
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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PLANNING COMMISSION

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Alison Van Gorp, CPD Deputy Director
Adam Zack, Senior Planner

DATE: September 28, 2022

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Update
Land Use Element – Second Draft

Attachments

- A. Second Draft Land Use Element
- B. First Draft Land Use Element Comment Matrix
- C. Planning Commission and Public Comments on the first draft Land Use Element

PURPOSE

To receive the Planning Commission’s response to comments on the first draft of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan (see Attachment A). The comments are summarized, and a staff response is provided in Attachment B. The full comments are provided in Attachment C.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Members of the public may submit written public comments or questions on the Land Use Element to comp.plan@mercerisland.gov. Public comments will be provided to the Planning Commission at their October meeting. Please visit the [Comprehensive Plan update project website](#) for more information about the update process.

BACKGROUND

The City of Mercer Island is updating its comprehensive plan as part of the periodic review required by the WA Growth Management Act (GMA). The periodic review will be a targeted “surgical” update, focusing on those technical updates required to maintain compliance with the GMA. The existing Land Use Element already meets most of the GMA requirements and only requires limited technical amendments during this periodic review.

The Land Use Element is a component of the Comprehensive Plan that establishes goals and policies to guide City decision making regarding regulation of land uses. The Land Use Element is made up of goals, policies, and a Land Use Map. Goals state the objectives that the policies are intended to achieve. The Policies establish direction for how the City will work to achieve the goals. The Land Use Map identifies the locations for future land uses throughout the City.

The Planning Commission was briefed on the first draft of the Land Use Element on July 27. The Commission provided written comments on the first draft following the meeting. The Planning Commission, public comments, and staff responses are summarized in Attachment B. The complete comments are provided in Attachment C.

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

The staff response to Planning Commission and public comments on the first draft of the Land Use Element is summarized in Attachment B. Specific text changes proposed in comments are shown as alternatives in the second draft (Attachment A). Text amendments proposed by the Planning Commission are shown in **green text**. Text amendments proposed by the public are shown in **purple text**. Each alternative includes the corresponding comment number from Attachment B in brackets after the alternative text. Staff has proposed an alternative for one policy on page 24 of the second draft, shown in **blue text**.

At the meeting on September 28, the Planning Commission will go through the amendments proposed by the public. The Commission can decide whether to make the proposed amendment, accept part of the alternative, or keep the first draft version. Staff recommends agreeing to comment responses by consensus.

Once the Planning Commission works through the comments, staff requests the Commission decide whether another review is needed at the October meeting. If the Planning Commission is satisfied with the draft element after working through the comments at the September meeting, another touch on the draft in October may not be needed. If a third review is not needed, the Planning Commission will still have an opportunity to review the element two more times before making a recommendation to the City Council, as described below.

NEXT STEPS

1. October 26 - Third touch on the Land Use Element (if needed).
2. There might be additional changes to the Land Use Element for the Planning Commission to consider during the Comprehensive Plan update. These additional changes would be in response to the Climate Action Plan and the Housing Work Group's work on the Housing Element. Discussion of these possible amendments will take place when the Planning Commission takes up these topics later during the update process.
3. Summer 2023 - The next touch on the Land Use Element will be during a Comprehensive Plan update "tune up" meeting planned for the meeting after the Comprehensive Plan update Open House.
4. Fall 2023 - After that "tune up" meeting, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the overall Comprehensive Plan update. This will include a review of the Land Use Element before making a recommendation to the City Council.