



# Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review

## **Parks Zone**

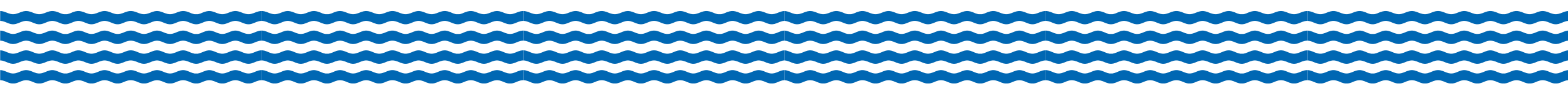
Planning Commission  
January 24, 2024

Adam Zack, Senior Planner  
Community Planning and Development

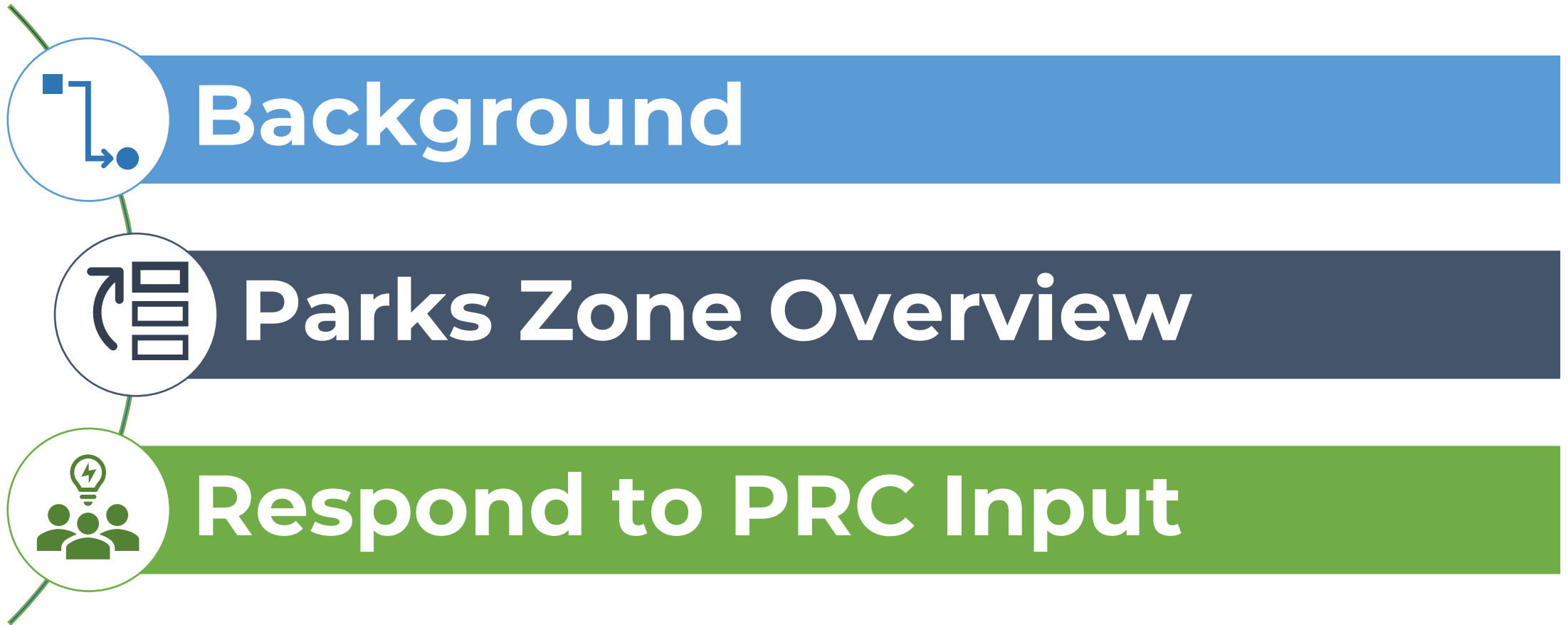


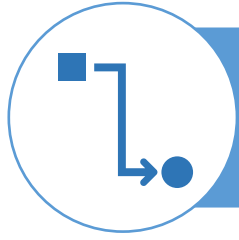
# Purpose

To provide the Planning Commission (PC) with an introduction to the initial parks zone draft and receive PC responses to the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) input.



# Agenda

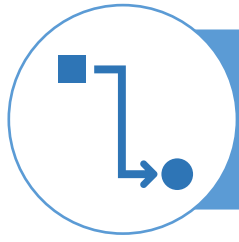




# Background

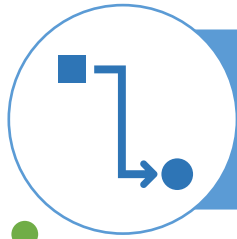
## **WHAT IS THE PARKS ZONE?**

- New zone to regulate development in City parks.
- Will be adopted during the Comprehensive Plan Update per City Council direction.
- Would apply to City-owned, -leased, or –managed parks.
- Ensure that park development is consistent with the adopted PROS Plan.



# Background

- The GMA requires cities in King County to complete the comprehensive plan periodic review by December 31, 2024.
- The periodic review scope of work set by Council in 2022 and supplemented in 2023 ([Resolution No. 1621](#) and [Resolution No. 1646](#)).
- Drafting a new Parks Zone was included in this scope of work.
- The Parks Zone will be adopted in Title 19 Mercer Island City Code (MICC), which requires a specific legislative review process.



# Process

## Project Begins



## PC review



## Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review Open House



## Public Hearing and Recommendation



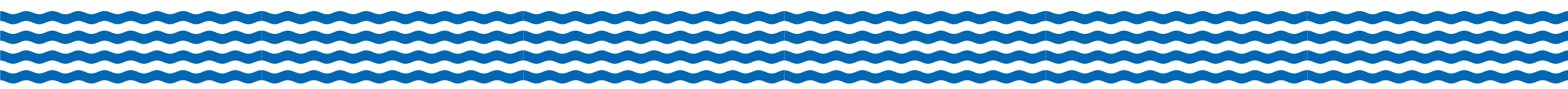
- Scope of Work
- Staff Prepares Initial Draft
- Parks and Recreation Commission Input

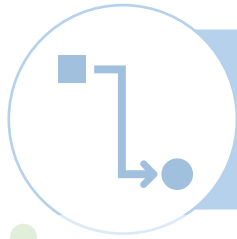
Several meetings to prepare a Public Review Draft

PC responds to comments

PC Makes Recommendation to Council

Periodic Review Concludes





# Process

## Project Begins

- Scope of Work
- Staff Prepares Initial Draft
- Parks and Recreation Commission Input

## PC review

Several meetings to prepare a Public Review Draft

Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review Open House

PC responds to comments

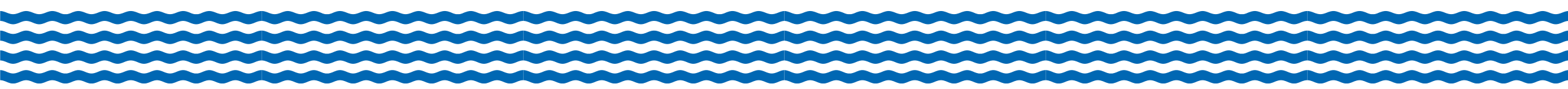
Public Hearing and Recommendation

PC Makes Recommendation to Council

City Council Review and Adoption

Periodic Review Concludes

**We are here**







# Parks Zone Overview

## Development Regulations

- Two New Code Sections
- Amendments to MICC 19.01.040
- New Definitions

## Zoning Map

- Shows where Parks Zone development regulations would apply
- Does not include street ends, 'landings', and Aubrey Davis Park

## Land Use Map

- Part of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan
- Establishes the generalized location of future land uses based on the policies of the Comprehensive Plan
- Forms the basis for zoning





# Parks Zone Overview

**1** Zone establishment (amending MICC 19.01.040)

**2** Zone purpose and designation criteria

**3** Permitted land uses

**4** Development standards

**5** Definitions (amending MICC 19.16.010)



# Parks Zone Overview

## 1 Zone establishment (amending MICC 19.01.040)

- MICC 19.01.040 must be amended to create a new zone.
- Proposed amendments are limited to those required to establish the zone and minor edits for clarity.



# Parks Zone Overview

## 2 Zone purpose and designation criteria

### Purpose

- Establish regulations for parks because their intended land uses substantially differ from other zones.
- Focus is the facilitation and continuation of recreational uses of publicly owned park lands.

### Designation Criteria

- Set the rules for when lands may be zoned Parks.
- Lands must be City-owned, -leased, or -managed.
- Council must make findings that zoning is consistent with the purpose.



# Parks Zone Overview

## 3 Permitted land uses

The list of permitted uses should be:

**Broad enough** to ensure that the City can develop its park land to realize the PROS Plan, and

**Narrow enough** to preserve parks from being developed with incompatible uses.

Any allowed land uses would go through the City's planning processes including approval of the budget, listing the project on the capital improvement plan, and design review.



# Parks Zone Overview

## 3 Permitted land uses

- Recreational uses.
- Recreational facilities.
- Agricultural activities.
- Government offices and government services.
- Public parking, parking structures, and underground parking.
- Temporary uses and structures.
- Transit stops.
- Public art.
- Signs.
- Wireless communications facilities.
- Utilities. Utilities must be placed underground whenever feasible.



# Parks Zone Overview

## 4

### Development Standards

- Development standards include parking requirements, setbacks, height limits, and maximum impervious surfaces. Intended to help reduce the impact of allowed uses on neighboring land uses, and vice versa.
- Standards are focused on ensuring park development occurs consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and PROS Plan.
- The full text of the proposed development standards can be found on page 3, line 37 of Exhibit 1.



# Parks Zone Overview

## 4 Development Standards

Topic	Proposed Standard Summary
Setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No setback required between Parks Zone and institutional, commercial, and mixed-use zones;</li><li>• 20 feet between Parks Zone and residential zones; and</li><li>• The following developments are exempt from setback requirements: picnic tables, fences, gates, culverts, trails, landscaping, and parking areas.</li></ul>
Building Height	35-foot maximum, approximately three stories. This is the maximum for most zones outside of Town Center.
Impervious Surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No net new impervious surfaces unless authorized by an adopted Park Master Plan, ADA Plan, and</li><li>• Emergency vehicle lanes, trails, and synthetic turf athletic fields are exempt.</li></ul>





# Parks Zone Overview

## 4 Development Standards

Topic	Proposed Standard Summary
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No minimum number of parking spaces, City Engineer can determine the necessary number of parking spaces;</li><li>• Screening required between parking areas and residential zones; and</li><li>• Note: impervious surface requirement would limit the amount of new parking that could be created unless it was shown on an adopted City plan.</li></ul>
Lighting	New lighting must be shielded and directed downwards, consistent with International Dark Sky Association recommendations to minimize lighting impacts to neighboring properties and the night sky.



# Parks Zone Overview

## 5 Definitions (amending MICC 19.16.010)

New Definitions for the Following Terms:

- Agricultural Activities
- Farmer's Market
- Government Offices
- Park
- Recreational Facility
- Recreational Uses
- Temporary Structures, Uses, and Activities
- Trail
- Transit Stop

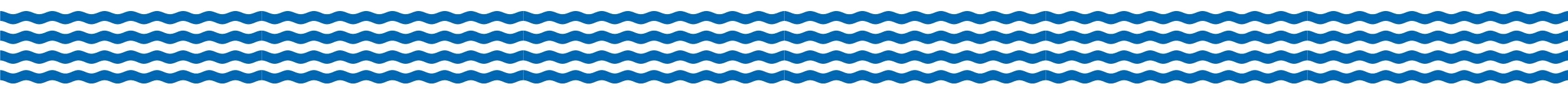


# Respond to PRC Input

- PRC provided 16 high-level comments.
- Staff is looking for PC consensus on each (whether to incorporate the change into the next draft).
- If desired, consensus can be reached at the February meeting.
- **The PC must resolve all comments on the first draft by the end of the February meeting.**

# Next Steps

- Planning Commissioner comments due by **4:00 PM on January 31.**
- Joint PRC and PC work session.
- PC will resolve comments from individual commissioners on **February 28.**



Questions?





# Additional Reference





# Parks Zone Overview

## 4

## Development Standards

**Nonconforming Use:** The use of a structure, site or of land that lawfully existed prior to September 26, 1960, or conformed to the applicable code requirements in effect at the time it was commenced but no longer conforms to the current regulations of the zone in which it is situated due to subsequent changes in code requirements. [[MICC 19.16.010](#)]

Regulated by [MICC 19.01.050 – Nonconforming structures, sites, lots, and uses](#).

In general, redevelopment of a nonconforming structure and use is more difficult than redeveloping a conforming use.





# Definitions (Proposed)

**Agricultural Activities.** The production of plants, animals, or their products, including but not limited to gardening, and fruit production.

**Farmer's Market.** An occasional or periodic market held in an open area or in a structure where groups or individual vendors offer for sale to the public items such as fresh produce, seasonal fruits, fresh flowers, arts and crafts, and food and beverages dispensed from booths located on-site.

**Government Offices.** A building or structure owned, operated, or occupied by a governmental agency to provide a governmental service to the public.



# Definitions (Proposed)

**Park.** Any public or private land available for recreational, environmental, educational, or cultural uses.

**Recreational Facility.** Structures, pieces of equipment, or developments that are specifically provided for recreational uses. Recreational facility includes both indoor and outdoor facilities for public or private recreational use.

**Recreational Uses.** A land use that provides opportunity for amusement, entertainment, athletic, environmental, and/or other leisure-time activities.



# Definitions (Proposed)

**Temporary Structures, Uses, and Activities.** A land use, structure, or activity that will only be in place for a limited period of time not to exceed 180 days in duration.

**Trail.** An off-street pedestrian, bicycle, or multi-use path.

**Transit Stop.** A transit facility located at selected points along transit routes for passenger pickup, drop off, or transfer, but excluding areas for vehicle repair or storage, parking lots, transfer stations, and park-and-ride stations.



# Definitions (Existing)

**Impervious surfaces:** Includes without limitation the following:

1. Buildings — the footprint of the building and structures including all eaves;
2. Vehicular use — driveways, streets, parking areas and other areas, whether constructed of gravel, pavers, pavement, concrete or other material, that can reasonably allow vehicular travel;
3. Sidewalks — paved pedestrian walkways, sidewalks and bike paths;
4. Recreation facilities — decks, patios, porches, tennis courts, sport courts, pools, hot tubs, and other similar recreational facilities;
5. Miscellaneous — any other structure or hard surface which either prevents or retards the entry of water into the soil mantle as under natural conditions prior to development, or causes water to run off the surface in greater quantities or at an increased rate of flow from present flow rate under natural conditions prior to development.



# Definitions (Existing)

**Government services:** Services provided by the city, King County, the state of Washington, or the federal government including, but not limited to, fire protection, police and public safety activities, courts, administrative offices, and equipment maintenance facilities.

**Parking:** A public or private area, under, within or outside a building or structure, designed and used for parking motor vehicles including parking lots, garages, and driveways. For the purposes of this definition only:

1. Parking structure shall mean a building or structure consisting of more than one level and used for the temporary parking and storage of motor vehicles.
2. Underground parking shall mean the location of that portion of the parking structure located below the existing grade of the ground abutting the structure.



# Definitions (Existing)

**Sign:** Any series of letters, figures, design symbols, lights, structure, billboard, trademark or device intended or used to attract attention to any activity, service, place, subject, person, firm, corporation, or thing. Excluded are official traffic signs or signals, public notices, and governmental flags.

**Utilities:** Facilities providing infrastructure services by a public utility or private utility regulated by the state through fixed wires, pipes, or lines. Such facilities may include water, sewer, storm water facilities (lines, ditches, swales and outfalls) and private utilities such as natural gas lines, telecommunication lines, cable communication lines, electrical lines and other appurtenances associated with these utilities. "Utilities" does not include wireless communication facilities, but do include small wireless facilities.

**Wireless communications facility (WCF):** Any unstaffed facility for the transmission and/or reception of radio frequency signals usually consisting of antennas, an equipment cabinet, transmission cables, and a support structure to achieve the necessary elevation.