



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 6988
September 1, 2026
Regular Business

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6988: Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment for four properties owned by the Stroum Jewish Community Center (SJCC) (Ordinance No. 26-13)	☐ Discussion Only ☒ Action Needed: ☐ Motion ☒ Ordinance ☐ Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Amend the Planning Commission's recommendation by rejecting both amended findings for MICC 19.15.230(F)(1) and (2) and replace these findings with those originally presented by staff to the Planning Commission as detailed in Exhibit 3 and schedule the second reading of Ordinance No. 26-13 for December 1, 2026.	

DEPARTMENT:	Community Planning and Development
STAFF:	Jeff Thomas, Community Planning and Development Department Director Molly McGuire, Senior Planner
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	1. Ordinance No. 26-13 2. Planning Commission Recommendation 3. CPA25-002 Staff Report
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to consider the Planning Commission's recommendation to approve the proposed comprehensive plan map amendment to redesignate parcels 2655500137, 2655500136, 2655500132, and a portion of 2655500115 from Single-Family Residential to Commercial Office within the Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan. As discussed further below, this agenda item does not address the request for rezoning of the same parcels within the City's zoning map, which will be evaluated separately at a later date.

- On December 5, 2023, the City Council adopted [Resolution No. 1657](#) which added the Stroum Jewish Community Center's (SJCC) proposal for a Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map Amendment and Rezone to the 2024 Annual Docket.

- Applications for the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA25-002) and Rezone (RZN25-002) were received by the Community Planning and Development (CPD) Department on December 11, 2025 and deemed complete for the purpose of review on January 6, 2026. The application for the Rezone has been put on hold until the City Council completes a first reading of CPA25-002.
- A SEPA Determination of Non-Significance was issued on June 22, 2026. The comment period ended on June 6, 2026 and no comments were submitted regarding the City's determination. There were no timely appeals of the SEPA threshold determination.
- 341 written public comments were received during the public comment period until the close of the public hearing on August 5, 2026. Twenty-five additional public comments were received in-person during the public hearing portion of the Planning Commission's meeting on August 5, 2026.
- At its August 5, 2026 meeting, the Planning Commission held a public hearing, considered public comments, the staff report, and criteria in Mercer Island City Code (MICC) Chapter 19.15. The Planning Commission adopted findings by motion and made a recommendation to the City Council for consideration at its September 1, 2026 regular meeting for first reading.

BACKGROUND

On December 5, 2023, the City Council adopted [Resolution No. 1657](#) which added the SJCC's proposal for a Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map Amendment and Rezone to the 2024 Annual Docket. On December 11, 2025, the SJCC submitted applications for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA25-002) to redesignate parcels 2655500137, 2655500136, 2655500132, and a portion of 2655500115 from Single-Family Residential to Commercial Office and a Rezone to reclassify (RZN25-002) parcels 2655500137, 2655500136, 2655500132, and a portion of 2655500115 from Single-Family Residential (R-9.6) to Commercial Office (C-O). The applications were deemed complete for processing on January 6, 2026.

The application for the Rezone (RZN25-002) was put on hold until the City Council completes a first reading of CPA25-002.

Pursuant to MICC 19.15.230(G), in cases where both a comprehensive plan amendment and an area-wide rezone are required, both shall be considered together. However, applications for comprehensive plan amendments and rezones follow two different review processes. Per MICC 19.15.260, comprehensive plan amendments must be first considered by the Planning Commission. On August 5, 2026, the Planning Commission made a recommendation to the City Council, and now the City Council will complete a first reading of CPA25-002. After the first reading of CPA25-002, the required public hearing for RZN25-002 is anticipated to be scheduled before the Hearing Examiner followed by first reading with the City Council. Should both applications proceed, a second reading and potential adoption of both CPA25-002 and RZN25-002 would likely occur in December 2026.

Legislative Review

Comprehensive Plan Map Amendments must be reviewed and decided according to the procedures in MICC 19.15.230 and .260. Pursuant to MICC 19.15.260(B), the Planning Commission considered the proposed amendment for conformance with the criteria listed in MICC 19.15.230(F) (the applicable section) and made a written recommendation to the City Council.

Decision Criteria

The Mercer Island City Code lays out the decision criteria for comprehensive plan amendments in 19.15.230(F) MICC. This code section is provided below for reference.

F. *Decision criteria.* Decisions to amend the comprehensive plan shall be based on the criteria below. An applicant for a comprehensive plan amendment proposal shall have the burden of demonstrating that the proposed amendment complies with the applicable regulations and decision criteria.

1. The amendment is consistent with the Growth Management Act, the countywide planning policies, and the other provisions of the comprehensive plan and city policies; and:
 - a. There exists obvious technical error in the information contained in the comprehensive plan; or
 - b. The amendment addresses changing circumstances of the city as a whole.
2. If the amendment is directed at a specific property, the following additional findings shall be determined:
 - a. The amendment is compatible with the adjacent land use and development pattern;
 - b. The property is suitable for development in conformance with the standards under the potential zoning; and
 - c. The amendment will benefit the community as a whole and will not adversely affect community facilities or the public health, safety, and general welfare.

The applicant's demonstration is contained in the staff report for CPA25-002.

August 5, 2026 Public Hearing – Planning Commission

Consistent with practices of the Community Planning & Development (CPD) Department, staff prepared a Staff Report containing staff findings on the consistency of the comprehensive plan amendment application with the criteria in MICC 19.15.230(F). The Planning Commission reviewed this staff report during the August 5, 2026 public hearing. The Planning Commission also considered 341 written public comments submitted to the City, 25 verbal public comments provided during the public hearing on August 5, 2026, and presentations by the project applicant and CPD staff.

After reviewing the above materials, the Planning Commission adopted findings generally consistent with the Staff Findings presented in the report (Exhibits 2 and 3). The Planning Commission made amendments by motion to the staff findings for criteria (1) and (2). These findings are in addition to the staff findings presented in the staff report:

Planning Commission Finding for Criteria (1): The consistency demonstration for Countywide Planning Policies FW-6, DP-2, DP-4, DP-6, DP-8, EC-2, EC-14, EC-26, EC-29, and PF-19, and for the Comprehensive Plan community values and Land Use Goals 7.4 and 7.5, rests on programs and services provided by the current owner and operator. A Comprehensive Plan land use designation runs with the land and does not require the continuation of any use or program. The record contains no instrument that would secure the community benefits relied upon. The Commission therefore recommends an instrument to run with the land be required by the City Council.

Planning Commission Finding for Criteria (2): The Planning Commission amends the recommendation to the City Council to exclude parcel 2655500132 from CPA25-002, and adds the following supporting findings: (i) the staff report finds that parcels 2655500137, 2655500115, and 2655500136 appear integrated in their daily operations as the Stroum Jewish Community Center site and does not so find as to parcel 2655500132; (ii) parcel 2655500132 is developed with a two-story, 1,860 square foot single-family residence constructed in 1986 and has not been used for recreational or community facility purposes; (iii) the applicant's compatibility demonstration, which rests on more than fifty years of continuous community facility use, does not apply to

this parcel; (iv) no changed circumstance has been demonstrated as to this parcel; and (v) the parcel cannot be developed in conformance with Commercial Office standards. The Commission finds that the applicant has carried its burden under MICC 19.15.230(F)(2) subject to the removal of parcel 2655500132.

Planning Commission Recommendation (Exhibit 2)

The Planning Commission made the following recommendation based on their adopted findings:

“The Planning Commission recommends that the City Council approve the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment based on the adopted findings.”

The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 3-0. Recording of the proceedings before the Planning Commission is available here: [Planning Commission Special Hybrid Meeting | Mercer Island, Washington](#)

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

Staff prepared a Report which was presented to the Planning Commission on August 5, 2026, and contains staff findings on the consistency of the comprehensive plan amendment with the criteria in MICC 19.15.230(F) (Exhibit 3). The Staff Report also contains a recommendation to the Planning Commission stating:

“Staff reviewed the proposed application in accordance with the criteria for comprehensive plan amendments in MICC 19.15.230(F). The staff report and findings are based on the application and all supplemental information. The Planning Commission shall consider the proposed amendment for conformance with the criteria listed in the applicable section, the comprehensive plan, and other applicable development standards. The Planning Commission shall make a written recommendation on the review to the City Council. Based on the findings contained in this staff report and the application materials, Staff recommend the Planning Commission adopt the above findings and move to recommend approval of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment under City File Number CPA25-002 to reclassify King County Parcel Nos. 2655500137, 2655500136, 2655500132, and a portion of 2655500115 from Single-Family Residential to Commercial Office (C-O) within the Land Use Map (Exhibit 8) to the City Council.”

Planning Commission Findings and Recommendation

The adopted Planning Commission findings for the criteria in MICC 19.15.230(F)(1) and (F)(2) result in two changes to the proposal that the City Council must consider.

1. The Planning Commission finding to amend the staff finding for criteria (F)(1) results in the requirement for “an instrument to run with the land.” A comprehensive plan amendment, however, is a legislative exercise. It is not a project application that can be conditioned like a permit. Consequently, staff recommends that the City Council reject the Planning Commission’s amendment to this finding and retain the staff findings presented in the staff report in Exhibit 3.
2. The Planning Commission’s finding to amend the staff finding for criteria (F)(2) results in a change to the boundary of the amendment proposed by the applicant. More specifically, it contracts the proposed boundary to exclude parcel no. 2655500132 from the proposal. Unlike the previous recommendation, there is authority in law for the City Council to add or subtract properties that are subject to the amendment being considered. Consequently, the City Council may choose to accept or reject this recommendation. Should the City Council wish to proceed with this recommendation to

amend the boundary of the redesignation area, this can be accomplished by adopting the Planning Commission finding and directing staff to amend Ordinance No. 26-13 for second reading.

Legislative Review – City Council

Discussion and deliberation at the September 1, 2026 City Council meeting should be limited to whether or not the proposed comprehensive plan amendment meets all of the criteria in MICC 19.15.230(F). During the September 1, 2026 meeting, the City Council shall also consider the Planning Commission’s recommendation and findings **related to the criteria for comprehensive plan amendments in MICC 19.15.230(F)**. In completing the first reading of Ordinance 26-13, the City Council may select one of the following options:

1. Accept the Planning Commission’s recommendation as presented which includes the amended findings for MICC 19.15.230(F)(1) and (2);
2. Amend the Planning Commission’s recommendation as presented to reject one or both amended findings for MICC 19.15.230(F)(1) and (2);
3. Reject the Planning Commission recommendation as presented, discuss new findings and provide direction to staff.

Ordinance No. 26-13 Recommendation

It is recommended the City Council select a version of option (2.) above and amend the Planning Commission’s recommendation as presented by rejecting both amended findings for MICC 19.15.230(F)(1) and (2) and replacing these findings with those originally presented by staff to the Planning Commission as detailed in Exhibit 3. Therefore, the recommendations of the Planning Commission to include the requirement for the “instrument to run with the land” to satisfy MICC 19.15.230(F)(1) and the contraction of the proposed boundary to exclude parcel no. 2655500132 to satisfy MICC 19.15.230(F)(2) would be rejected.

Should the City Council select option (1.) above and accept the Planning Commission’s recommendation as presented which includes the amended findings for MICC 19.15.230(F)(1) and (2), Ordinance No. 26-13 will be revised as directed, and the City Council will be able to review it at second reading later this fall.

NEXT STEPS

If the City Council wishes to move forward with the proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, second reading of Ordinance No. 26-13 should be scheduled for December 1, 2026. This will allow time for the Hearing Examiner review of the related rezone, RZN25-002. The City Council would then conduct a first reading of an ordinance related to RZN25-002 in November and the second reading would potentially be scheduled for December 1, 2026, to allow the Comprehensive Plan amendment and the rezone to be considered together.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The recommended action is to reject both amended Planning Commission findings:

Move to amend the Planning Commission’s recommendation by rejecting both amended findings for MICC 19.15.230(F)(1) and (2) and replace these findings with those originally presented by staff to the Planning Commission as detailed in Exhibit 3 and schedule the second reading of Ordinance No. 26-13 for December 1, 2026.

Alternate actions:

1. Accept both amended Planning Commission findings:
Accept the Planning Commission's recommendation as presented which includes the amended findings for MICC 19.15.230(F)(1) and (2) and schedule the second reading for Ordinance No. 26-13 for December 1, 2026.
- 2a. Accept only amended Planning Commission finding (F)(1):
Amend the Planning Commission's recommendation as presented by rejecting the amended finding for MICC 19.15.230(F)(2) and replacing this finding with that originally presented by staff to the Planning Commission as detailed in Exhibit 3 and schedule the second reading for Ordinance No. 26-13 for December 1, 2026.
- 2b. Accept only amended Planning Commission finding (F)(2):
Amend the Planning Commission's recommendation as presented by rejecting the amended finding for MICC 19.15.230(F)(1) and replacing this finding with that originally presented by staff to the Planning Commission as detailed in Exhibit 3 and schedule the second reading for Ordinance No. 26-13 for December 1, 2026.
3. Reject the Planning Commission recommendation, discuss new findings and provide direction to staff.