



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6476
May 21, 2024
Regular Business**

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6476: Public Safety and Maintenance Building Design Progress Update	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Receive report. No action necessary.	

DEPARTMENT:	City Manager
STAFF:	Jessi Bon, City Manager Robbie Cunningham Adams, Management Analyst
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	n/a
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	3. Make once-in-a-generation investments to update and modernize aging infrastructure, capital facilities, and parks.

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to present an update on the preliminary programming and building capability needs of the future Public Safety and Maintenance building.

- Given the current condition of the Public Works building and unexpected closure of City Hall in 2023, the City Council directed the City Manager at the March 1 Planning Session to commence planning for a new Public Safety and Maintenance Building (PSM) on the current City Hall Campus ([AB 6420](#)).
- This new facility will replace the existing Public Works Building and provide a new combined home for the City’s Public Works teams, Police Department, Emergency Operations Center, and IT & GIS.
- Staff and the City’s architectural consultant team, Northwest Studio, have conducted workshops with the staff teams expected to be housed in the future PSM building to inform the ongoing design work.
- The new building is intended to be a Level IV Risk Category Building. The risk category of a building reflects the relative resilience to natural disasters and other building failure risks. Risk Category IV includes buildings that are essential in that their continuous use is needed, particularly in response to disasters. Police stations and emergency vehicle garages, Emergency Operations Centers, public works staff areas, and equipment necessary for emergency response, must remain operational during and after major disaster type events.

BACKGROUND

City Hall Closure

In April 2023, City Hall was closed after asbestos was detected in several locations in the building, including in the HVAC system. Although airborne asbestos was not detected during air quality tests, abatement at City Hall would be required to re-open the facility. City staff and outside experts worked extensively to identify solutions to address the asbestos contamination and evaluate the best path forward for City Hall. Two scenarios for re-occupying the City Hall building, either fully or partially, were evaluated for timeline, preliminary costs, and impact to City operations. Unfortunately, the cost of both scenarios to re-occupy City Hall exceeded the benefits due to the age and condition of the building. On October 2, 2023, [Resolution No. 1650](#) was approved to cease City operations at City Hall and permanently close the building.

Facility Conditions Assessment –Public Works Building

Given the age and condition of the Public Works Building, the City Manager directed the staff and consulting teams to proceed with the facilities conditions assessment (FCA) for this building. The Preliminary Facility Conditions Assessment for the Public Works Building was presented to the City Council on February 6, 2024 ([AB 6402](#)). The FCA identified multiple systems that are failing or in need of significant repair or investment. Based on these findings, the City Manager recommended the City Council prioritize the Public Works Building for replacement. The Public Works Building houses many essential services and some short-term reinvestment is needed to extend the life of the building until a replacement strategy is identified as discussed in AB 6477: Public Works Building Follow-Up, also on the agenda for discussion with the City Council at the May 21, 2024 City Council meeting.

Public Safety and Maintenance Building

During the March 1, 2024 Planning Session, the City Council contemplated the replacement strategy for City Hall and the Public Works Building. The Council directed the City Manager to commence planning for a new Public Safety and Maintenance Building (PSM) on the current City Hall Campus ([AB 6420](#)). This new facility will replace the existing Public Works Building and provide a new combined home for the City's Public Works teams, Police Department, Emergency Operations Center, and the IT & GIS team.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

Staff Workshops

Since City Council gave direction to begin planning for the Public Safety and Maintenance Building (PSM), staff and the City's architectural consultant team, Northwest Studio, have conducted workshops with the City teams anticipated to be housed in the future PSM building. The pre-design work considers the spaces needed in the building, in addition to how the spaces are best organized to achieve efficient workflows, to plan for future growth, and to accommodate changing space needs over time.

Overview of Programming and Work Groups Included in the Public Safety and Maintenance Building

Current planning for the new PSM anticipates the new building will house four key City functions: Police, Public Works and Maintenance, the Emergency Operations Center, and IT & GIS. In the existing City facilities, these four groups currently use approximately 40,000 square feet of building area and approximately 20,000 square feet of covered vehicle and equipment storage. The public works yard requires an additional 150,000 square feet of uncovered or partially covered space for operations. Together, these City functions are the

foundations for basic City operations and public safety. The benefits of housing these teams in the same facility include:

- Efficiency in co-locating protected and secured parking and storage for a vast array of City equipment and vehicles—including secured parking and sallyport space for police operations.
- Improved operational and emergency response coordination through centralized location of work groups who often co-respond and operate together.
- Large spaces driven by specific staff team needs can be shared, avoiding the construction of thousands of square feet of identical functions at other locations on the Island.
- Efficiency and cost effectiveness of constructing a single Risk Category IV facility for work groups that share emergency response duties.
- Improved security for sensitive public safety operations and critical City equipment, including limited and controlled access by non-City employees.

Police Department

The Mercer Island Police Department operated out of the former City Hall building and is currently operating out of modular buildings in the former City Hall parking lot and the Luther Burbank Building. Key programming needs for MIPD include:

- Workstations and support spaces for approximately 40 police department staff, including patrol units, detectives, marine units, administration.
- Secure parking for department vehicles and equipment.
- Public facing works space and storage for the records team.
- Single controlled public access point to the police precinct.
- Secure interview rooms.
- Vehicle sallyport and areas for secured criminal intake, processing, and holding.
- Secure evidence storage.
- Specialty secure storage and operations areas including marine storage and dive lockers, special operations room, bicycle patrol storage, and the armory.
- Patrol lockers and deployment mudroom.

Public Works and Maintenance

The new PSM building would replace both the existing public works administration and shop building in addition to improving and reorganizing the yard space for City vehicles and material storage. The Public Works department includes engineering, capital projects, parks, utility, right of way, stormwater, support services, and seasonal staff. Key programming needs for Public Works include:

- Workspaces and support spaces for approximately 80 employees including offices, meeting rooms, and lunch areas.
- Storage for field equipment and gear for field staff.
- Locker rooms, mud rooms, and cleanup rooms for field staff.
- Laundry facilities.
- Sleep rooms for staff overnight use during emergency operations.
- Primary loading, receiving, and storage areas for public works equipment and materials inventory.
- Storage and maintenance facilities for over 100 pieces of equipment and City vehicles, many of which are the largest and most expensive vehicles owned and operated by the City.

Emergency Operations Center

The former City Hall had a dedicated Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in the basement, and with the closure of City Hall the EOC has generally operated out of the Mercer Island Community and Event Center (MICEC) when needed. Key programming needs for the EOC include:

- A large and flexible command center.
- Breakout meeting spaces and areas for local media.
- Support spaces including a call center, emergency radio communications, equipment storage, and workspaces to host members of partner government agencies.
- Ample storage for food, water and other supplies in addition to supplies that may be needed for distribution to the community during emergencies.

IT & GIS

IT & GIS staff operated out of the former City Hall building, with IT & GIS staff currently working out of the Luther Burbank Admin building or remotely. Key programming needs for IT/GIS include:

- Workstations and support spaces for approximately nine City staff. This team historically spends a significant amount of their daily operations supporting the unique technical needs of the Police Department and Public Works team.
- Equipment and secure storage for new equipment and surplus equipment.
- Access to loading, receiving, and storage areas.
- A dedicated and secure server room.

Shared Spaces

Several support spaces are a shared necessity among multiple work groups, including:

- Sleeping spaces for staff during emergencies, extreme weather or multiple shifts, or circumstances related to MIPD operations.
- Large and flexible meetings spaces.
- Exercise equipment and lunchroom spaces.
- Lockers and storage for field equipment alongside shared cleanup and washdown areas.
- Loading and receiving areas for equipment and supplies.

Opportunity for a “Level IV” Essential Public Facility Building Standard

The risk category (RC) reflects the relative seriousness of potential failure. Categories vary from the lowest hazard to human life (RC I) to the highest hazard (RC IV) and serve as a threshold for a variety of code provisions related to earthquake, rain, flood, snow, ice, tornado, and wind loads. Requirements increase with the importance of the facility. The result is a more robust structure that would be less likely to sustain damage under the same conditions than a structure assigned to a lower risk category. The intent is to enhance a structure’s performance based on its use or the need to remain in operation during and after an emergency event.

In general terms, Risk Category II structures are the most common and form a baseline for general building design. While the current City Hall and Public Works buildings were constructed under an earlier building code, based on their construction they would likely fall into Category II.

Risk Category III structures are designed for 25% larger seismic forces than the average building (RC II) in the same location, while Category IV structures are designed for 50% larger seismic forces than the average building (RC II) in the same location. Category IV structures also require seismic bracing for all building systems including equipment, ductwork, and piping.

Risk Category IV includes buildings that are considered to be essential in that their continuous use is needed, particularly in response to disasters. Police stations and emergency vehicle garages, Emergency Operations Centers, public works staff areas and equipment necessary for emergency response, must remain operational during and after major disaster type events.

Staff are proposing to design the Public Safety and Maintenance Building to meet risk category level 4 building standards. The new building is a lifeline to the community in the most extreme circumstances, and continuity of operations for the work groups housed at this facility is essential during critical events.

Additional information on building risk categories can be found in the International Building Code (2021 1605.4) [in the link here](#).

NEXT STEPS

City staff and Northwest Studio will continue to work with Police, Public Works, EOC staff, and IT & GIS to gather feedback on design concepts and proposed building programming and workflow. City staff are preparing to return to the City Council in June to present preliminary design and siting concepts for the Public Safety and Maintenance building, including early cost estimates.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive report. No action necessary.