

# TIP Public Comments Via Let's Talk and Public Works

No.	Category	Location	Comment/Suggestion	Date
1	Pedestrian and Bicycle Project	ICW- North of SE 72nd PI	Create a pedestrian crosswalk (across ICW) just north of SE 72nd Place. Provides a safe connection between two trail systems.	3/18/20
2	Pedestrian and Bicycle Project	WMW	While I appreciate the bike lane around the Island in one direction, some of us use bikes to commute and need to be able to travel safely in both directions. Downtown, the speed limit is low enough and there are enough stops to mitigate bike travel in the road on the rare occasion there's not a bike lane. But the major thoroughfares (e.g. WMW) are unsafe without bike lanes so those need to be added in the other direction. Please add that to the planning. Thanks.	3/19/20
3	Pedestrian and Bicycle Project	City Wide	I believe the most important suggestions I have is to keep as much open green spaces as possible. Do not increase the widths of pedestrian walkways to accommodate the addition of bicycles. Use impervious surfaces as much as possible for the walkways. Planners must be aware of the dangers of bicycles to pedestrians, especially the small children using the park who may not be as observant of dangers from those on bicycles. If at all possible, keep pedestrians & bikers completely separate.	3/21/20
4	Non TIP	City Wide	Protect all our parks by putting them in a Trust to protect them forever from being sold or leased by the City of Mercer island for any revenue purpose as was attempted previously several times, the last being to lease a portion of Mercerdale Parker to establish a performing arts theater.	3/21/20
5	Non TIP	Former Recycling Center	The former recycling center should be repurposed as another educational effort that will honor the legacy of the late Harry Leavitt, Mercer Island native & much respected Mercer Island environmental educator under whose enthusiastic leadership the recycling center was built by his students & received WA State awards. The Concerned Citizens for Mercer Island Parks should head up any & all decision-making for the repurposing purposes.	3/21/20
6	Non TIP	Parks	No glysohate products should be used in any park or open spaces in order to control weeds. Use only products that will not harm humans, pets, wildlife, or ornaments trees or plants.	3/21/20
7	Arterial Street	EMW and SE 36th	Needs Improvement: This intersection (east mercer way and SE 36th Street) has been a problem for more than a decade, and has failed a number of traffic studies (LOS "F") that are public record.	3/25/20

No.	Category	Location	Comment/Suggestion	Date
8	Non TIP	5712 WMW	<p>I would like to request some type of safety measure such as a convex safety mirror to assist persons crossing West Mercer Way from a very fancy paved public trail head that leads onto West Mercer Way, to then be able access the Groveland Beach Park. Crossing the street from the neighborhood with the public park to the trail head is much easier as visibility is open both left and right directions. However crossing from the trail head to the park is very difficult and dangerous as the corner is completely blind to the left.</p> <p>One has to stand in the multi use "lane" that bikers walkers etc use and listen for any traffic before running across WMW.</p> <p>I think the safety is best achieved if the pedestrians could "see" around that corner. Perhaps with the use of the convex mirror or another device known the public works?</p>	3/27/20
9	Non TIP	Mercer Island Loop	<p>Like many of the thousands of silent residents who live on or near the loop, I have noticed a significant degradation in the quality of our lives due to the influx of off-Island motorcycles (often traveling in groups) and race cars speeding around the Island. Are we really waiting for someone to die? I didn't imagine living on a race track where 100+ decibels of rumbling serenade our community from morning til late night. Something must be done to change this besides relying on our already overtaxed Police patrols. I posted on ND "Mercer Loop Recreational Speedway" to see if I was the only one who - I'm not! The Council should find solutions to this in TIPS because the silent residents will eventually discover their voices. Thank you</p>	5/18/20
10	Non TIP	Mercer Island Loop	<p>Our household has noticed a sharp uptick in noisy motorcycles and excessively fast cars racing on EMW at all hours of the day and night and on every day and night of the week. Not conducive to sleep at night, not safe in the day.</p> <p>Please consider traffic calming solutions for the Mercer Loop. Speed bumps, stop signs placed at certain intersections, or traffic enforcement cameras would all be a step in the right direction. We're not a racetrack and some solutions are needed.</p>	5/18/20

No.	Category	Location	Comment/Suggestion	Date
11	Non TIP	Mercer Island Loop	I live on EMW, and while the 'Speedway' has always been bad, it's a massive liability and nuisance now. I'm proactive versus waiting until car/motorcycle racers kill someone, and we need to act. I've almost been hit head-on twice by speedy passers on blind curves. Post cameras, drones, whatever we can do to heavily fine offenders. It will pay for itself, and we might be safe on our roads and not be woken at night by loud motors, screeches, revving and honking.	5/18/20
12	Non TIP	Mercer Island Loop	I sometime go for a walk along West Mercer Way. I also have noticed speeding bicycle teams, roaring motorcycles and fast cars being driven. I am wondering if putting some 4-way or 3-way stop signs at some intersections on the West and East Mercer Way would be helpful in slowing down the racing motorcycles, cars and also bicycles. Also speed cameras might help. Thanks.	5/18/20
13	Non TIP	EMW	What is being done about the street racing that happens late at night? I am often awakened by cars racing by on East Mercer Way at midnight. Often the exhaust noise is over 100 decibels inside my bedroom which is close to 200 feet above and away from the road.	5/18/20
14	Non TIP	WMW	Resident of WMW here! I'm also a resident physician at the Harborview ER. Motorcycle crashes continue to cause horrific accidents with significant morbidity and mortality with all ages affected. I feel that anecdotally these are increased so far this summer (probably due to everyone feeling cooped up in quarantine). Every time I hear a motorcycle (especially late at night) I worry that they will end up at Harborview. I would be in favor of any actions that attempt to limit speeding/reckless driving on the island from motorcycles and cars alike.	5/18/20
15	Pedestrian and Bicycle Project	EMW	My home on Mercer Island backs up to East Mercer Way and my property value has been negatively affected by loud motorcycles and cars racing on East Mercer Way, especially during nice weather. I hope the City can do something about that. Another concern I have is the bicycles on East Mercer Way and West Mercer Way. We need bike lanes in both directions. The bicycle riders do not pull over for cars. As a result, they back up traffic and create a dangerous situation for everyone.	5/18/20
16	Non TIP	EMW	I concur with previous commenters. The racing on E Mercer Way is a serious problem and I would like to understand what options we as a community have to mitigate it	5/18/20

No.	Category	Location	Comment/Suggestion	Date
17	Non TIP	EMW	I live on E. Mercer and walk along that road almost daily. I am appalled at the level of traffic and noise from the motorcycles and high speed sports cars. It is only a matter of time until someone gets killed or seriously hurt. The noise is ridiculous and my neighbors who live along E. Mercer talk nightly about what can be done. It is worse this year than I recall. I want to know what the MI police can do as summer is almost here and if we do nothing it is going to get worse. The little kids, moms with strollers, dog walkers, runners and cyclists are already working to share the road. This new element is not welcomed and not safe. What will be done to ensure that the loop around the island does not become a dangerous race track?	5/18/20
18	Non TIP	Mercer Island Loop	Please take a hard look at the problem we have with motorcycle cruising at high speeds around our Island. Especially in the middle of the night. The times I have been jolted awake between 1-3 in the morning from a continuous roar of loud sounding engines racing down or up West Mercer has drastically increased. I miss the days off island folks feared the speed limit on MI at any hour of the day. Come on! This should be an easy fix!	5/18/20
19	Non TIP	Mercer Island Loop	I am a motorcycle enthusiast but I don't ride the Mercer Island loop and support speed controls! Mercer Island has something extremely unique & wonderful with the continuous "ring road" and it should be "tuned" for slow speed enjoyment!! Europeans often use one-way street sections for cars/motorcycles or small "slalom traps" or roundabouts to slow traffic without speed bumps and allowing pedestrians/bicyclists flow by. But slowing the ring road would also require enhancing access and traffic flow of Island Crest Way for those who live on the ring road. It's a great & relatively easy opportunity for MI to shine :)	5/18/20
20	Non TIP	Mercer Island Loop	I've lived on WMW since 1995 and the racing cars and packs of motorcycle traffic has never been worse. In recent years, I rarely, if ever, see patrol officers from Holly Lane south to 63rd and only occasionally see an officer north from Marimount to 40th. In years past this stretch was frequently targeted and it had a noticeable positive effect on traffic conditions. With the increase of pedestrian & bike traffic along WMW during the lockdown it will only be a matter of time before there is a tragic accident if something isn't done to address the speeding and reckless passing of cars along the winding road.	5/18/20

No.	Category	Location	Comment/Suggestion	Date
21	Non TIP	Mercer Island Loop	I am a resident of Mercer Island, living mid Island. I have noticed two issues with traffic here:1. There is a lot of speeding/racing on the loop around the island. I would like to see more police doing stops or something to curb this. The noise and the potential for serious accident make me very concerned. Additionally I believe we need a dedicated bike lane on the Mercer Island loop so bikes can ride more safely.2. There are several crossing places on Island Crest that need to have those cross walks where lights flash when someone pushes a button. The flags are not enough. There was an accident this year with two pedestrians being hit. There needs to be more done to make crossing safer.	5/18/20
22	Non TIP	EMW	We have lived here for 16 years and we have never seen anything like the racing going on now on East Mercer Way. Sometimes motorcycles, sometimes race cars--but somebody is going to get killed unless we can stop it. Our house is on the straight stretch of East Mercer way in the 5900 block,, and when these racers come around the corner they floor it. 60 miles an hour is not unusual, sometimes 10 or 12 motorcycles or cars at a time. It is almost always on Friday, Saturday and Sunday between 5 and 7pm.Please help us so we can walk with our children, walk dogs and bike without threatening our lives.Thank you,Don Jensen	5/19/20
23	Pedestrian and Bicycle Project		Finish the missing link in a North Sound Bike/Ped route to link schools and island with Town Center	5/19/20
<b>Comments Received Following the May 19 Opening of the Public Hearing</b>				
24	Non TIP	EMW	I have lived on E Mercer Way since 1980 and can confirm the problem with street racing, whether it's cars or motorcycles, has been steadily escalating. For years it's been a nightly occurrence and lately daytime racing has also become a thing- scary! Our home sits directly above E Mercer (4900 block) and there have been numerous racing related accidents on the road directly below us. Our mail boxes have been demolished and my kids have sat in our yard more than once, watching tow trucks trying to retrieve cars stuck half-way down a ravine because they didn't make the curve. The speeds are terrifying and inclement weather does not deter. It's a matter of time before a pedestrian or an innocent driver dies. There has to be a solution. Help!	#####

No.	Category	Location	Comment/Suggestion	Date
25	Pedestrian and Bicycle Project	WMW	The public sidewalk/bike path parallel to I-90 leading in and out of West Mercer Way is a real choke point. It's often very crowded with no way to socially distance. Could it be widened? Perhaps directional signage added? Or at least a polite sign asking users to "Please use masks in this crowded area" ? Thank you,	#####

## **Additional TIP Comments Received By Email Following the May 19 Opening of the Public Hearing**

I took time to listen to this week's council meeting as well as public input. The public input really bothered me related to creating public parking on 77th Avenue to assist retail owners recover from the pandemic. My reason is that it showed residents with more concern of self than community.

Let me explain.

We know that no one could be against assisting local retail to recover because of bicycle safety because every like community to us (Kirkland, Bothell, Edmonds, Bainbridge Island, Langley, Issaquah,...), all blend their bicycle and vehicular traffic in their retail cores and have experienced no adverse effects. I not only have taught bicycle safety for almost 30 years but am well enough known for doing this that a decade ago the P-I wrote a three page spread on my work. I know of no one else that has gained this much notoriety as a leader on this singular topic.

We know that no one could be against adding public parking to Town Center because of sustainability or clean air concerns because not doing so pushes residents off island for dining out, entertainment and shopping needs. This means more pollution to our atmosphere than an entire year of saving by having a solar panel on someone's house. Jeff Speck, the most noted urban planner on this topic (as well as others), has highlighted this fact in his books and speeches. If you want a green suburban community you have to provide for your residents to shop local so they don't have to drive elsewhere.

We know that no one that promotes our parks should be against adding public parking to Town Center because doing so gives local residents access to our parks. Currently Mercerdale as well as Sculpture Park do not have park parking so residents outside of Town Center can easily enjoy them. Adding public parking to Town Center that can be used for visiting our parks as well as shopping ensures that all residents will have access to our parks to enjoy them.

We know that no one concerned about costs should be against adding public parking to Town Center because we have seen our Farmers Market do this on 77th Avenue all last year at no cost by just using a few traffic cones to designate where parking begins and ends. Not only does this work but it is the recommended way to start with your retail core public street parking by Jeff Speck and other noted Urban Planners. The reason is that it is the least expensive and gives you the opportunity to see exactly what works before you commit large sums of money to the project. They recommend to start with just a few planter boxes and cones like we currently see in downtown Seattle to designate their cycle tracks so Seattle isn't wasting money till the cycle tracks prove out.

We know that no one concerned with traffic flow should be against adding public parking to Town Center on 77th Avenue because the only traffic concerns on this artery are at SE 27th Street where cars line up in the morning and evening waiting for an available parking spot to come available. At the Mercerdale Park end of the avenue there is so little traffic that this is the most closed off street in Town Center for other activities.

What we also know is if Mercer Island residents can not now solve our public parking concerns and begin to work together instead of against each other during these trying times, then our community will never come together. This is where we need city leadership that can get residents to speak to each other, to listen to each other and to come together to solve our challenges so everyone's concerns are recognized. Our city will not survive if our leadership does not speak out firmly against personal displays of ego over community. Retail owners are ready to work with other residents to save our retail core and at the same time address other



concerns. Will our leadership step up at this critical time so all residents put our community first over personal gains of pride?

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Dear Council,

Watching the meeting last night I was struck by City Manager Bon's comment regarding updating street standards. It is critical the city do this as soon as possible or else we risk major investments in bad infrastructure, like the bike lanes on 40th Street by Northwood Elementary (and as proposed on 77th and completely absent on 80th Ave). The city is designing facilities that do not meet protection standards for the [volumes of vehicles present](#). We don't need to reinvent the standards, just copy. Seattle has a great guide (<https://streetsillustrated.seattle.gov/>) and NACTO (<https://nacto.org/>) exists to produce better standards. Given these facilities connect directly to the Light Rail Station, I expect settlement money could be used in adopting updated standards.

Also, I noticed in the road design cross section for 77th St it show 11' travel lanes. This is [too wide for an urban street](#), to prevent speeding 10' is much safer and can carry equal volumes. Counterintuitively, smaller lanes are safer since they increase driver alertness and slow traffic down. Again our standards are outdated and inappropriate for our context. Our standards are both inefficient and increase risks for all users.

For reference this is the type of facility that should have been done on 40th given the volumes and presence of children.



(Cambridge, Massachusetts)

This is the type of facility that should be done on 80th



(Seattle, Washington)

Public Comment to the Mercer Island City Council  
Public Hearing on the 2021-2026 TIP  
May 20, 2020

Please consider the following comments on the 2021 – 2026 Transportation Improvement Program (“TIP”) as outlined in AB5691 and discussed in public session by the City Council and City staff on May 19, 2020.

**Extending the Public Hearing until June 16, 2020**

I concur with the Council’s actions to allow the community to provide comments after they have been able to hear testimony by City experts, e.g., City Engineer, etc. as this provided material information and context that was not brought forth in the written AB5691.

Moreover, I strongly suggest this timeline of extending public comment after the Council study session/discussion needs to be implemented for all public hearings of a technical nature. For example, I believe the upcoming Capital Improvement Program (“CIP”) where there will be a long list of projects for discussion would benefit from an amended timetable. For example, once the City agenda bill is published for a first reading, allow for public comment immediately, then the discussion by City Council/staff in public session, continue the public comment period until there is a second reading, and a final decision.

**Staffing for Infrastructure Projects**

Exhibit 1 listed all of the individual projects in the TIP. Many projects in the next biennium do not have a designated project manager. Infrastructure is one of the essential functions of local government (along with public safety and public education). I encourage the City to ensure that for those essential projects either internal or external resources are made available in a prudent manner to keep these projects on track.

**Project SP126 – 77<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE Channelization**

I understand (now) the necessity of a “placeholder” project to preserve certain rights with developers, etc. However, and my sense was the Council was leaning this way, that whether or not City code needs to be changed, it needs to be done in a thoughtful manner. It’s unclear at this juncture what the “new normal” will be in terms of preferred transportation modes – bicycles, private cars, public transit, etc. I know many believe that the “work from home” and online shopping trends are being accelerated due to the current circumstances. Since the project is not slated until 2026 there will be plenty of time to assess what is the right solution for 77<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, and by extension how it complements the overall Town Center and greater community. Let’s not get ahead of ourselves!

**Project SP119 – N/S Bike Lanes on ICW**

As was discussed, this project is multi-faceted, and will require a tremendous amount of effort. There were a number of qualitative comments made on usage by the various constituencies – pedestrians, bicyclists, autos, commercial vehicles, kids, schools, etc. However, as part of the research and groundwork there will need to be hard data on usage patterns – volumes, time of day, etc. Such information can go a longways to inform the Council and community on how best to meet safely the objectives of SP119.

**Opposition to Transportation Improvement Plan SP123  
“North Mercer Way Park and Ride Frontage Improvements”**

The 6 year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) includes SP123, “North Mercer Way Park and Ride Frontage Improvements” and is presented to the City Council in AB 5691 for approval. The justification for this plan is:

“...widening the I-90 to Sound trail to meet current standards for a multi-use facility, provide a mixing zone at 80<sup>th</sup> Ave SE crossing, improving sight lines at the western driveway access, relocating street lighting, and a new landscape area to match existing landscape. This project is planned for construction after the East Link Station is open and bus drop off/pick up is no longer needed at the north side of the road.”

I strongly oppose SP123 for the following reasons:

1. **It is too expensive.** It is the largest TIP at \$1,284,107, which is 70% of all REET projected for 2024 (\$1,833,300).
2. **It is very low priority.** It cannot be considered either mandatory or necessary. REET can alternately be used for the General Fund (up to 25% per RCW 82.46.015(1) and RCW 82.46.037, permanent provisions passed in 2015), or to accelerate more important Capital Improvement Plans, such as replacement of about 200 undersized and deteriorated water main projects, important tasks for improved drinking water quality.
3. **It is a detriment to pedestrian safety.** Mixing bicycle traffic with pedestrians and wheel chairs is adverse to pedestrian safety. Bicyclists should be required to dismount south of the parking garage.
4. **It is redundant, with no significant benefits.** The Mercer Island in Motion map provided by King County Metro shows a nearby bike trail that traverses westerly along North Mercer Way, then north on 84<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, then west on SE 24<sup>th</sup> St. (beside MICEC and the north side of the parking garage, then westerly along North Mercer Way, a trail that has significantly less pedestrian conflicts.
5. **It precludes better solutions for Mercer Islanders and bus riders from the east and southeast.** Mercer Islanders and eastside bus commuters are better served when busses arriving from the east continue on to Seattle, either without stopping on Mercer Island, or by using the existing bus bay without forced transfer to light rail. The roundabout is certain to cause major traffic jams on North Mercer Way and trip delays. The bus bay on the north side of NMW should at least be retained for local transportation, such as private car drop offs, Uber, Lyft, taxis and local buses. Layovers/idling should be prohibited.
6. **Forced bus transfers are not customer friendly.** The thought of driving to a P&R lot, taking a grueling bus ride, taking 5-10 minutes to transfer in the rain, followed by standing up in a packed light rail for the final leg to Seattle will be an incentive to drive to Mercer Island and try to park there, or to not use public transportation at all. Businesses that do not operate in the best interests of their customers are doomed to fail.
7. **It causes increased indirect costs.** The large number of pedestrians from enabled forced bus-light rail transfers will result in increased police, fire/aide and park/cleanup personnel, construction of restrooms, and other TIPs for traffic signals, signal coordination, signage, crosswalks, pavement markings, and traffic calming. Any agreement or building permit should contain full impact fees.
8. **It is ill defined.** Physical layouts either do not exist or are inconsistent. Cost breakdown data are not provided. The environmental impact statement is badly out of date/incomplete.

It should not be assumed that the bus turnaround and transfer is a done deal. They can easily undo any construction performed to thwart Sound Transit/Metro without strong legal protection. The best solution is a strong legal agreement that prohibits forced transfers, turnarounds, and layovers/idling.

It is quite possible that SP123 is just a placeholder, but it still conveys acceptance of the forced bus-light rail transfer and turnaround. Sound Transit will be emboldened to push for bus layovers in exchange for some token payment. This proposal should be turned down and another placeholder should be developed.

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### Counting the Buses: Opposition to SP123

There are 5 regularly scheduled Metro/Sound Transit bus routes that currently stop at the Mercer Island P&R on the north side of North Mercer Way (NMW). The number (before coronavirus reduction) of westbound morning stops:

#204 local Mercer Island only, embark/disembark on N. or S. side NMW	
#216 from Redmond, Sammamish, Issaquah to Seattle	6
#550 from Bellevue P&R	39
#554 from Eastgate P&R	15
#630 joint Metro & Mercer Island	<u>25</u> (likely all pickup at P&R)
Total	85

There are at least 4 regularly scheduled bus routes from the Eastside to Seattle via I-90 that don't stop on Mercer Island. The number of morning buses:

#114 Newcastle to Seattle	8
#212 Eastgate P&R to Seattle	27
#218 Issaquah via Eastgate P&R to Seattle	19
#219 Redmond via Eastgate P&R to Seattle	<u>6</u>
Total	60

It is understood that upon activation of Eastside light rail, #550 will be eliminated as redundant and #554 will be routed to Bellevue P&R, as it is generating traffic from Bellevue; the a.m. Mercer Island westbound bus stops would be reduced to 45, most of which originates from Mercer Island. This quantity is manageable for north side bus stops and is less than current level. It would be a disservice to Islanders to preclude #630 stops on the north side of NMW. Metro #216 services all passengers for Mercer Island from Eastgate P&R, though not exclusively.

Metro would like to force all buses currently not stopping on Mercer Island to disembark on Mercer Island and transfer to light rail raising the number of westbound morning stops to 105, far beyond the current level. The issue is really the number of passengers transferring. This is a disservice to the passengers on those buses, as well as to Mercer Island, and the benefit to Metro is small if at all. There are alternatives for the routes from Eastgate P&R:

1. Reroute some or all of these buses to Redmond to catch light rail there and don't go to Eastgate P&R—eliminates need for roundabout.
2. Let these buses continue on to Seattle, as they currently do—eliminates need for roundabout.

3. Have the passengers transfer to Metro #216 at the Eastgate P&R, let #216 continue to Seattle—eliminates need for roundabout
4. Reroute these buses to Bellevue P&R to catch light rail. The time to fight through the backups caused by these buses and the roundabout likely exceeds the time saving from not going to Bellevue P&R. The time saved for the passengers is even greater, considering the extra time to walk to the light rail and wait for the next train—eliminates need for roundabout.

**From:** [Dan Thompson](#)  
**To:** [Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Jessi Bon](#); [Jason Kintner](#); [Appelman Ira](#); [aql1@cornell.edu](#); [Tom Acker](#); [Ray Akers](#); [Matthew Goldbach](#); [Lloyd Gilman](#); ["Elizabeth Buckley"](#); [Carv Zwingle](#); [Mark Coen](#); [Mike Cero](#); [Gary Robinson](#); [david@surecritic.com](#); [Dwight Schaeffer](#); [Jon Hanlon](#); [Patrick Daugherty](#); [Jackie Dunbar](#); [Jim Eanes](#); [Elaine Kavalok](#); [fletchsa1@gmail.com](#); [Fran Call](#); [Max Goldbach](#); [heatherjordancartwright@gmail.com](#); ["John M Hall"](#); [Mark Hirayama](#); [Bob Harper](#); [Morrene Jacobson](#); ["Sarah Smith"](#); [Susan Lund](#); [Meg Lippert](#); [obergcd@comcast.net](#); [olivia@lippens.com](#); [Ashley Hay](#); [Peter Struck](#); [Robin Russell](#); [Ryan Rahlfs](#); [Robinson, Lori](#); [Susan Lund](#); [Carv Zwingle](#); [traci.granbois@gmail.com](#); [Victor Raisys](#); [Evan Maxim](#); [Ryan Daly](#)  
**Subject:** Transportation Improvement Program/Public Comments Open Until March 31/Lack Of Public Notice/Public Comments on Projects  
**Date:** Thursday, March 12, 2020 2:54:16 PM

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Hello, although the city and council are essentially closed due to the coronavirus the city just announced on Let's Talk that public comments are open from March 16 to March 31. Since the city has not publicized the comment period and there are some important issues I am submitting this email as my public comments. Quite frankly I object to the city beginning a 14 day public notice period on something as important as TIP when the council and city are shut down, and so far I haven't seen any effort at a public outreach to the citizens for their comments (which was the problem with the TIP in the past).

The TIP Let's Talk page can be found at <https://letstalk.mercergov.org/TIP2020>

The specific projects can be found at <http://www.mercergov.org/SIB/files/DescriptionofTIPProjects.pdf>

### **1 Town Center Improvements 80th St. Sidewalk (page 2, Sec. B).**

The city is proposing to remove the mature trees along 80th from 32nd to 34th in order to redo the sidewalk, presumably for the ADA based on earlier discussions. Anyone familiar with the this sidewalk will know few if any disabled individuals would use it as it is steep, while 78th is flat. Further the east side of 80th where the mature trees are to be removed is a very steep bank. I have a hard time the ADA requires this kind of compliance, which won't benefit disabled individuals.

My problem is some on our council do not distinguish between a tall tree and a tiny sapling. The trees planted along NMW are a good example. The only distinction between a blade of grass and a tree are height and canopy. The Mud Bay project alone will remove dozens of mature trees and replace them with saplings. The 80th St. project will do the same. The north side of NMW looks like a joke. Our TC is not visually attractive, and about the only appealing element are the mature trees.

Maintaining the mature trees was a main concern last year when this idea was addressed by the council. I submitted a method used in the lid park that allows mature trees to be preserved, even with invasive roots, by using grids under the surface, while repaving the path. Jason indicated this is a method that could work on 80th. Most of the council members including Bruce Bassett were committed to doing everything possible to save the mature

trees, and Jason said he would commit himself to exploring a method to save the mature trees, although surprisingly Salim was not (one of the few issues I disagree with Salim on).

Trees take decades to become mature. We need to work harder to preserve our mature trees, or our TC will have almost no visual appeal. This project and the Mud Bay approval for the removal of mature trees is returning our TC into a strip mall with saplings.

## **2 North-South Bike Route (Missing Gap) from 90th Ave. SE to SE 63rd St) Page 4. Sec. E**

This is the famous "missing gap" I have written to you about many times before. For over a decade Dan Grausz sought a remedy and failed, and now Salim has taken on this Holy Grail on behalf of NIM's (which is noted in the description section as the prime requester), and recently the planning commission buried a few comp. plan amendments prioritizing bike paths in front of schools. The city is now proposing to spend \$200,000 just for scoping and design (despite the passage of I-976 and lost of \$375,000 annually by the city). **The problem is this solution removes all the mature trees along the west side of ICW and still will not be effective or safe.** Here is the description:

**• North-South Bike Route - Island Crest Way (90th Avenue SE – SE 63rd Street) will allocate funding for the design of the missing link in the North-South Bike Route. This section of the North-South Bike routes is a high priority for Neighbor's in Motion (NIM) and will complete the missing section of bicycle route along the southern portion of Island Crest Way (between Island Park Elementary and Pioneer Park). Staff is proposing project scoping and design in 2019-2020 at a budget of \$200,000. All realistic design concepts will have some impact on trees in the ICW corridor so a public engagement process will be included during the preliminary design phase. City Council will receive a staff presentation of design alternatives and a summary of public**

Here are the problems:

1 Island Crest Elementary School does not want a bike path crossing in front or behind the school, for the safety of the children and because this is the most congested residential intersection on the Island. Parents will not give up driving their elementary kids to school to solve global warming or so a few bicyclists can ride at high speed along ICW.

2 In the past Scott Greenberg held a public meeting to ask the citizens if they opposed removing the trees on one side of ICW for a bike path. Scott testified he was lucky to get out alive.

3 The west side of ICW (actually both) have many different streets and driveways accessing ICW, and most residents have large hedges or vegetation screening ICW. This means a motorist has to pull out into the intersection to see the speeding traffic on ICW in order to enter, and exiting off ICW is at high speeds. Meanwhile bikes will be riding at a fast pace along this edge of ICW where cars will be pulling out blind, including Island Park field which means 16-18 year old drivers. This will make a very dangerous (or very slow) bike path.

4 The only alternative is to route the bicycles west behind Island Park Elementary (but not over or along the school property since adults and children in the back part of the property raises a risk for the children). Although this alternative was explored ad nauseum street parking and cost made it impractical.

5 Bicyclists hate riding along ICW at all, and generally use the Mercers. Plus it is too dangerous for kids riding to school (if there are kids who ride to school, most kids I know drive if they can).

This would be a multi-million dollar project, remove beautiful old trees (which seems to be a theme these days with the city and council), and not solve the problem. The only solution, as noted many times before, is to route the bikes west behind the school and field, and that would require removing parking from the streets and restriping them at a very significant cost.

### **3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan Page 5, Unfunded Projects**

The TIP proposes rewriting the Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan. There are some important things to consider:

1 TC street parking competes directly with bike paths, so a choice will have to be made, especially on 77th. Not many shoppers I know ride bikes.

2 The bus turn around will likely eliminate the only east -- west bike path through the TC.

3 The city lost an annual \$36,000 grant for intermodal transportation due to the passage of I-976.

4 Despite a \$5.5 billion price tag East Link provides no covered, secured bike lockers at either station, and most residents won't risk leaving their expensive bikes outside in an open rack (which is even a risk at the middle school). The PC recommended recently requiring new development to provide covered bike storage (no doubt the Tully's project) because apparently ST can't afford covered storage. No storage equals no last mile access by bikes.

5 The bus intercept depending on the intensify of the configuration could move so much car



traffic from NMW to 76th and 27th the TC is not safe to ride a bike in, like now, which is amazing considering we have a fairly small and flat TC.

#### **4 I-90 Trail Crossing At WMW, Page 5**

This proposal will address the crossing at WMW between the two parts of the lid park. My hope is we can find a better use of the \$500,000 grant from WSDOT than traffic calming at the bathroom for this project, although it will likely cost several million dollars. As you know my suggestion is to address the issue at the bathroom in the lid park with signage on the path warning of pedestrians ahead at the bathroom and a lighted speed sign to gather data before spending the entire grant on a round about at the bathroom, which still may be necessary.

#### **Conclusion**

I ask that mature trees and fiscal responsibility be part of these discussions, which in the past have tended to serve special interests (NIM's) and failed to see issues comprehensively, like bike paths and street parking. Since the TIP is a rolling 6 year plan many of these ideas come from a council and city manager who are long gone, and don't reflect our current fiscal situation and the views of the majority of citizens who don't know how to follow this discussion, and based on notice so far are not given any notice or opportunity to be heard.

I understand and appreciate the city and citizens are consumed with the coronavirus right now, which is why I object to such stealthy public notice for a TIP that can't be reviewed by this council for probably several months.

Thank you.

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