

AB 6947:

GMA Compliance – Planning Commission Recommendation

June 16, 2026, Mercer Island City Council

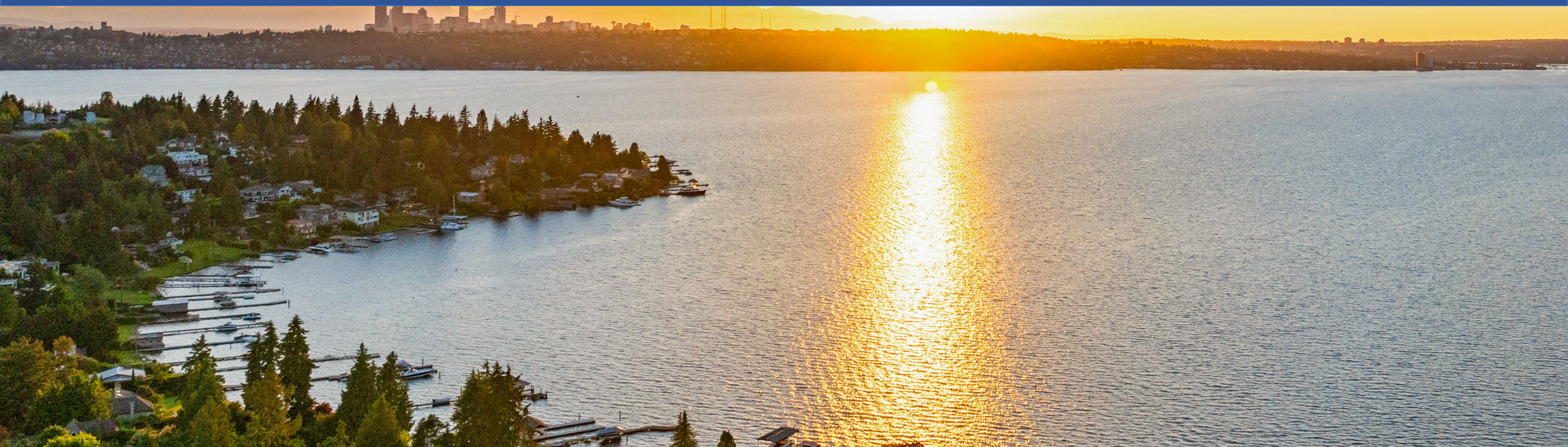
Community Planning and Development
Jeff Thomas, Community Development Director
Adam Zack, Principal Planner



Agenda

1. Background: Growth Management Act and Comprehensive Plan
2. Planning Commission Process and Recommendation
3. Next Steps

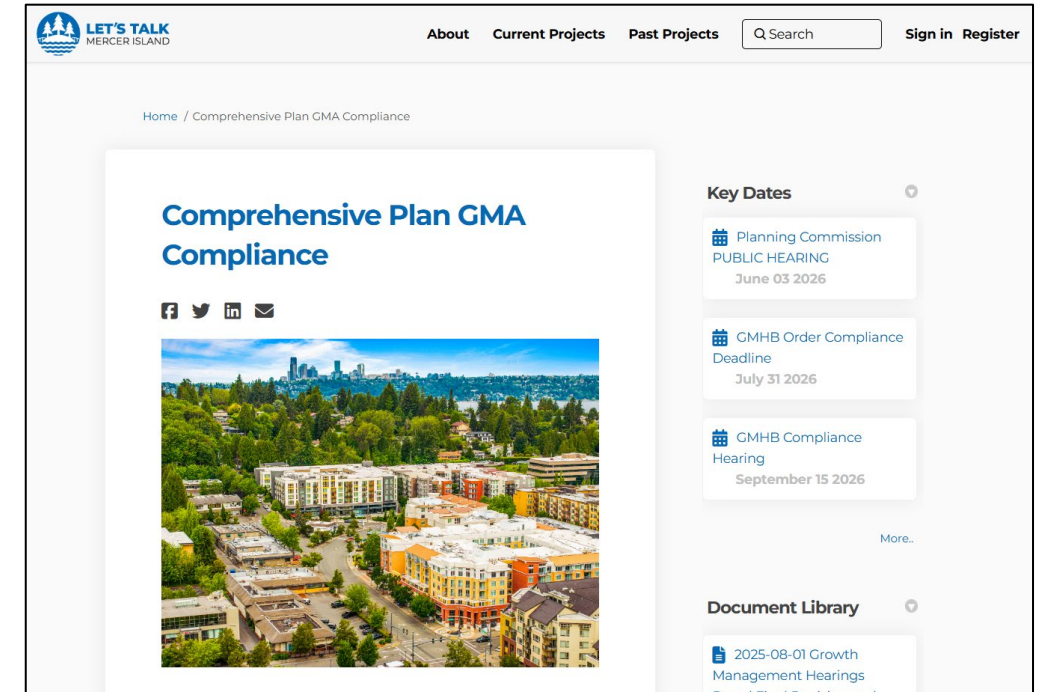
BACKGROUND



Where to Find Documents

- All relevant documents are posted on the project Let's Talk page

<https://letstalk.mercergov.org/comprehensive-plan-gma-compliance>



- Every agenda bill includes a list of the previous meetings, including City Council meetings, and links to the materials.



BACKGROUND

Background materials are provided on the [City's Let's Talk page](#). A summary of previous agenda materials is outlined below:

January 16, 2026

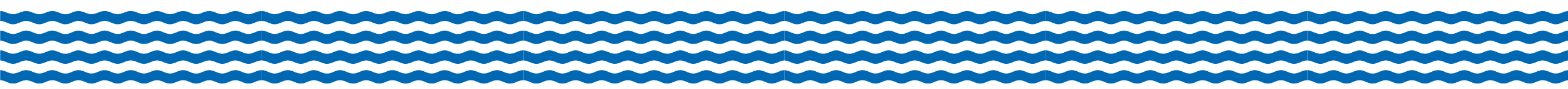
- [AB 6838](#): Compliance with [Growth Management Hearings Board Final Decision and Order](#) related to the City of Mercer Island Periodic Update to the Comprehensive Plan Overview of City Council Planning Session.

February 17, 2026

- [AB 6865](#): Compliance with Growth Management Hearings Board Final Decision and Order Related to the City of Mercer Island Periodic Update to the Comprehensive Plan
- [AB 6866](#): GMA Compliance Public Engagement Plan
- [AB 6871](#): Legislative Review Alternatives to Help City Meet GMHB Order Compliance Deadline (Ordinance No. 26C-03 First Reading)

Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB) Appeal

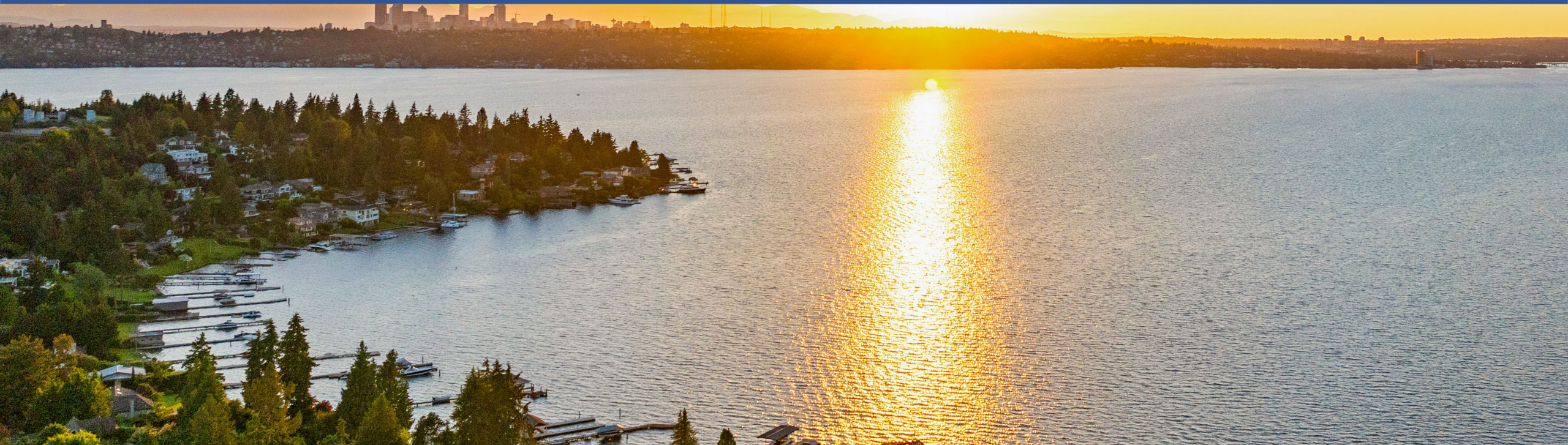
- Mercer Island adopted an update to its Comprehensive Plan in November 2024.
- Futurewise appealed in 2025 claiming the Comprehensive Plan did not go far enough for affordable housing.
- Comprehensive plan appeals under GMA are decided by the GMHB.
- The GMHB is a state board that determines whether a comprehensive plan complies with the WA Growth Management Act.



GMHB Order

Issue	Amendments in Comprehensive Plan, Subarea Plan, and Development Code
Land Capacity	2026 Land Capacity Analysis Update in Comprehensive Plan & zoning changes in Town Center and Adjacent MF zones – eight stories in TC-8A and TC-8B and six stories in TCMF-6
Adequate Provisions	Inclusionary zoning in TC-8A, TC-8B, and TCMF-6 Fee in Lieu Other changes for affordable housing throughout the development code
Station Subarea Plan	Adoption of the Station Subarea Plan
Anti-Displacement Measures	In a separate ordinance (Ord. No. 26C-07), regulations intended to mitigate or reduce potential displacement resulting from zoning changes. Note – City Council had a public hearing and first reading on 6/2 and will have second reading on 6/16.
July 31, 2026, Deadline	Complete public hearing by June 10 – on track

Planning Commission Process and Recommendation



Comprehensive Plan Update Summary

- Updated residential land capacity analysis to reflect the proposed upzones in Town Center and adjacent Multi-family
 - Disaggregated by affordability level
- Updated Land Use Map to reflect changes in Town Center and adjacent multifamily
- 2026 Housing Barriers Analysis & updated summary table of potential barriers and resolving actions
- Migration of Town Center Goals & Policies into the Station Subarea Plan
- Consistency amendments to Transportation, Utilities, and Capital Facilities

Station Subarea Plan Summary

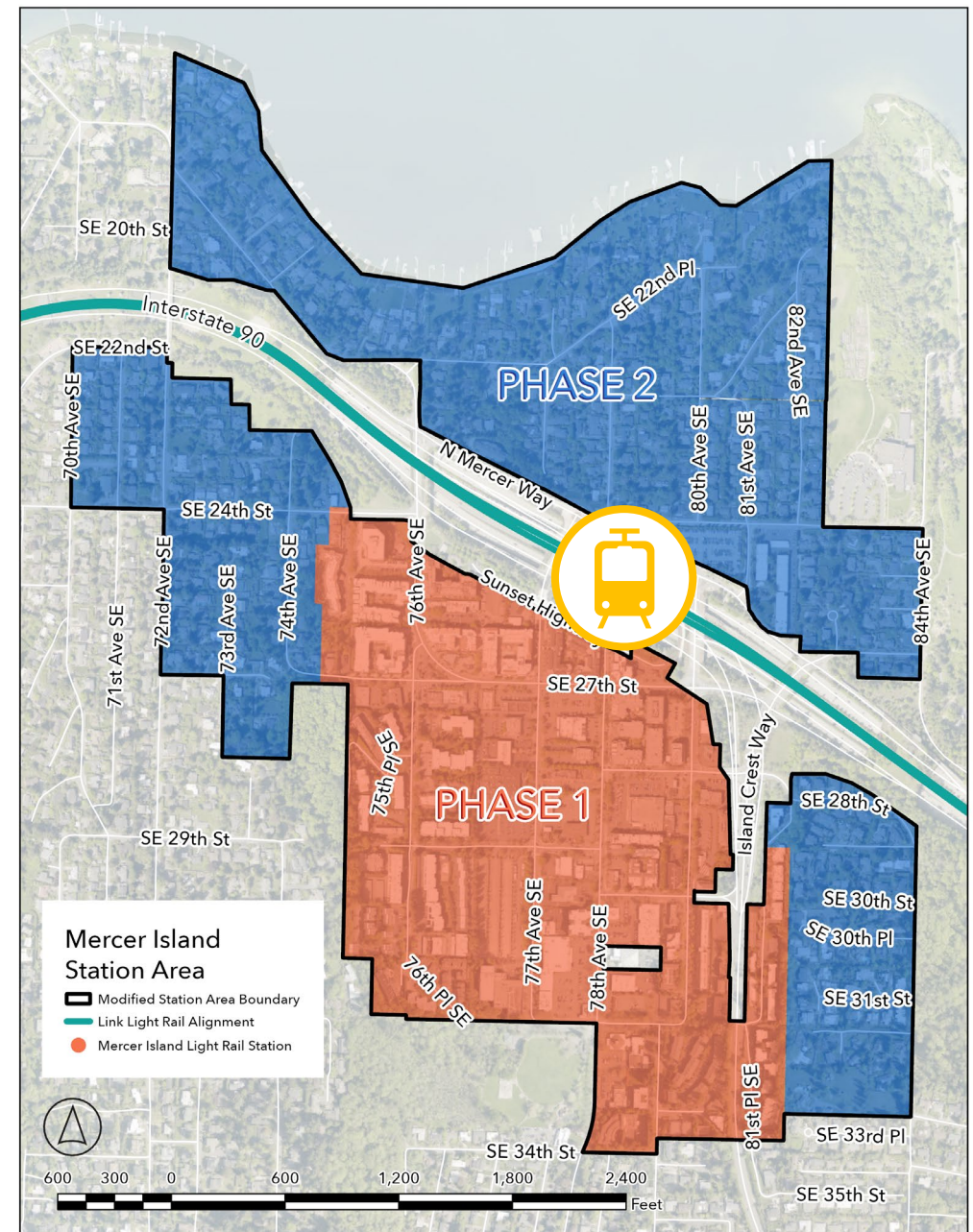
What is a Subarea Plan?

A subarea plan is a set of goals and policies for a defined area in the city. It is part of the Comprehensive Plan that establishes a refined plan for the subarea.

When will the phases of the Station Subarea Plan happen?

Phase 1 – changes will be made concurrently with adoption of the Station Subarea Plan.

Phase 2 – City will have until 2029 to complete Phase 2. Work will begin following adoption of the Station Subarea Plan.



Zoning & Development Code Amendments Summary

Zoning Changes: implement Phase 1 and address development capacity issue from the GMHB order (see map).

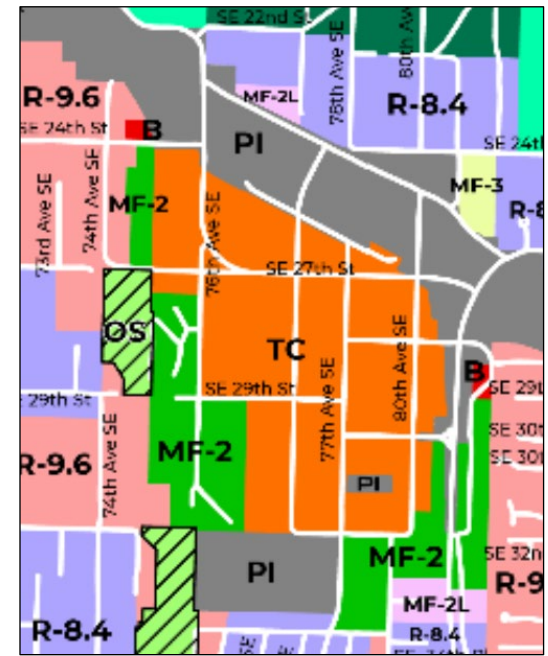
Inclusionary Zoning: in Phase 1 area 10% of units must be affordable at 50% of the area median income.

Fee In Lieu: Allows payment of a fee in lieu of constructing the required affordable housing – funds will be used to finance projects with deeper affordability.

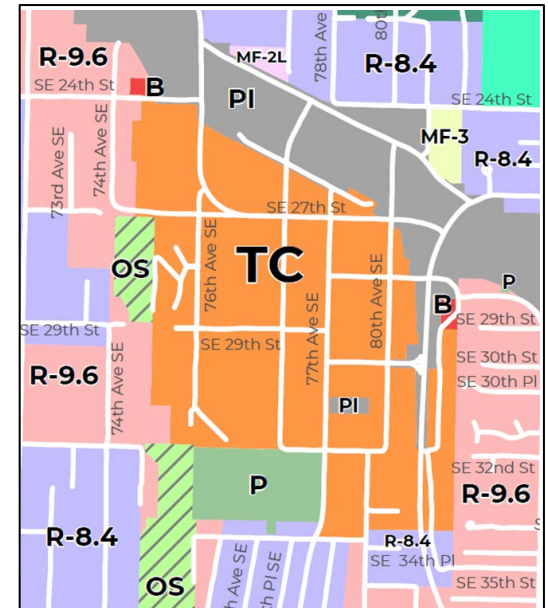
Permanent Supportive and Emergency Housing: Changes to regulations in MICC 19.06.080 for special needs and social service transitional housing.

Consistency Amendments: other code amendments to be consistent with changes to the Comprehensive Plan, Station Subarea Plan, and elsewhere in the development code.

Existing

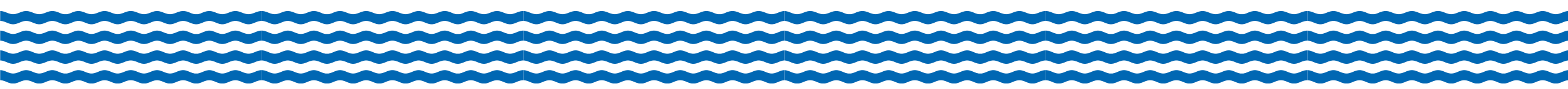


Proposed



Planning Commission Process

- Planning Commission considered this matter eight times between March 25 and June 10, including six meetings in seven weeks between April 29 and June 10.
- SEPA Determination of Non-Significance was issued on May 20, comment period through June 3 – No comments received.
- The Planning Commission opened a public hearing on the recommendation June 3 and continued it to June 10.



Next Steps

- July 7 – First readings of ordinances to adopt the Planning Commission recommendation
- July 21 – Second readings of ordinances to adopt the Planning Commission recommendation

GMHB Proceedings

- July 31 – GMHB compliance deadline
- August 14 – Compliance report due to GMHB
- September 15 – GMHB compliance hearing

