



## BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

**AB 5938**  
**September 21, 2021**  
**Consent Agenda**

### AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	AB 5938: 2021-2022 Work Plan Update	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Receive updates to the 2021-2022 work plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution

<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	City Manager
<b>STAFF:</b>	Jessi Bon, City Manager
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	n/a
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. Status Report on Major Work Plan Items 2. All Work Plan Items by Department
<b>CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:</b>	2. Articulate, confirm, and communicate a vision for effective and efficient city services. Stabilize the organization, optimize resources, and develop a long-term plan for fiscal sustainability.

### SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide a written update to the City Council on the status of the 2021-2022 work plan items.

The COVID-19 pandemic is again impacting the overall City workload. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was recently re-activated to Level 2 to address the impacts of the more contagious Delta variant. This activation level provides the resources and structure necessary to coordinate the City's response to the pandemic and to ensure essential City services are sustained. A level 2 EOC activation redirects some staff resources to the EOC and away from other work duties. The City leadership team is actively working to re-prioritize work items and have reflected as many of the changes as possible in the attached Exhibit 1.

The workforce continues to be impacted by the spread of the more contagious COVID-19 Delta variant and many staff teams have been impacted by positive cases and quarantine requirements, despite having a staff vaccination rate of close to 90%.

The competitive job market is also a factor in delivery of work plan items. A number of open positions remain vacant, despite an exhaustive recruitment effort. One example is the vacant Capital Project Manager positions, that have been advertised for the better part of 2021. The staff team continues pursuit of qualified candidates to fill these vacancies and is also exploring alternative options (e.g., contracting) to cover these staff vacancies.

### BACKGROUND

The City's work plan was approved in the [2021-2022 Adopted Budget](#), see also Exhibit 2. At the Mid-Year Planning Session on April 27, 2021, staff presented two streamlined work plan tools to better visualize and track major work plan items ([AB 5858](#)). The Major Work Plan Items visual tracking tool (Exhibit 1) has been

updated to reflect the status of current work items. Highlights of recent accomplishments and an overview of other work items is provided below.

Highlighted Recent Accomplishments:

- **Coordinate with King County jurisdictions on regional growth planning (including growth target development and adoption by the Growth Management Planning Council 2021). (Community Planning & Development)**  
Staff work is complete. On July 1, the King County GMPC approved and transmitted the 2021 Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) and 2021 Urban Growth Capacity Report (UGCR) to the King County Council. This work is necessary to commence the periodic update to the Citywide Comprehensive Plan, which is required to be completed no later than June 2024. Consideration and adoption of the CPPs and UGCR by the King County Council is expected this fall and cities will be asked to ratify prior to the conclusion of 2021.
- **Prepare for the opening of the Sound Transit Light Rail Station in 2023. Work with internal teams and other agencies to ensure safe design and implementation. (City Manager's Office, Fire, Police & Public Works)**  
Recent accomplishments include contracting with Sound Transit, Bellevue, and Redmond to train Fire crews for potential emergencies in light rail stations as well as on needed equipment, and accelerating the hiring of two new Police Officers, as approved by the City Council during the 2021-2022 budget process, who will be assigned to the Sound Transit light rail station area.
- **Restore the Citizens Academy, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and National Night Out. Conduct one Citizens Academy by Q4 2022.**  
Staff virtually revived a number of public outreach programs including Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, graduating 20 new emergency management volunteers. Staff supported local National Night Out neighborhood events and launched virtual Paws on Patrol and Neighborhood Watch programs.

Upcoming City Council Review/Action Items:

- **Review and update the City's current budget policies and present new financial management policies to the City Council. (Finance)**  
The City has undertaken a significant update to the Citywide financial policies. The Policies serve as a blueprint to draft the biennial budget, achieve goals set forth in the work plans, and strategically direct financial resources towards meeting the City's long-term goals. This project is ahead of schedule with first reading completed on August 31, 2021 and adoption slated for September 21, 2021.
- **Report to Council on implementation of permit fee analysis and level of service analysis. (Community Planning & Development)**  
After making several significant changes to the Permit Fee Schedule for 2021 including updated building valuations and hourly permit processing charges, staff will provide City Council with an update on the success of these changes as well as ongoing staff time tracking efforts as part of the second quarter report planned for September 21, 2021.
- **Explore the feasibility and cost effectiveness of contracting with a surrounding jurisdiction for municipal court services by Q3 2021. (Administrative Services, Police, City Attorney's Office, and Municipal Court)**  
A multi-department staff team has begun the process of analyzing options for municipal court

delivery services, either by continuing the Mercer Island Municipal Court or by contracting with another area court. Thanks to the Police Department leadership for stepping up to lead this project given the inability to secure a consultant to perform this work. Staff will present findings and recommendations at the October 19, 2021 City Council Meeting.

- **Negotiate new Collective Bargaining Agreements with Police and Police Support (2022-2024); AFSCME (2022-2023); and Fire (2022-2024) bargaining groups. (Administrative Services, City Attorney's Office, and City Manager's Office)**

Staff are in the process of negotiating new collective bargaining agreements with Police, Police Support, and AFSCME and a one-year extension agreement with Fire.

- **Update Animal Control Ordinance in conjunction with the City Attorney's office by Q2 2022.**  
Staff presented a draft of the updated Animal Control ordinance on August 31, 2021 and the second reading is scheduled for October 5, 2021.

#### On-Track/Ongoing:

- **Oversee the City's Emergency Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic (All Departments)**  
Continue to oversee and manage the City's response to the pandemic including keeping the City Council and community apprised of city service changes and updates, monitoring current health conditions, and implementing additional protective measures including delaying facility rentals, implementing a capacity cap at the Thrift Shop, delaying City Hall re-opening, and exploring alternative innovative programming.
- **Provide ethics training for all public officials. (City Manager's Office and City Attorney's Office)**  
City Council adopted the updated Code of Ethics on June 16, 2021. A training program for boards and commissions has been developed and will be deployed in October 2021.
- **Defend the 2017 Settlement Agreement with Sound Transit to ensure modifications to North Mercer Way that allow passenger transfers to and from bus and light rail at the East Link Station do not adversely impact traffic patterns or public safety for community residents. (City Attorney and City Manager's Office)**  
The City Attorney and legal team are tasked with holding Sound Transit to the terms of the 2017 Settlement Agreement. There are currently crossclaims and appeals proceedings pending before King County Superior Court and Court of Appeals. This remains a significant work item for the City and requires a considerable amount of staff time and support from outside legal counsel. The City was granted relief via the Court for Sound Transit's discovery misconduct, including reimbursement for fees and costs relating to Sound Transit's failure to produce documents relevant to the case in a timely manner. The City has also appealed the Superior Court's Land Use Petition Act (LUPA) decision to the Court of Appeals, and filed a Notice of Supersedeas to stay, while the appeal is pending, the Superior Court's LUPA decision ordered the City to issue permits to Sound Transit for the construction of bus layover on the north side of North Mercer Way.
- **Work with Sound Transit on design, plan review, and installation of fire suppression systems for the light rail station by 2023. (Fire)**  
The Fire Marshal and Fire Department Leadership continue to work with Sound Transit on safety and fire suppression systems and requirements for the light rail station. Fire alarm, fire sprinkler, and clean agent systems will be finalized soon. Work is also underway on maintenance and operations agreements for installed hydrants. Fire sprinkler and standpipe systems testing and flushing have been completed. Access gates are being permitted and installed. This work will continue until 2023.

- Prepare for the new light rail station, to include police response protocols and pedestrian and vehicles safety considerations. (Police)**

The Department accelerated the hiring of two new police officers, as approved by the City Council during the 2021-2022 budget process, who will be assigned to the Sound Transit light rail station area.
- Administer the Sound Transit Settlement Agreement to include tracking of appropriations and expenditures, contract management, and submission of invoices. (City Manager's Office and Finance)**

The ongoing tracking and invoicing of costs incurred by the City for which the City is eligible for reimbursement under the 2017 Settlement Agreement with Sound Transit. Significant reimbursements during this period include enhancements to traffic safety to offset the impact of the Mercer Island Station such as a new crosswalk construction near West Mercer Elementary School.
- Develop a strategy and evaluate options to upgrade the technology in Council Chambers to allow for Councilmembers and/or staff to participate remotely if unable to attend a meeting in-person. (City Manager's Office and Others)**

Staff have installed necessary technology and worked through technical issues to allow for hybrid (in-person and remote) participation at public meetings, when feasible.
- Conduct a Citywide Classification & Compensation Study. (Administrative Services)**

The Classification and Compensation Study examines and evaluates the City's current salary schedule for non-represented employees, develops a classification system for all positions, and recommends improvements or changes to be implemented. Phase one of the study is underway; the consultant is reviewing and editing job descriptions for all non-represented positions. Phase two of the study which entails completing a market analysis for the positions, is set to be complete by the end of the first quarter 2022. City Council policy review is anticipated in early 2022.
- Develop a citywide compensation policy and philosophy subject to review and approval by the City Council. (Administrative Services and All Departments)**

The City is scheduled to develop a citywide compensation policy and philosophy to follow best practices and industry standards. The project's start has been pushed to the second quarter of 2022, after completion of the Citywide Classification & Compensation Study.
- Conduct a public engagement process to solicit input to rewrite the Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan (per supplemental goal 3.12). (Community Planning & Development)**

Staff are preparing a budget request to fund a robust public engagement process for the Economic Development portion of the Comprehensive Plan update. The City Council will have a chance to review the budget request this fall.
- Conduct a request for proposals by Q3 2021 to assess and evaluate software solutions to upgrade or replace the City's financial management system. Purchase and implement Enterprise Resource Planning Software by Q4 2022. (Finance)**

The City's current accounting software has not had a significant update in over sixteen years. To replace the software, the City developed a scope of work and issued a request for proposals (RFP) to evaluate alternative financial accounting software solutions. The RFP closed on September 14, 2021. Staff are evaluating the proposals and are on target to select a preferred software vendor by the end of November 2021.

- **Utilize Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) funds from King County Emergency Medical Services (KCEMS) to implement a MIH program, or contract with Bellevue Fire Department CARES program for Mercer Island residents pending consideration and acceptance by the City Council by Q2 2021. (Fire and Youth and Family Services)**

A six-year King County levy provides funding to local fire departments to establish a Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH) program designed to address the needs of low-acuity 9-1-1 callers and vulnerable community members. Beginning in January 2022, Fire crews, in partnership with Mercer Island Youth and Family Services (YFS), will deploy a set of programs and systems to connect community members accessing the emergency medical services to an array of health and social services.

- **Continue to ensure the Police Department complies with State accreditation standards and achieve reaccreditation in Q3 2021. (Police)**

Every four years the Police Department undergoes a comprehensive accreditation process managed by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC). The accreditation reviews 134 standards in the areas of Use of Force, Code of Conduct, Health and Safety, and more. The assessment helps ensure that Department policies meet the best practices and standards. The on-site review and assessment (virtual this year) is scheduled for September 15, 2021. The outcome will be announced shortly after.

- **Collaborate with public safety partners to acquire and implement the Puget Sound Emergency Radio Network (PSERN) for public safety communications by Q4 2022. (City Manager's Office, Police & Fire)**

The Puget Sound Emergency Radio Network Operator (PSERN) is scheduled to replace the current emergency radio communications system used by Mercer Island, Bellevue, Issaquah, and other King County communities. The project is currently in Phase 2, focused on building infrastructure (buying and implementing radios) and hiring a director. Deployment of the system could be as early as the end of 2021 or beginning of 2022 with a fully operational system by the end of 2022.

- **Complete the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan by Q2 2022. (City Manager's Office and Public Works)**

Work on the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan was revived in 2021 after a delay due to the Pandemic. A second community survey closes on September 17, 2021. The second survey has brought in over 1,200 responses – 790 online and 462 mail/print – as of September 14. The Parks and Recreation Commission has begun review of specific chapters of the draft PROS Plan, including the draft Capital Facilities Plan, and is expected to continue into Q4 2021. It is anticipated the City Council will review and adopt the PROS Plan in early 2022.

- **Implement the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Project ("SCADA" Project) by Q4 2022. (Public Works)**

The City's water distribution and sewer systems are monitored and controlled remotely by equipment commonly referred to as, Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition ("SCADA"). Construction has begun, including installation of hardware required for communications at five water sites. The water system is anticipated to be completed by Q2 2022 (due to material and manufacturer delays as a result of the pandemic). A bid for the next phase of the project, upgrading the sewer utility system, will be issued in the fourth quarter of 2021 for construction in 2022.

- **Complete the Water Meter Replacement Project by Q4 2022. (Public Works)**

The City is replacing residential water meters as well as upgrading the technology that reads and analyzes the water meters. The Project Team has been working to conclude the technology

propagation study and the contract negotiations with City's preferred vendor are nearing completion. Construction is anticipated to begin in the fourth quarter of 2021 or in early 2022.

- **Complete the ADA Transition Plan by Q4 2022. (Public Works)**

The City is developing an ADA Transition Plan to identify, prioritize, and remove barriers, specifically for those with disabilities. A public engagement process launched in the second quarter of 2021 with an online open house and community survey. The plan is under development throughout the fall of 2021 with a published version in early 2022.

- **Continue work on the Thrift Shop operations recovery plan with a goal of gradually expanding retail sales and donations processing per the guidelines of the Governor's Safe Start Plan. Prepare budget proposals for City Council review and consideration as recovery progresses. (City Manager's Office, Administrative Services, Finance and Youth & Family Services)**

The Thrift Shop division was able to implement early phases of the operations recovery plan by expanding operations in August to five days a week. Donations are still being collected and managed at the MICEC once a week. A donation bin was added to the south end of the Island and plans for donation bins at additional locations around the City are underway. Additional staff were brought on as in-person and online operations expanded. An informal Advisory Group was established to continue planning for a full Thrift Shop recovery.

- **Implement 2021 sustainability work plan as adopted on March 2, 2021. (Public Works)**

The 2021-2022 adopted budget included a full-time position focused on sustainability initiatives. Although the position was filled in early 2021, the person filling this role continued to provide support for Citywide Communications through early summer 2021. Now working at full capacity, the new Sustainability Analyst has begun work on sustainability initiatives including incorporating sustainability best practices in City operations/maintenance, and capital improvement projects; meeting GHG emission targets; restarting the sustainability committee; and scoping the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan.

Delayed Work Items:

- **Delayed to 2022: Continue implementation of HRIS software (NEOGOV) to centralize employee data, payroll, and benefits. This work is ongoing. (Administrative Services)**

The Human Resources staff team is continuing to work with the vendor to set up and implement HRIS software (NEOGOV). Implementation of this work is critical to deploying a number of process improvements. The challenge with implementation is that the Human Resources team is inundated with current recruitment work, other policy matters, and overseeing a wide variety of COVID-19 personnel impacts. The City Manager is seeking an appropriation at the September 21, 2021 City Council meeting to fund an additional limited-term Human Resources staff position through the end of 2022. This will help to address the backlog of work items and ensure NEOGOV implementation is completed. Next steps in the process include deploying the new software, training staff, and identifying technical issues, with full implementation now anticipated for mid- to late-2022.

- **Delayed to 2022: Create a master fee schedule for City Council adoption (includes CPD planning and permitting, impact, licensing, and parks fees) by the end of Q1 2022. (Administrative Services)**

Due to demands on staff this project has been moved to 2022. A master fee schedule will be ready to adopt by the end of the third quarter of 2022.

- Delayed: Work with the City Council and staff on the transition to in-person meetings. The City Council is currently meeting remotely due to restrictions related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The timing to resume in-person meetings is currently unknown. (City Manager's Office)**

Staff are prepared to return to in-person meetings as soon as it is safe to do so. Audio and video technology in the Council Chambers has been upgraded to allow for hybrid (in-person and remote) participation. Staff are working to integrate remaining enhancements in Council Chambers to improve City Council and audience experience.
- Delayed to early 2022: Prepare a recommendation to the City Council regarding the future use of the Tully's Property, acquired by the City in 2020. The City Council directed staff to suspend work on a mixed-use and commuter parking project proposed this site in 2020. This discussion is planned for 2021. (City Manager's Office)**

Staff continue to work with counterparts at the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) on matters related to the acquisition of Parcel 12 and Parcel A-2 and are preparing to provide a full update to the City Council later this year. A next steps discussion is planned for the first quarter of 2022.
- Partially Delayed: Develop a transition plan to re-open the Mercer Island Community and Event Center (MICEC) and restore recreation programs and services. (Parks & Recreation)**

Implementation of the earliest phases of the transition and re-opening plan for the Community and Event Center and recreation programs and services began in the summer of 2021. In June 2021, the MICEC opened its doors to Mercer Island youth for summer camp. In August 2021, MICEC staff welcomed community members for open gym. In late August 2021, the Parks and Recreation Division hosted its first event in over a year – Mostly Music in the Park. Three outdoor events had been scheduled but two were canceled due to increasing COVID-19 cases. Staff continue to develop and modify the transition and re-opening plan due to the changes in the Pandemic.
- Delayed to 2022: Administer a community-wide survey to understand community needs/wants related to business offerings, parking, walkability, and other issues concerning Town Center. (Community Planning & Development)**

The community-wide business survey has been temporarily delayed due to lack of staff capacity related to the sequencing and priority of other projects. The survey is now scheduled in 2022 as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. Results from this resident survey will support efforts to develop the new Economic Development Element for the Comprehensive Plan.
- Hire a Senior Policy Analyst position to address land use policy including code amendments and comprehensive plan updates beginning July 2021. (Community Planning & Development)**

Included as part of the 2021-2022 approved budget, the City began recruiting for a Senior Policy Analyst who will support policy work related to code amendments, comprehensive plan updates, and more. The initial recruitment for the position commenced earlier this year. The City is currently undertaking a second recruitment process to fill this role.

The next update to the Work Plan is scheduled for the beginning of 2022.

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive report.