COMMENTS ON THE FIRST DRAFT

Comments on the first draft of the Economic Development Element were submitted between June 28 and July 12. At the meeting on July 26, the Planning Commission will go through the amendments proposed in the comments. The Commission can decide whether to make the proposed amendment, accept part of the alternative, or keep the first draft version. The comments received are provided in Attachment C. Each comment was assigned a log number. Proposed grammatical corrections or minor text amendments were made in strikeout/underline format in the Second Draft Economic Development Element (Attachment A).

### Comments Received After July 12

Two comments from Planning Commissioners were received after July 12. Those comments are provided in Attachment D. Because these comments were received after the initial comment period closed, they were not incorporated into the second draft of the Economic Development Element or added to the comment matrix in Attachment C.

### Public Comments

Public comments on the first draft of the Economic Development Element are also provided in Attachment C. Where needed, staff has provided clarifying notes in the comment matrix.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

To efficiently review the volume of comments provided, staff proposes the following review process. The Planning Commission can decide on the simple amendments discussed below by consensus on July 26. A discussion of the proposed amendments that require deliberation and/or direction can take place at the next Planning Commission meeting in September. This will give members of the Planning Commission time to consider all of the more consequential amendments through the month of August. Holding discussion of the substantial comments at the next meeting will also allow commissioners with planned absences in July to participate in the deliberations.

### Simple Amendments

The simple amendments can likely be made without requiring much discussion. These are minor changes that would not significantly change the policy direction in the Economic Development Element. At the July meeting, the Planning Commission can address the simple amendments by consensus. If an individual Planning Commissioner would like to discuss a simple amendment further, that discussion can take place at the next meeting.

### Deliberation Needed

Many comments propose smaller text changes that would also affect the policy direction in the Element. These comments require some deliberation by the Planning Commission but would not require additional direction for staff to draft language in the element. Most of the proposed amendments fall into this category. Staff proposes the Planning Commission go through these proposed amendments at their September meeting.

### Deliberation and Direction Needed

Some comments proposed significant changes to the direction in the draft. For these comments, the Planning Commission needs to both decide whether to make the change and provide staff with direction for drafting new or additional language in the element.

**Table 1. Comments Categorized by Amendment Type.**

	<b>Comment Log Numbers (Attachment C)</b>
<b>Simple Amendments</b>	1, 10, 11, 12, 20, 24, 28, 31, 32, 33, 39, 44, 45, 46
<b>Deliberation Needed</b>	5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 38, 41, 43
<b>Deliberation and Direction Needed</b>	3, 4, 8, 9, 16, 25, 26, 34, 35, 36, 37, 40, 42

Staff recommends each Planning Commissioner consider the comments that require deliberation, review the comments received after July 12 in Attachment D, and come prepared to make recommendations for each at the September meeting.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Staff requests the Planning Commission provide any additional written comments on the draft Economic Development Element no later than the end of the day on August 23. The Planning Commission can discuss any additional comments at their next meeting in September.

## PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW SCHEDULE

<b>July 26</b>	Review of initial Planning Commission comments received during the comment period. The Planning Commission can address the simple amendments proposed in the comments received.
<b>August 23</b>	Additional comments on the Economic Development Element are due. To the extent possible, please make sure to provide all questions and comments by August 23 so the whole Planning Commission will have the opportunity to consider each comment in advance of the September meeting.
<b>September 27</b>	The Planning Commission can consider the proposed amendments that require deliberation and any comments submitted during the comment period. If necessary, discussion of the proposed amendments can extend to another meeting. After resolving the comments, the Planning Commission can complete this round of review and the draft Economic Development Element and Implementation Plan will be considered the public hearing draft.
<b>Remaining Review</b>	Once the Planning Commission has arrived at a public hearing draft of the Economic Development Element and Implementation Plan, there will be more rounds of review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The City will hold a Comprehensive Plan update open house to gather public input.</li><li>• After the open house, the Planning Commission will have a Comprehensive Plan update “tune up” meeting to respond to public input gathered.</li><li>• The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan update to gather additional public input.</li><li>• The Planning Commission can respond to input from the public hearing by amending the drafts prior to making a recommendation to the City Council.</li></ul>