



**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND, WASHINGTON**

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DATE: January 5, 2023

TO: Mercer Island City Council

FROM: Parks and Recreation Commission  
Jodi McCarthy, Chair, Peter Struck, Vice Chair, Don Cohen, Paul Burstein, Sara Marxen,  
Rory Westberg, Ashley Hay

SUBJECT: Recommendation on Aubrey Davis Park Trail Safety Improvements 30% Design

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The Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) presents our recommendation on the Aubrey Davis Park Trail Safety Improvements 30% Design.

**Summary Recommendation:**

Our recommendation is to proceed to a 60% Design phase with further review by the Parks and Recreation Commission at the conclusion of that phase.

The PRC commenced review of this matter on April 7, 2022 and discussed the topic over four meetings. The project design team collected public input through a virtual open house held on February 17, 2022 and an online survey conducted from February 17 to March 17, 2022 as well as public comments received via the project page on Let's Talk. The open house was attended by 24 people, and survey responses were received from 86 participants. This input was presented to the PRC for consideration at the outset of its deliberations.

The 30% Design includes a roundabout, low fencing, signage and pavement markings at trail intersections throughout the Lid Park. It also provides additional trail modifications in the ballfield/restroom area that will reduce speeds, channelize cross-trail traffic and alert all users to the "mixing zone" they are entering.

**Project Priorities:**

The design prioritizes improvements that will directly enhance trail safety and focuses major improvements at the ballfield/restroom area, which is a critical area of concern.

**Focus on safety**

The PRC initially considered a suite of improvements that were collected from public input. With the limited budget, the PRC chose to prioritize improvements that would directly enhance

safety. The utility of other improvements such as benches, kiosks, and pull-out areas was not as clear.

#### **Focus on the ballfield/restroom area**

The initial design included substantial improvements at the West Mercer Way crossing. The PRC concluded that these improvements, while potentially useful, were not as critical to trail safety as the improvements proposed for the ballfield/restroom area. The PRC concluded that the project should focus trail improvements there. Particularly, the importance of a roundabout at the entrance to this area was identified as key to controlling traffic flow before trail users enter the mixing zone at the ballfield. ~~Additional analysis is needed to determine the exact composition and configuration of the roundabout.~~ Using concrete pavement to better define the restroom mixing zone will also further signal the need to be alert to the areas where park users enter the trail. Installation of low-level fencing will channel pedestrians to marked crossings and improve predictability for pedestrians and cyclists.

#### **Stay within the available budget Anticipated Budget & Funding Sources**

The Consultant's initial estimate included three schedules totaling nearly \$783,000 for all three schedules. With the refinements noted above, the current construction estimate for the recommended 30% Design is \$510,000 which will exceed the current budget for this project. ~~exceeds the available construction budget of \$350,000 by approximately \$25,000.~~ The PRC is pleased that this 30% Design has incorporated safety elements from multiple schedules. The PRC recommends moving forward with this scope of work, as the design achieves the goals of the project, and the estimate is a planning-level estimate that is likely to change when the project is publicly bid for construction.

The PRC recommends staff pursue additional funding sources such as grants (if available) to help cover the anticipated construction budget shortfall. Given the importance of this project and improvements proposed for this project, the PRC recommends that staff seek Council appropriation from the Capital Improvement Fund during the construction award for the remaining construction budget needs.

#### **Other Considerations:**

On June 2, the PRC and the Mercer Island Arts Council held a joint meeting and discussed opportunities to integrate art and/or placemaking elements into the project that would be consistent with the Aubrey Davis Park Master Plan. The PRC understands that placemaking elements incorporated into the trail could foster more considerate behaviors among trail users but also wants any features to be compatible with the park's natural landscape, including employing judicious selection of themes and colors. These recommendations will be transmitted to the Arts Council to further inform their discussions of how to use the project's 1% for Art in Public Places contribution (approximately \$3,500).

#### **Conclusion:**

The PRC believes the 30% Design provides much-needed improvements and that some elements of the design require further review in the next phase of design. These elements include:

- Refining the design of the roundabout
- Consider adding lighting in the roundabout area

- Number, placement and wording of signs
- Safety, effectiveness and placement of Thermoplastic striping

We look forward to seeing this project advance to 60% Design and request the opportunity to provide our recommendation at the completion of that phase.

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