

PCB26-03

Briefing on Station Subarea Plan Goals and Policies

April 29, 2026

Mercer Island Planning Commission

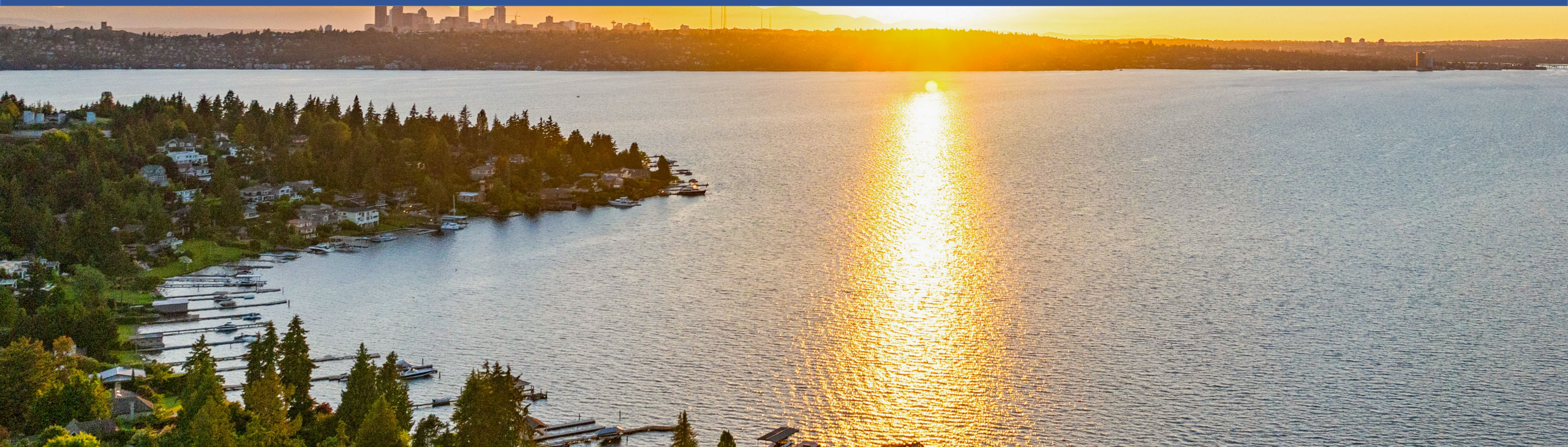
Community Planning and Development
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PURPOSE

To provide an initial briefing on the goals and policies of the Station Subarea Plan and prepare the Planning Commission to provide comments by the May 11 comment deadline.

BACKGROUND



Station Subarea Plan Quick Facts

What is a Subarea Plan?

A subarea plan is a set of goals and policies for a defined area in the city. It is part of the Comprehensive Plan that establishes a refined plan for the subarea.

Why is the City adopting a Station Subarea Plan?

The Growth Management Hearings Board found that the City must adopt a subarea plan for the area near transit to comply with the Growth Management Act (GMA).

When will the phases of the Station Subarea Plan happen?

Phase 1 – changes will be made concurrently with adoption of the Station Subarea Plan.

Phase 2 – City will have until 2029 to complete Phase 2. Work will begin following adoption of the Station Subarea Plan.

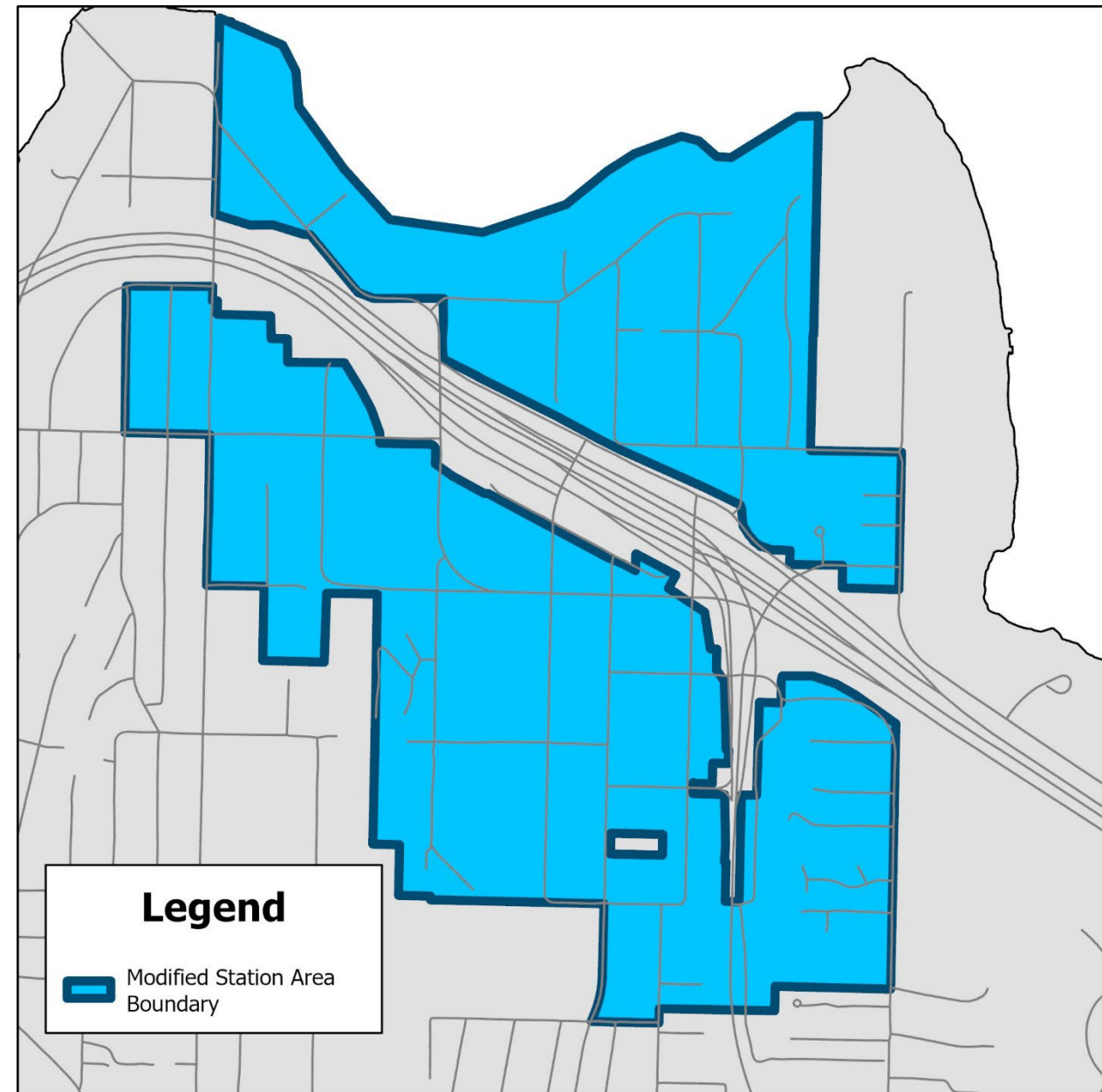
Station Subarea Boundary

Station Subarea is located at the north end of Mercer Island.

It includes the existing Town Center and areas surrounding the Light Rail Station.

The only changes to zoning in the Station Subarea will be in the existing Town Center and the adjacent multifamily zones.

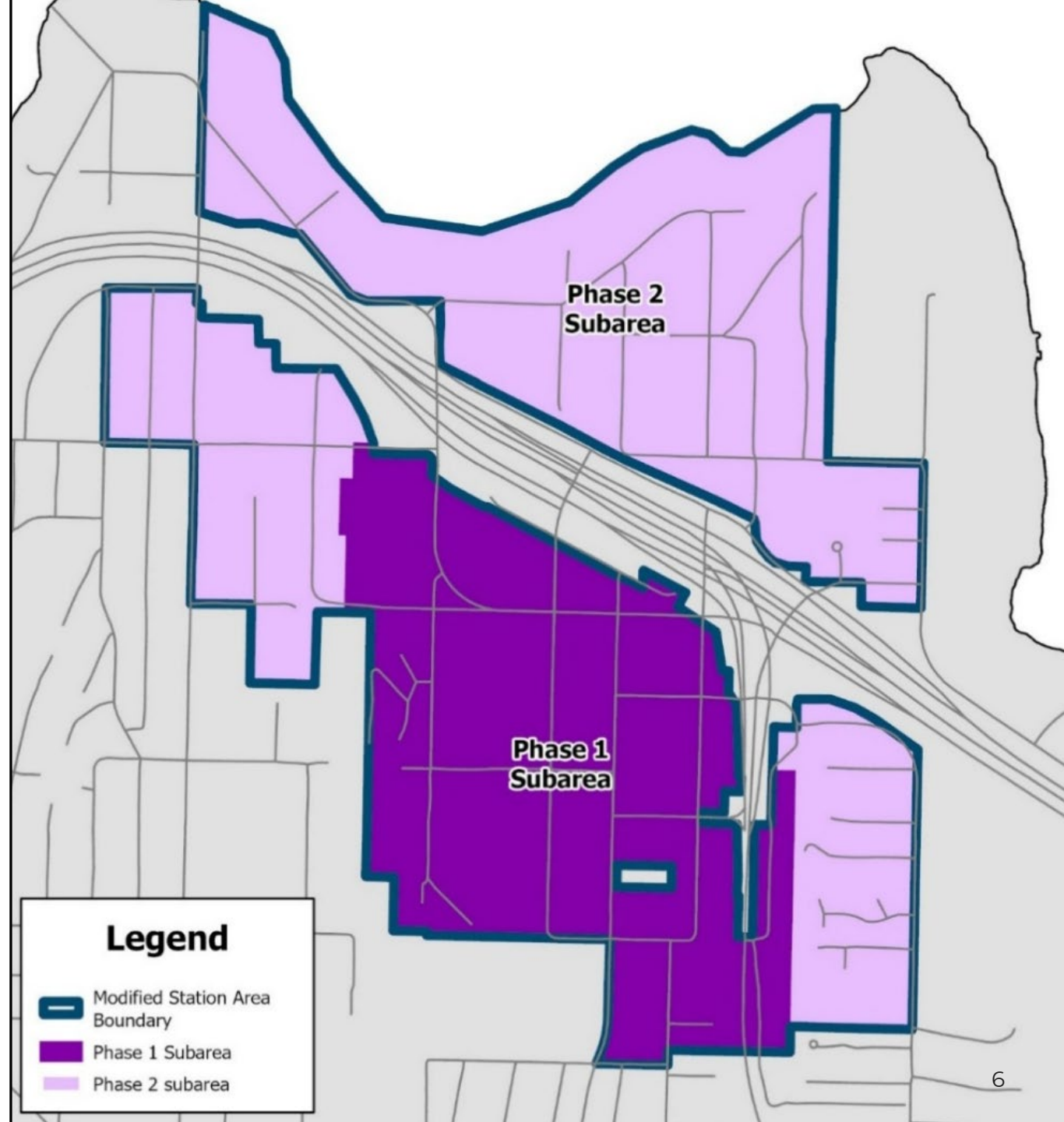
The City Council approved the Station Subarea Boundary on March 17.



Phased Approach

The Station Subarea Plan is divided into two phases:

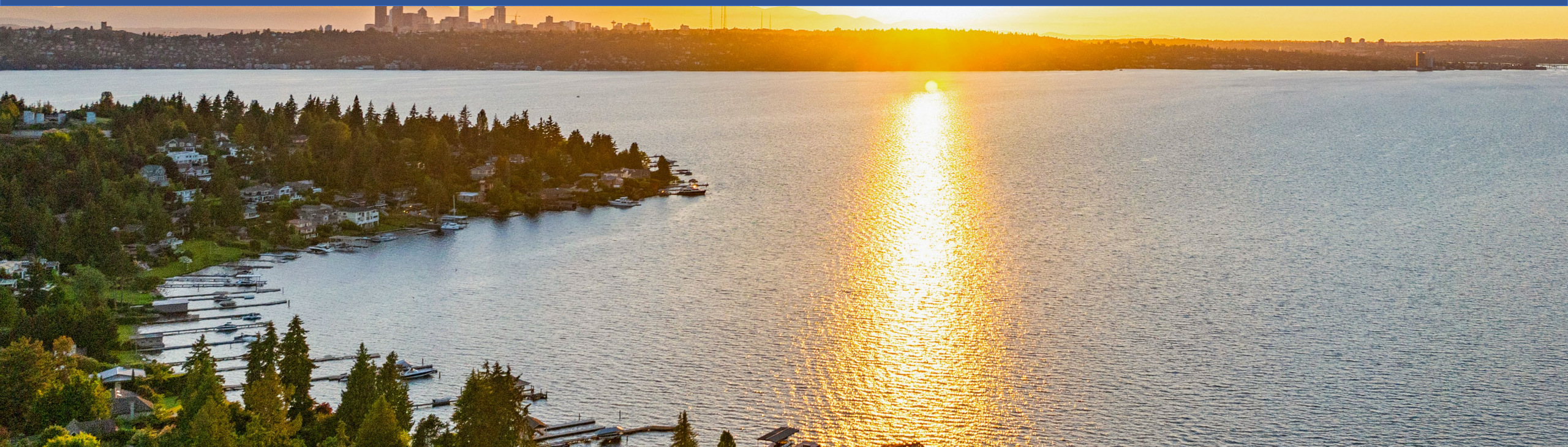
- **Phase 1 – Dark Purple** (by July 31, 2026):
 - Establish required transit station subarea
 - Apply required upzones and additional development capacity to comply with GMHB Order
- **Phase 2 – Lighter Purple** (by December 31, 2029):
 - Comply with other TOD bill requirements throughout the rest of the station subarea



HB 1491 TOD Bill

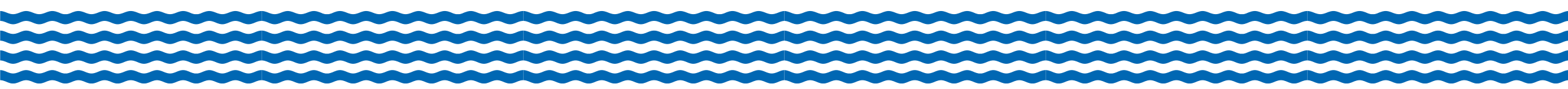
- Enacted in 2025, House Bill 1491 requires cities to allow **transit-oriented development or TOD** near transit. The bill is related
- Cities must designate a **station area**. The bill includes planning requirements for inside the station area.
- Compliance with the TOD bill is required no later than 2029 regardless of the GMHB Decision.
- Compliance with the TOD bill is planned for Phase 2. Work on compliance with this bill will not begin until after the Comprehensive Plan is updated to comply with GMA.

Station Subarea Plan Goals and Policies



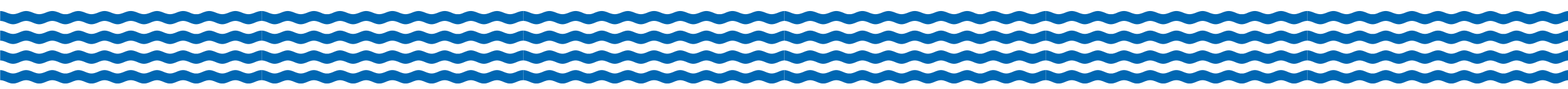
Initial Draft – Goals and Policies

- Goals and policies are the “what” and “how” of the subarea plan:
 - Goal: What the plan aims to achieve
 - Policy: How the City will achieve its goals
- Some goals and policies are existing from the land use, housing, and economic development elements.



Existing Goals and Policies

- Most existing goals and policies relocated to the subarea plan pertain to the Town Center.
- Existing goals and policies are noted with brackets and bold text i.e., **[Previously LU 6.4]** “LU” indicates the land use element and 6.4 is the policy number.
- Changes to existing goals and policies are shown in track changes.
- Town Center goals and policies have been amended to reflect the larger station area.

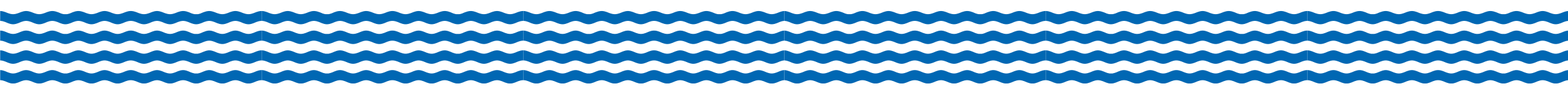


New Goals and Policies

New goals and policies do not have notation






Most of the new policy direction in the subarea plan is focused on how the City will approach Phase 2:

- Conduct public outreach during Phase 2 (Land Use Goal 1 policies)
- Policy direction to undertake an empirical parking study during Phase 2 (Land Use Policy 4.1)
- Plan for surplus public property for potential affordable housing developments (Housing 1.1)



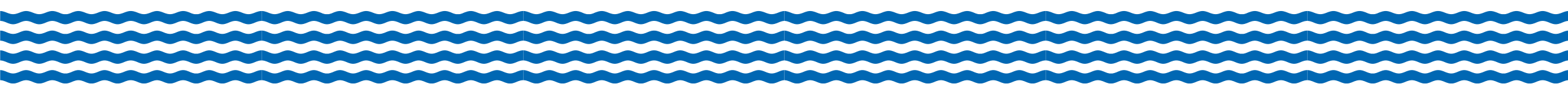
Implementation Program

- Summary of Phase 2 Implementation Actions
 - Brings together actions from Subarea Plan policies
 - Provides a snapshot of work to come 2026-2029
- Sorted by action type

	Public Engagement
	Evaluation & Analysis
	Policy Development
	Regulatory Update
	Infrastructure Investment

Station Subarea Plan – Still to Come

- Introductory text describing current conditions and planning context.
- Subarea Plan maps.
- Transportation, Capital facility, and Utility policies as needed based on results of capacity studies.



Planning Commission Comments

- The complete subarea Plan document will be presented May 6.
- Planning Commission comments on the Station Subarea Plan are due by end-of-day Monday May 11.
- Comments on the draft will be compiled into a matrix and presented for the Planning Commission consideration during the public hearing on June 3.

Questions?

