



AB6242 Draft Town Center Parking Study Report Handoff

Mercer Island City Council | March 21, 2023



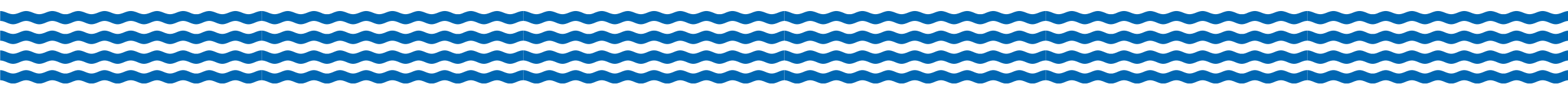


Agenda

- Washington State Legislature Impacts
- Project Overview
- Report Structure and Contents
- Implementation: “Quick Wins”
- City Council Action Tonight
- Discussion

Washington State Legislative Session

- State Legislature currently in session
- SB 5466, if passed, would prevent cities from requiring off-street parking in future developments in Town Center.
- Other bills may also result in impacts to the City's ability to require parking as part of developments.
- Staff recommend **pausing** work on the Town Center Parking Study until the legislative session concludes.





Town Center Parking Goals

1. Create a parking program that activates Town Center, supports small businesses, and enhances Town Center visitor experience.
2. Ensure Island residents have priority access to public transportation.
3. Determine if on-site commercial and multi-family residential parking is adequately utilized. Identify options for increasing and/or regulating its use.



Project Timeline





Report Structure

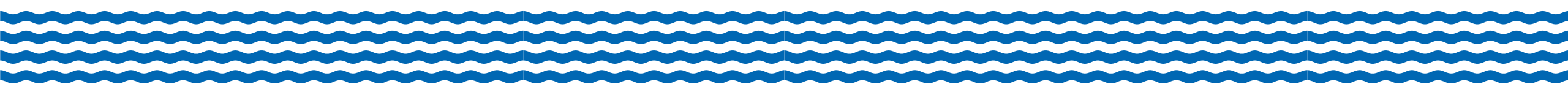
- A. Project Overview
- B. Parking Inventory and Utilization
- C. Community Engagement Activities
- D. Strategy Recommendations
- E. Implementation
- F. Appendices

Report available for community to read:

<https://letstalk.mercergov.org/tc-parking-study>

Section D. Strategy Recommendations

- Three strategies to **manage on-street parking supply, increase parking convenience & efficiency**, and **expand travel mode options**.
- Each strategy includes specific **recommendations** (1a., 1b., etc.)
- Recommendations are supported by **current conditions**, key **actions**, and primary **reasoning** to support their implementation.



Strategies & Recommendations	Implementation
Strategy #1: Manage the on-street public parking supply.	
Revise on-street parking time limits to be two-hours throughout Town Center.	1-3 years
Monitor the RPD and Town Center Parking permit programs. Modify them as needed to prepare for future parking impacts caused by increases in commuter traffic and the opening of the East Link Extension.	4-6 years
Create additional 30-minute loading and 3- and 10-minute pickup/drop-off spaces on-street.	1-3 years
Add more ADA parking on-street.	4-6 years
Implement additional enforcement of Town Center’s on-street parking regulations, including education and marketing campaigns.	1-3 years
Consider paid parking in Town Center and deploy technology to create easier use and enforcement.	7-10 years
Strategy #2: Improve the convenience and efficient supply of parking.	
Improve awareness of and navigation to Town Center’s range of parking options.	1-3 years
Promote agreements for public use of currently underutilized private parking.	4-6 years
Strategy #3: Expand travel mode choices through programs and infrastructure investments.	
Add bicycle parking.	1-3 years
Study options to allow more flexibility related to parking requirements for new businesses.	4-6 years
Implement a proactive Transportation Demand Management Program for new development.	4-6 years
Study options to reconfigure some Town Center streets with considerations for adding parking and loading, improving walking and bicycling facilities, improving wayfinding and access, and ensuring area streets are calm and safe for all users.	7-10 years
Create more community gathering spaces.	7-10 years

Manage on-street public parking supply.

- Begins on **page 15** of the report
- Six recommendations seek to make on-street parking:
 - Easier to find for each user type – visitors, employees, commuters, delivery operators, and others.
 - Consistently regulated throughout Town Center.
 - Better enforced to help increase availability.
 - More conducive to “parking once” and being able to walk to multiple destinations.





Improve the convenience and efficiency of public parking.

- Begins on **page 24** of the report
- Two recommendations seek to improve parking to be:
 - More available, accessible, and apparent to all users in both on- and off-street locations.
 - Navigable to and from parking and to destinations.

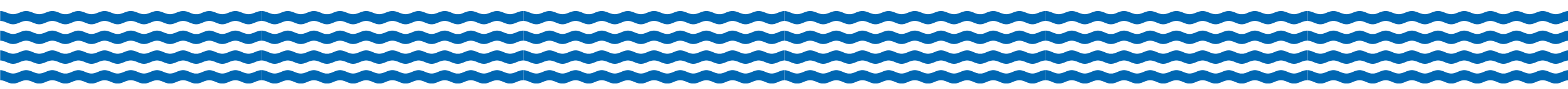


Expand travel mode options through programs and infrastructure investments.

- Begins on **page 27** of the report
- Five recommendations seek to improve Town Center mobility to be:
 - More convenient and safer for people traveling by any mode.
 - Supportive of active, mixed uses, including more businesses and housing options, that can easily be reached by walking, biking, and other mobility devices.
 - Balanced so streets and parking are less physically intrusive and do not dominate.
 - Connected to regional trail networks for pedestrian and bike/wheeled users.

Section E. Implementation

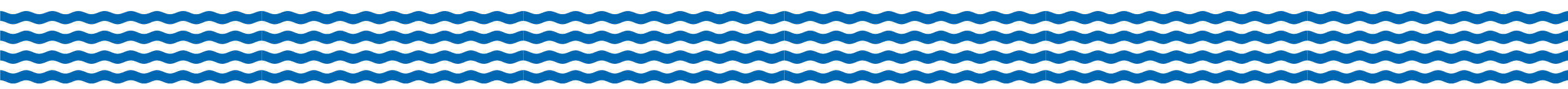
- Begins on **page 34** of the report
- Includes Implementation Matrix with timing, resource needs, and other considerations for each recommendation
- Also includes ongoing activities for consideration to evaluate and inform future decisions for Town Center parking program



Strategy		Recommendation	Anticipated Investment	Timing	Implementation Considerations
Manage the on-street public parking supply.	1a	Revise on-street parking time limits to be consistent throughout Town Center.	\$\$	1-3 years	Coordinate efforts – This action requires resources to educate the public about new parking regulations, evaluate the effectiveness, and monitor impacts such as displacement of daylong parkers or spill over into other parking areas. These efforts could be coordinated with other actions for efficient implementation.
	1b	Monitor the RPD and Town Center Parking permit programs. Modify them as needed to prepare for future parking impacts caused by increases in commuter traffic and the opening of the East Link Extension.	\$\$	1-3 years	Coordinate efforts – Permit holders who regularly park in the on-street parking spaces designated for these permit programs may need to adjust their parking behavior, including potentially finding other locations to park and changing their arrival time. Communications about program changes could be coordinated with other marketing and outreach related to Town Center parking (e.g. messaging about changes to parking time limits) as appropriate.
	1c	Create additional 30-minute loading and 3- and 10-minute pickup/drop-off spaces on-street.	\$	1-3 years	Coordinate efforts – Short-term loading zones require consistent enforcement to ensure time-limit compliance and use only by those actively performing deliveries, loading, etc. This enforcement could be coordinated with other proposed enforcement activities.
	1d	Add more ADA parking on-street	\$\$\$	4-6 years	As-needed – Installing new ADA spaces may reduce the number of non-ADA, on-street parking spaces and will require repurposing some portions of sidewalk for clearance zones and ramps. There are no national or local standards for quantity of on-street ADA parking spaces, so consider input from potential ADA parking users, residential building managers, business owners, and commercial property owners/managers before adding new supply.
	1e	Implement additional enforcement of Town Center’s on-street parking regulations, including education and marketing campaigns.	\$\$\$	1-3 years	Enhance existing programs – Mercer Island PD currently operates three patrol vehicles equipped with automatic license plate reader (ALPR) technology. One patrol vehicle’s ALPR system links to the City’s parking enforcement technology. Linking the other two vehicles to this enforcement system could effectively triple MIPD’s capacity to enforce Town Center parking more regularly.
	1f	Consider paid parking in Town Center and deploy technology to create easier use and enforcement.	\$\$	7-10 years	As-needed – Supply management actions are intended to build upon each other, and earlier actions may alleviate the need to take more drastic measures, such as implementing paid parking. However, this is a proven solution in changing parking user behavior.
Improve the convenience and efficient supply of parking.	2a	Improve awareness of and navigation to Town Center’s range of parking options.	\$\$	1-3 years	Enhance existing programs – The City partially implemented a signage strategy using Port of Seattle funding in 2018/2019 and could build upon this existing work to improve wayfinding in and around Town Center.
	2b	Promote agreements for public use of currently underutilized private parking.	\$\$\$	4-6 years	As-needed – Parking agreements can be time-consuming to negotiate, and private parking owners understandably have concerns about liability, compensation, enforcement, and ensuring parking supply for their direct customer base. These agreements will also require some financial compensation for use of shared spaces, but the cost of doing so is typically significantly lower than the cost to construct and maintain new parking spaces.
Expand travel mode choices through programs and infrastructure investments.	3a	Add bicycle parking.	\$	1-3 years	Pilot program opportunity – The City has unused bicycle racks that can be quickly deployed in various locations and monitored for use to inform future permanent infrastructure decisions.
	3b	Study options to allow more flexibility related to parking requirements for new businesses.	\$	4-6 years	Code update required – This likely requires a labor-intensive, time-consuming code update as well as other analysis, such as conducting a development pipeline parking study and monitoring state legislation that may prohibit imposing parking minimums in the future.
	3c	Implement a proactive Transportation Demand Management Program for new development.	\$\$	4-6 years	As-needed – TDM programs require staff time to review, administer, and monitor, and Town Center may not have a critical mass of larger employers with whom significant impacts can be made through a TDM program.
	3d	Study options to reconfigure some Town Center streets with considerations for adding parking and loading, improving walking and bicycling facilities, improving wayfinding and access, and ensuring area streets are calm and safe for all users.	\$\$\$	7-10 years	Coordinate efforts – This work could integrate into other studies and/or capital projects planned for Town Center.
	3e	Create more community gathering spaces.	\$\$	7-10 years	Pilot program opportunity – The City saw success with temporary outdoor dining and other informal gathering spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic and could build on those pilot efforts to gather additional data to inform decisions to build formal gathering spaces.

Implementation: “Quick Wins”

- Update parking counts, including counting Mercer Island Park & Ride and Town Center/RPD permit zones. (1b)
- Observe ADA parking usage. (1d)
- Evaluate and modify parking citation fees. (1e)
- Improve wayfinding to and promote availability of public parking in parking garages. (2a)
- Observe bicycle usage and identify locations for/relocate additional bicycle parking. (3a)
- Phase in conversion to two-hour parking limits depending on observed congestion/lack of turnover. (1a)



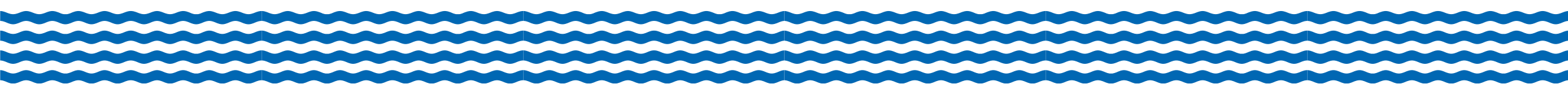
City Council Action Tonight

Option 1: Move to suspend work on the Town Center Parking Study until the conclusion of the Washington State Legislative Session.

Option 2: Move to commence the public outreach period on the draft Town Center Parking Study report, concluding with a public hearing on April 18, 2023.

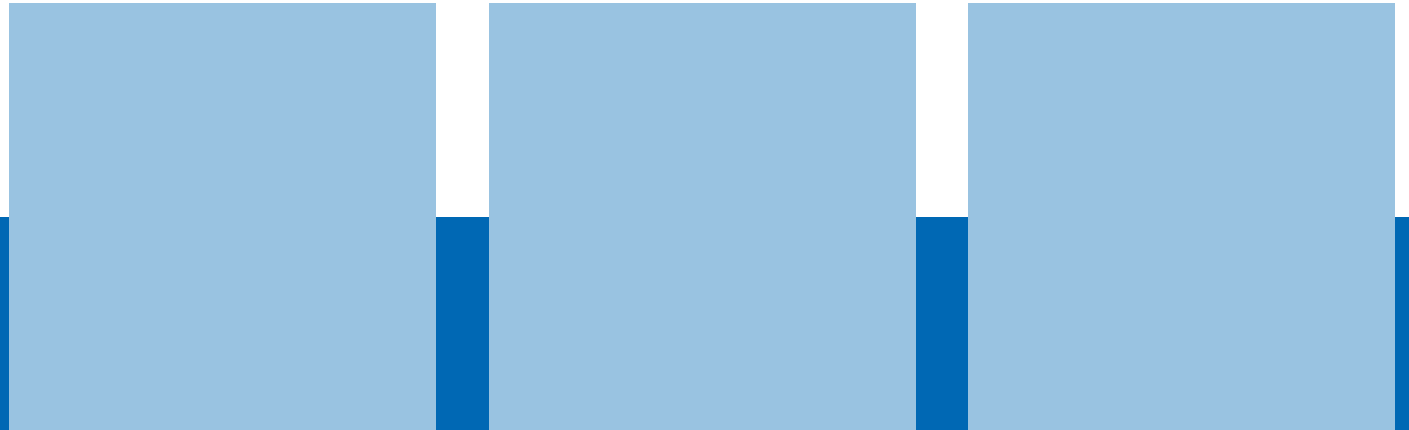
or

Other action as directed by City Council.



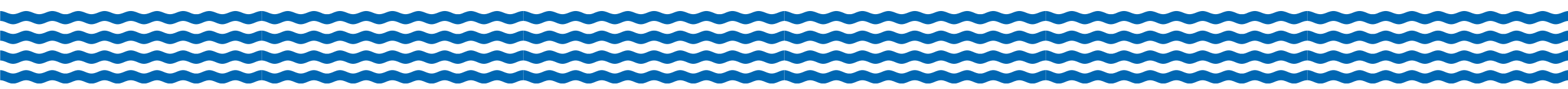


Discussion



Opportunities for Comment

- Draft report available for the community to review on Let's Talk:
<https://letstalk.mercergov.org/tc-parking-study>
- Review and provide feedback:
 - Post your comments on Let's Talk
 - E-mail Sarah Bluvas at **sarah.bluvas@mercerisland.gov**
 - Attend the Public Hearing scheduled for April 18 (details on Let's Talk)
- Comment on the report through April 18



Next Steps + Schedule

