



City Manager's Year in Review 2023





2023: A Busy Year

Projects
Completed

Work
Underway

Unexpected
Challenges

2023: A Busy Year



Projects
Completed

Work
Underway

Unexpected
Challenges

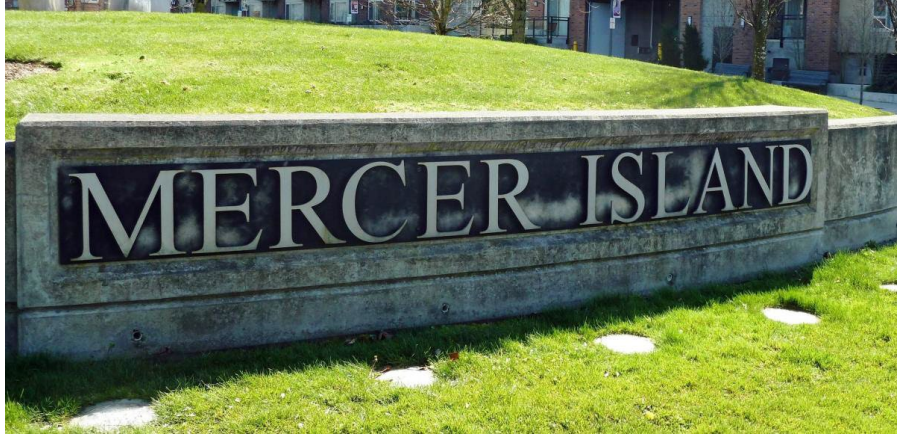
Good News, Successes, and Accomplishments



A few highlights
from 2023...



2023 Legislative Session



- Council Leadership, staff, and the City's lobbying team navigated a long and action-filled legislative session.
- The City tracked dozens of bills focused on housing, public safety, mental and behavioral health, and more.
- Councilmembers and the City Manager met with legislators, participated in an AWC session, and attended a presentation from Governor Inslee.
- The City was successful in securing \$3.5 million in grant funding for waterfront improvements at Luther Burbank Park.





Regional Fire Services Agreement

- The City completed a months-long effort to shift fire and EMS operations to a regional fire services model with Eastside Fire & Rescue.
- Adopting a regional fire services model allows the City to offer even stronger fire and emergency medical services to the community and better support the Island's fire staff.
- The transition was wrapped up in 2023 and EF&R began fully operating on Mercer Island at the start of this year.
- The Mercer Island community was invited to two Fire Station Open Houses in January 2024, to meet firefighters, explore the stations, see equipment, and learn more about EF&R.



Luther Burbank Shoreline Restoration



- A comprehensive restoration of the South Luther Burbank Shoreline Trail was completed, opening to park users last fall.
- The previous trail was eroded due to wave action.
- Trail users are now able to walk from the docks to the swim beach on an all-weather accessible trail.
- The shoreline was stabilized with spawning gravels and tree sections, which enhance aquatic habitat and shoreline stability. New vegetation was also planted along the new trail surface.
- Over 50 community volunteers came out to celebrate Arbor Day and plant trees at the new shoreline for a restoration event. Volunteers planted over 600 native species.

Sunset & 77th Intersection Improvements



- Crews finished a capital project to improve pedestrian safety at this busy intersection, including adding a new crosswalk signal.
- Our ROW team was instrumental in helping locate and expose several long-buried electrical junction boxes in the landscaped I-90 trail area that were important for this project.
- We're happy to have this improved pedestrian crossing open for the community.



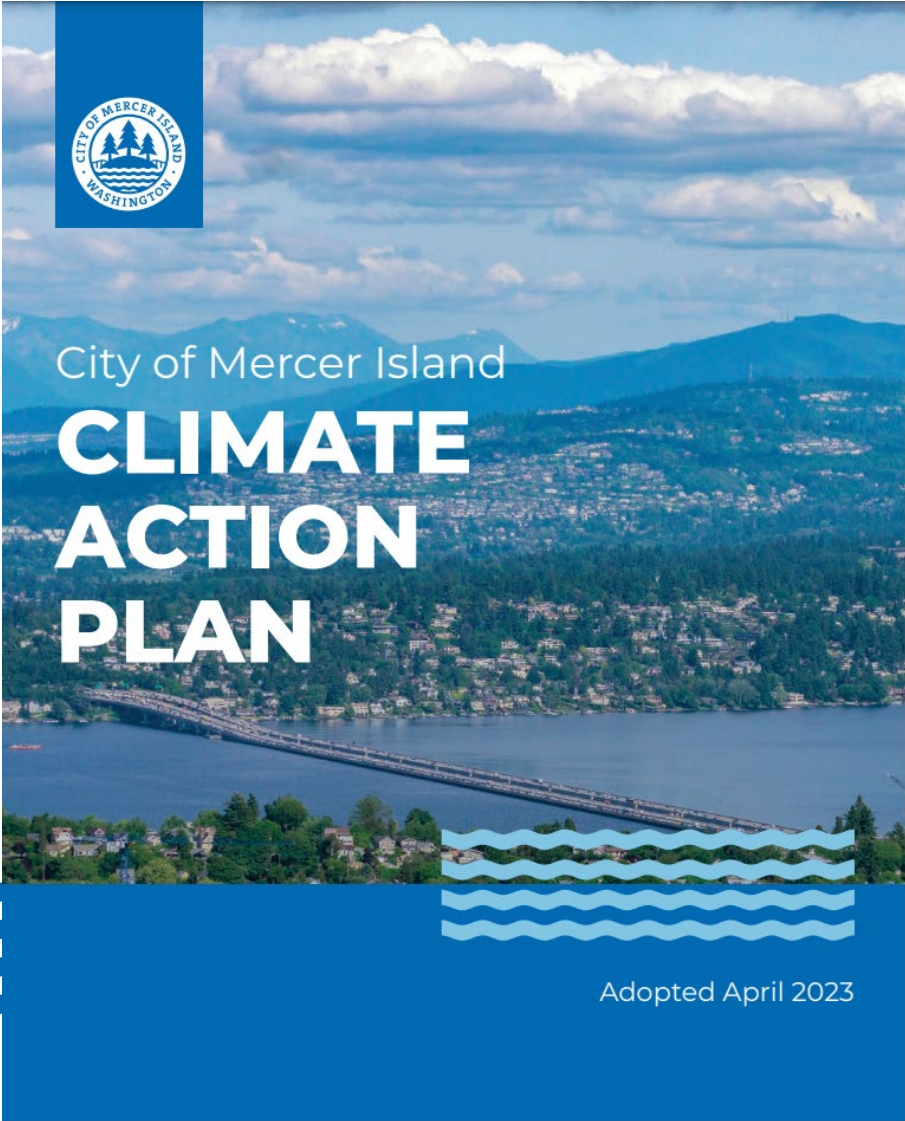
Bike Skills Area Opening

- The new Bike Skills Area at Deane's Children's Park opened on November 15, the culmination of a multi-year effort to relocate this popular amenity.
- Extensive community engagement, and the dedication of City staff, contractors, and volunteers, resulted in a safe and fun facility for bike riders to enjoy.
- The Bike Skills Area has been very popular, with lots of positive feedback and very high use!



YFS Fentanyl Awareness Programming

- YFS staff held a presentation with the DEA at the community center covering fentanyl dangers.
- More than 150 community members attended the DEA's "one pill can kill" presentation on current risks involving the illicit fentanyl marketplace.
- Speakers hosted a Q&A regarding fentanyl risks to youth, intervention strategies, and the current prevention efforts including the availability of Narcan.
- MIHS student Maggie Blohm was presented with an award for her efforts supporting fentanyl outreach through her blog exploring the impacts of this drug.



Climate Action Plan Adopted

- The City of Mercer Island adopted its first-ever Climate Action Plan (CAP) to summarize and guide the key government, business, and household actions needed to reduce our community's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and also to protect our environment from some aspects of climate change that are already underway.
- Began implementing the work items described in the plan and we will be providing a report out to the Council at an upcoming meeting.



Town Center Parking Plan

- A detailed process to improve access options to, in, and around Town Center, the Town Center Parking Study was completed in 2023.
- This study led to the development of a parking and access strategy for Town Center, known as the Town Center Parking Plan.
- The City Council adopted the Town Center Parking Plan on November 21, 2023.
- Recommendations identified in the Parking Plan will be implemented over time through various City department work plans.



MIYFS Foundation Partnership

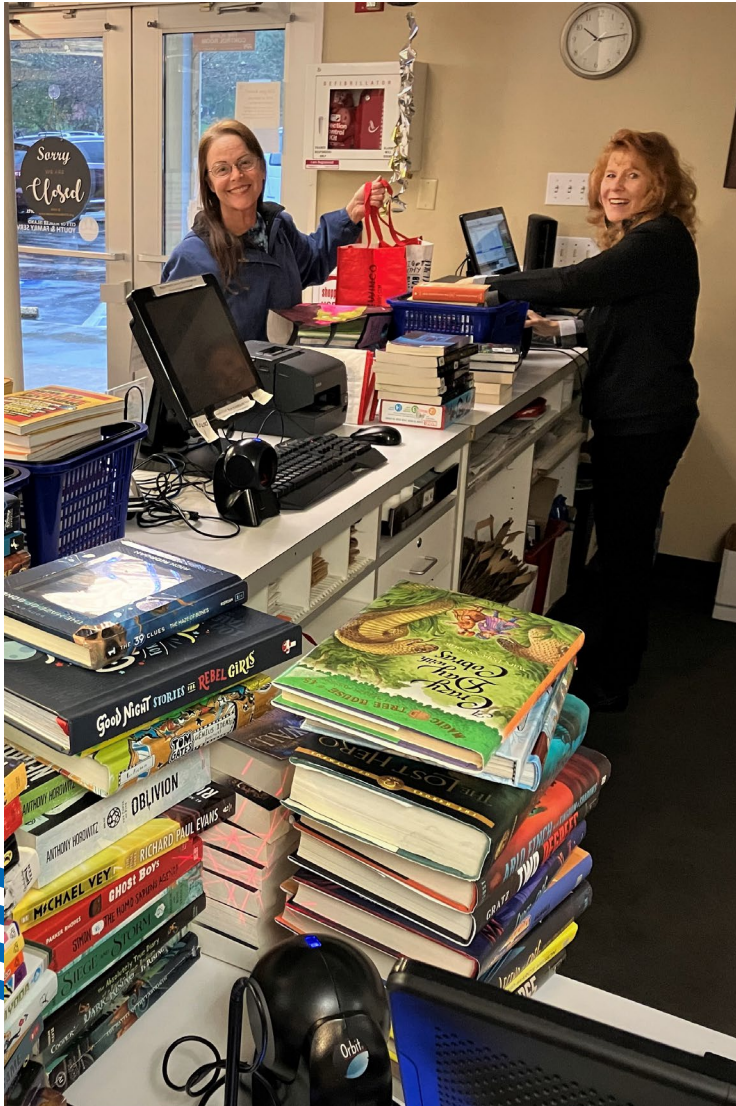
- The 2023 MIYFS Foundation Breakfast had more than 500 attendees, a new record for attendance (likely broken in 2024!)
- The event raised over \$425,000 in support for Youth and Family Services programs.
- And more!
- We are thankful for the ongoing partnership with the Youth and Family Services Foundation!



Riley Cove Dedication



- The City hosted a dedication event for Riley Cove, a small bay off Lincoln Landing now dedicated to Huston “Hu” Riley - a lifelong Mercer Island resident and World War II veteran.
- The project was a joint effort with the Mercer Island Historical Society, neighbors of the Riley family, and the City’s Parks and Recreation Division.
- Riley Cove is joined to the land by the new Lincoln landing park. Islanders are encouraged to check it out.



MI Thrift Shop Progress

- The Thrift Shop is making big moves. 2023 showed a consistent increase in daily revenue over the prior year: MITS exceeded its goal of increasing revenue by 10% in 2023, ending at nearly 16% growth overall.
- The team has been implementing new changes, including a women's athletic area to meet client interest and added two additional dressing rooms.
- Beyond revenue, MITS leaned into growing volunteers in the production roles of the shop: seeing a 26.2% increase in production hours in 2023.



Police Department Highlights

- Increased patrols and smart detective work helped solve several crimes on the Island, including a string of burglaries earlier in the year.
- Marine Patrol Officers helped successfully remove a derelict and abandoned boat in Lake Washington – protecting boaters and the environment.
- At the October Medication Take Back Day, MIPD collected more than 80 pounds of unused medications in partnership with the DEA. This helps keep these drugs from being potentially misused or abused.



Police Department Training and Development

- MIPD officers and staff conduct trainings to practice specialized skills and ensure department readiness. This includes training with partner agencies across the region.
- The Marine Patrol team practiced their tethered arc searches in Lake Washington last spring. This skilled approach helps aid in the search and rescue for lost swimmers or boaters.
- MIPD conducted specialized trainings last summer in partnership with the Mercer Island School District to practice readiness plans for school safety.



Seafair 2023

- With record-breaking attendance for 2023, Mercer Island staff helped manage Seafair impacts once again.
- Recreation staff worked closely with MIPD to implement new crowd control methods at Groveland Beach Park. This established a maximum capacity of 500 patrons, filled on a first-come-first-serve basis. This change was made for the safety of park patrons and to enhance emergency response capabilities for Police, Fire, and EMS providers.
- MIPD and staff were instrumental in managing safety for the event – thank you.



Emergency Management Training

- More than 30 staff across Public Works, the Recreation Division, and Youth and Family Services joined volunteers and the Emergency Management team for an emergency shelter training last year.
- This training helps increase our readiness and overall response in an emergency.



Saving Wildlife

- Several times a year, City crews encounter wildlife in need. Our team has shown great care in helping these animals.
- Last year, the Utility team found an injured hawk on the side of East Mercer Way. The hawk was taken to PAWS Animal Rescue in Lynnwood where they have a team dedicated to raptor rehabilitation.
- This young hawk is a 2-year-old male, and after his 8-week rehab was completed, he was released in the greater PNW region close to a potential mate.
- Thank you to our crews for their dedication and care.



Summer Celebration & Special Events

- Last Year Summer Celebration, the Island's signature event, saw record-breaking turnout.
- The event drew thousands into Town Center, Mercedale Park, and to Luther Burbank Park.
- This all-day celebration included the return of the parade for 2023.
- Many other special events were hosted throughout the year.
- **We look forward to another great event this year. Save the date: July 13, 2024.**

Unexpected Challenges





City Hall Closure

- City Hall was permanently closed after disturbed materials were discovered that were later confirmed to contain asbestos. City staff and consultants began an extensive testing process throughout internal systems and air/surface spaces. The building was permanently closed late last year.
- City staff workspaces, Council Chambers, and the Municipal Court have been relocated. Alternative operations have been very challenging – we thank staff for their dedication and flexibility.
- Work continues on future facility planning and the temporary relocation of the Police Department.



Water Emergency

- During planned construction work, Seattle Public Utilities encountered an unexpected problem which cut off incoming water service to Mercer Island.
- The City activated our Emergency Management system to monitor water levels and put safeguards in place. Water was fed by reservoir tanks until a fix could be implemented by SPU.
- The City hosted several webinars to inform and advise the public on the situation throughout the emergency and provided updates as available.
- The City lifted the emergency notice once the repair was made and water levels in the Island's reservoir tanks were sufficiently refilled.
- The City thanks all Islanders and the many crews involved for their help.



Snapshot: Work Underway





Automated Water Meter Project

- Many of the Island's water meters are past their useful life, which hampers leak detection efforts and results in higher water loss.
- To fix this, the City is conducting an Island-wide replacement project to deploy 7,900 new water meters.
- The City will start replacing residential and commercial water meters in early March, with the meter replacement schedule determined by water billing cycle and meter reading routes. Work is expected to be completed by August.
- The City Council will be reviewing at their next meeting the options for placement of the data collection stations/antennas.



Sewer/SCADA Equipment Project

- Throughout 2023 and into 2024, the City has been upgrading the equipment and communications systems at 17 sewer pump stations and select emergency generators around the Island.
- The City's contractor is working on equipment procurement despite delays in the supply chain. Construction is expected to continue through 2025.
- Phase 1, which was completed in the summer and fall of 2023, primarily consisted of site investigations and equipment procurement.
- Phase 2 will take place this spring through fall. Contractors will visit each site to install new equipment and test the upgraded system.

Water Reservoir Improvements

- Reinvestment work on the City's two four-million-gallon water reservoir tanks began in the fall of 2023.
- Reservoir tanks have coatings which protect the underlying steel from corrosion. The interior and exterior coatings, which were last replaced over 20 years ago, are being replaced over the next two years on both tanks.
- The first reservoir was drained and taken out of service last fall and winter while water system demands were low, to allow the interior coating to be replaced.
- The coating on the second reservoir tank will be replaced during the fall and winter of 2024.





East Seattle Neighborhood Water Improvements

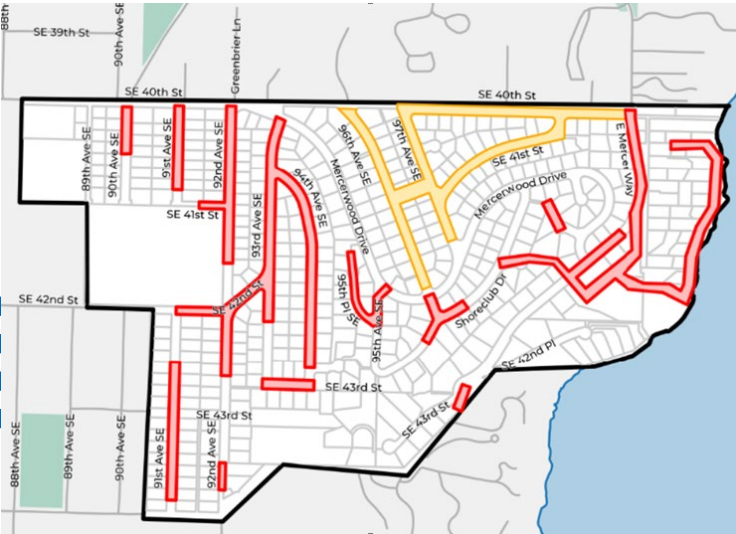
- The City's water utility contractor began construction of the 2023 Water System Improvements within the East Seattle neighborhood in October.
- This project continues with great progress, including laying new 8-inch ductile iron water main.
- Kar-Vel Construction has installed over 3,000 feet of pipe along 60th Ave and on SE 32nd St up to West Mercer Way. Pipe has also been installed at 62nd Ave SE.
- Work to install new water service lines will continue, weather-dependent, through Q1 2024 as teams finish trench paving and landscape restoration.





Sewer Basin 40 Project

- Replacement work is underway on Sewer Basin 40, located in and around the Mercerwood Neighborhood.
- This area is one of the oldest portions of Mercer Island's sewer collection system.
- Teams are installing 12,000 feet of cured-in-place-pipe (CIPP) into existing sewer mains to prevent groundwater seepage and stormwater runoff inflow into our sewer network.
- Crews have lined nearly 10,000 of the more than 12,000 feet of City sewer mains identified in the project.
- Work will continue on the remaining pipe and connection seals through late spring 2024.



Luther Burbank Dock and Waterfront



- This is a major waterfront renovation project including the replacement of many of the dock structures, plaza renovations, Boiler Building stabilization, and beach and access improvements.
- This is a multi-year project given the project complexity and permitting requirements with construction occurring in phases.
- Construction work will take place in 2024 and 2025.



Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

- The City Council adopted Resolution No. 1621 approving the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review Scope of Work and Master Schedule.
- The Scope of Work includes over 30 element-specific changes required by state, regional, and King County planning policies.
- Highlights include a new Economic Development Element, a robust Housing Element update to comply with state statute, and a new Parks Zone.
- This work will be ongoing in 2024, with adoption by City Council anticipated at the end of the year.



Financial Management Software

- Work is ongoing to implement the City's new enterprise-wide financial management software.
- The software is fully configured and staff are working on the transfer of data, staff training, testing and more.
- The team is aiming for a go-live date of January 1, 2025.

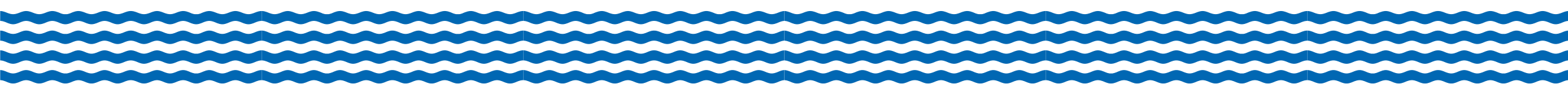


The work plan also includes...

- Addressing the short-term and medium-term needs of work groups displaced by the City Hall closure.
- Responding to many legislative mandates requiring code amendments.
- Planning for the opening of light rail and ongoing work related to the Sound Transit Settlement Agreement.
- Development of a new cost allocation policy, which will inform revisions to many of our partnership agreements.
- And more...

Work Items Paused/Delayed

- The Merceddale Park Master Plan is postponed.
- The Groveland/Clarke Joint Master Plan will have a delayed start, but work will continue on the site assessment.
- From the May 2023 Mid-year Planning Session:
 - The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan will not start in 2024 and should be reconsidered for the 2025-2026 biennium.
 - The Park Land Acquisition Strategy and Land Donation Program will not start in 2024 and should be reconsidered for the 2025-2025 biennium.
- Facilities Conditions Assessment work related to the Luther Burbank Administrative Building, the MICEC Annex, the Fire Stations, and the Community Center will be phased to address other facility needs. The work will be completed by the end of 2026.

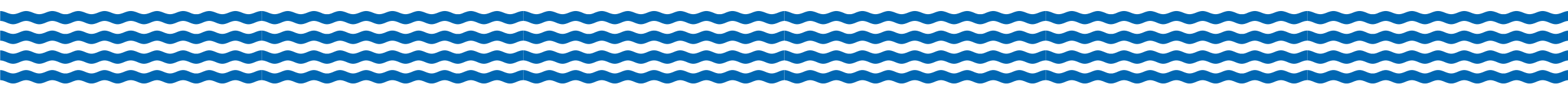


What's Next



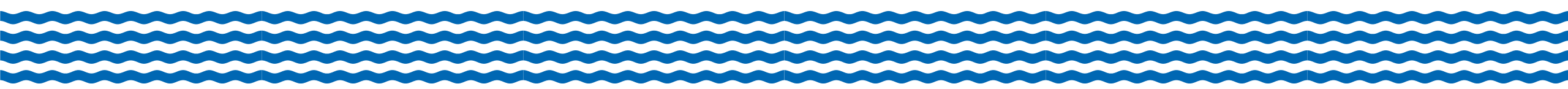
Areas of Focus

- Planning for the replacement of City Hall and the Public Works Building is our highest priority and will require dedicated staff and City Council time this year and into the next biennium.
- Other areas of major work include:
 - Comprehensive Plan Update
 - Finance Software System Implementation
 - 2025-2026 Budget Development
 - Capital Program
 - Legislation/Code Updates
- **City Manager's Wise Words of Caution:** We need to be mindful of the volume of work upon us before undertaking additional work items.



2025-2026 Preliminary Work Plans

- The 2025-2026 Preliminary work plans were included in the packet.
- These work plans will be further revised and included in the 2025-2026 Biennial Budget documents this fall.
- Additional presentations today:
 - City Facilities Discussion
 - Land Use Planning Work Discussion





City Manager's Year in Review 2023

