

Question & Answer Matrix
October 7, 2025 - City Council Meeting

Log #	AB No.	Received From	Question	Staff Response
1	6775	Reynolds	I am confused by the definition of “affordability gap”. Given how it is used, it seems like it should be the difference of two dollar amounts, A\$ - B\$. Correct? What are A and B?	<p>Additional affordable housing needs are generated when new housing creates a demand for additional services, and those services create jobs with wages that create the need for additional affordable housing. The “affordability gap” is the cost of providing these affordable units. It is calculated as the difference between the development cost and the mortgage amount that can be supported by the net income generated from rents on affordable units.</p> <p>Affordability Gap = Development Cost – Supportable Mortgage</p>
2	6775	Reynolds	If we do adopt a fee in lieu, what legal restrictions apply on how and where we spend that money?	Staff will fully address this question when the policy comes back to the City Council in 2026 for review and discussion.
3	6775	Reynolds	Indication is made that the consultants have conducted “draft analysis”. Was a draft report prepared? Is anything they prepared something that might be useful to review?	<p>The policy work and analysis are not complete, and the staff do not have a report to share at this time.</p> <p>The work on the fee in lieu program for affordable housing was scoped prior to receiving the GMHB decision. The early work done by the consultant does not include the additional analysis that will be needed to comply with the GMHB decision. This additional work is in progress now and staff will be bringing the item back to the City Council in early 2026 for a review and discussion.</p>
4	6783	Reynolds	Would it be legal and procedurally practical to require all new water connections to sign up for e-delivery of statements so as to gradually reduce the printing / sorting / mailing cost over time?	<p>Currently, electronic invoicing for Mercer Island utility billing is optional. This requires the customer to opt-in to paperless billing after creating a user login to view and pay their account online via the Invoice Cloud portal.</p> <p>The staff have not analyzed the legality or permissibility of mandating everyone to receive an e-invoice. We recommend maintaining the status quo right now given that many of our customers prefer to receive a hard copy invoice and there would be considerable push back in making this change.</p>

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5	6783	Reynolds	I note more payment for stage and sound rental for Mostly Music. Have we done an analysis of cost / benefits / logistical feasibility of purchasing rather than renting this equipment?	<p>One of the primary barriers to procuring equipment such as this is the lack of covered storage areas. This type of equipment must be stored out of the weather and the City does not have facility space to store this type of equipment, so we have not pursued acquisition.</p> <p>Something else to note – we are actually renting different size stages for our events, depending on the location and the size of the event. For example, this year alone we utilized at least four different stage sizes, each requiring different sound configurations.</p> <p>We review expenditures after each event, and equipment rental is a topic frequently evaluated (as this is one of our larger expenses). At this time, renting remains the most logically feasible solution for the City's diverse event schedule and staffing resources. It provides flexibility to match varying event sizes and technical requirements, while also ensuring professional installation and support from the rental companies for both stage and sound systems.</p> <p>This will continue to be evaluated going forward.</p>