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# CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

## Parks & Recreation Department

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## Parks and Recreation Commission

### November 5, 2020

#### Aubrey Davis Park Trail Safety Improvements #2

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To: Parks & Recreation Commission

From: Paul West, CIP Project Manager

Date: October 27, 2020

Mercer Island City Council directed the City Manager and the Parks and Recreation Commission to develop a recommended scope of work for the \$500,000 Washington State Department of Commerce grant when it adopted the Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan. These funds were appropriated to the City of Mercer Island by the Washington State Legislature, designated specifically for trail safety improvements on the Mountains to Sound Trail.

#### **Background:**

At its February 6, 2020 meeting the Parks and Recreation Commission discussed the draft scope of work for Aubrey Davis Park Trail Safety Improvements. Prior to the meeting, several commissioners had walked the trail through the Lid Park and had come to the meeting with an interest in considering "lower impact" improvements on a stretch of trail between 60<sup>th</sup> Ave SE and 76<sup>th</sup> Ave SE. The focus of the conversation at the meeting sought to improve trail safety without the need for a separate parallel trail, when possible limit additional installation of impervious surface, and eliminate the need to relocate the maintenance shop area. Traffic calming, separation of traffic on the trail, speed limits, education and wayfinding were all topics the Commission directed to be within the scope of work at this meeting.

Through the input and direction received, staff drafted a scope of work, attached as Exhibit 1. It was forwarded to WSDOT Northwest Region for an initial review on February 24, 2020.

For the past nine months, Commission meetings have been cancelled because of COVID-19 Pandemic. At the November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, Commissioners will review the draft scope of work and provide further input. Once a recommendation for a scope of work is finalized by the Commission, it will be delivered to the City Council for review at a future City Council Meeting.

The Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan generated significant public conversation regarding the future of the Mountains to Sound trail. Interest in this facility remain high. The proposed scope of work will include provisions for continues public engagement throughout the project design.

There is some urgency to this matter. The Department of Commerce (DOC) cannot issue a grant agreement until there is an approved scope of work. The DOC has indicated that this funding has to be encumbered by the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2021 to be eligible to be carried forward. Given the steps of obtaining City Council and WSDOT's approvals prior to submitting the scope of work to the DOC, this matter will be a high priority for the Commission.

**NEXT STEPS:**

Staff requests the following:

1. Provide revisions and edits to the attached scope of work;
2. Is any further analysis or engagement recommended or needed before the Commission is ready to make a final recommendation to the City Council?

## Aubrey Davis Park Trail Safety Improvements Scope of Work

### Problem Statement

The 0.8 mile section of the Mountains to Sound Regional Trail from 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE to 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE travels through an urban park setting that contains many recreational facilities, including sports fields, tennis courts, playgrounds, picnic areas and connecting spur trails. The intensive recreational use on this stretch of trail contributes to user conflicts. This segment of trail also contains significant grades that contribute to high speeds of travel among wheeled trail users. As a result, traffic along the trail travels at a wide range of speeds. Traffic also crosses the trail between two destinations, such as a parking lot and a sports facility. The trail currently does not segregate users, nor does it have notable features that regulate speed or control traffic flow other than limited center striping, bollards and “keep right” signs.

The Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan explored high-level trail planning issues such as trail width, bypass routes and key intersections. It did not consider a more detailed transportation design of the trail itself. Also, a main goal of the master plan is to preserve the open space in the park. Limiting or avoiding new impervious surface is a key objective in planning new facilities.

### Goals and Objectives

The goal of this project is to reduce user conflicts to create a safer, more enjoyable experience for both trail users and park users while maintaining the existing character of the park.

Primarily, this goal would be achieved by combining “low impact” approaches in a coordinated trail plan. Low impact approaches could include, but are not limited to:

- Traffic calming measures
- Traffic separation on the trail
- Street bypass routes for high-speed cyclists
- Trail speed limits
- Traffic barriers to limit cross-trail traffic in targeted areas
- Traffic signage and pavement markings
- Wayfinding and park rules signs
- Public education
- Art and placemaking elements

Secondarily, the planning process would consider an expanded trail cross section in limited or targeted areas such as immediately around the restroom that enhances the function of the low impact approaches. This objective would exclude the creation of new parallel trails, such as the one that has been proposed to route cyclists behind the restroom.

### Scope of Work

This project would design and construct trail safety improvements that meet these goals and objectives in the segment of the Mountains to Sound Trail defined above. The scope of work would include regular public involvement in the design of the project. Roles for project partners would generally be as follows:

## Exhibit 1

1. Project management by City of Mercer Island (CMI). These costs are not covered by the Department of Commerce (DOC) grant.
2. Project oversight by City of Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Commission
3. Review and approval authority by WA State Dept of Transportation Northwest Region staff (WSDOT).
4. Design, permitting and construction management provided by a consultant team selected by CMI and WSDOT
5. Public works construction of an approved plan or a portion thereof
6. Grant management by the DOC (@2% of the grant total)

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