



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6543  
September 17, 2024  
Regular Business**

**AGENDA BILL INFORMATION**

<b>TITLE:</b>	AB 6543: Town Center Parking Regulations Code Amendments (First Reading Ord. No. 24C-14)	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Schedule Ordinance No. 24C-14 for second reading and adoption on October 1, 2024.	

<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	City Manager
<b>STAFF:</b>	Jessi Bon, City Manager Robbie Cunningham Adams, Senior Management Analyst Amelia Tjaden, Management Analyst
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	n/a
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. Ordinance No. 24C-14 2. Proposed Parking Regulations Map
<b>CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:</b>	1. Develop data-driven economic development and retail plans and strategies to activate Town Center and other business areas.

<b>AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE</b>	\$ n/a
<b>AMOUNT BUDGETED</b>	\$ n/a
<b>APPROPRIATION REQUIRED</b>	\$ n/a

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this agenda bill is to present Ordinance No. 24C-14 (see Exhibit 1) to increase the citation fee for parking infractions and sunset the Town Center Commuter Parking Permit Program.

- The Town Center Parking Plan was adopted by the City Council in November 2023 ([AB 6369](#)).
- At the July 16, 2024 City Council meeting, the Council received a presentation and provided feedback on potential actions to update the Town Center parking regulations ([AB 6514](#)).
- City Council directed staff to increase the citation fee from \$20.00 to \$54.00 and to sunset the Town Center Commuter Parking Permit Program.
- This agenda bill and accompanying ordinance (see Exhibit 1) establishes the code changes to increase the parking citation fee and sunset the Town Center Commuter Parking Permit Program.
- If adopted, the citation fee increase will be effective January 1, 2025.

## BACKGROUND

The [Town Center Parking Plan](#) was adopted by the City Council in November 2023 ([AB 6369](#)). The City Council received a presentation and provided feedback on potential actions to update the Town Center parking regulations ([AB 6514](#)) on July 16, 2024. City Council directed staff to increase the citation fee from \$20.00 to \$54.00, and to sunset the Town Center Commuter Parking Permit Program.

The current citation fee for parking infractions is \$20.00, which is the default amount set by the Administrative Office of the Courts when a fee is not established in the code. Revenue from parking citation fees goes into the General Fund.

The Town Center Parking Permit Program was created in 2001 to eliminate parking for non-Mercer Island commuters from City streets. Permits are available for Mercer Island residents, as well as a limited number of Mercer Island businesses grandfathered into the permit program for \$5.00 per year. The permit grants priority access to designated on-street spaces from 7:00am to 9:00am on weekdays. The City sold 337 permits in 2022, and 233 permits in 2023.

## ISSUE/DISCUSSION

### Parking Citation Fee Increase

As described in the Town Center Parking Plan and evident in the recent parking counts conducted, a \$20.00 citation fee does not deter people from violating existing parking regulations in the Town Center. Many vehicles overstay the parking limits, making on-street spaces unavailable for Town Center customers and visitors.

Staff recommends the citation fee for parking infractions be increased to \$54.00. This rate was chosen as it is the current citation fee for parking infractions for the City of Bellevue. Increasing the citation fee to \$54.00 would create parity between the City of Mercer Island and its neighboring jurisdictions.

Increasing the parking citation fee will be achieved by amending MICC Chapters [10.18](#) and [10.36](#) as shown in Ordinance No. 24C-14 (see Exhibit 1), becoming effective January 1, 2025. The increase in the parking citation fee will also be added to the 2025 Master Fee Schedule.

The Mercer Island Police Department will provide an education-first approach to improve compliance with parking regulations by initially providing non-fee warning notices, at the discretion of the Police Chief.

### Town Center Commuter Parking Permit Program

Sunsetting the Town Center Commuter Parking Permit Program and encouraging former permit holders to use the Park & Ride and the future Commuter Parking Lot at the former Tully's site will preserve valuable on-street parking for Town Center customers and visitors and create consistent parking restrictions within the Town Center. This change will be achieved through making amendments to Chapter [10.74](#) MICC, as shown in Exhibit B of Ordinance 24C-14 (Exhibit 1). All existing permits will expire on December 31, 2024, and no Town Center Commuter Parking Permits will be issued for 2025, signifying the end of the program. It is important to note that the North Mercer Restricted Parking District (RPD) will not be affected by this change and staff will continue to monitor the RPD program.

The current restrictions for the Town Center Commuter Parking Permit are only applicable from 7:00am-9:00am. Upon sunseting the program, the Public Works Right of Way team will remove the placards for these spaces. As such, the parking spaces will now only be restricted by the 72-hour time limit until the City Council adopts different regulations (see Exhibit 2).

## **NEXT STEPS**

After adoption of Ordinance No. 24C-14 (Exhibit 1), anticipated on October 1, 2024, at the second reading, staff will implement a comprehensive outreach campaign to communicate the changes prior to the January 1, 2025 effective date. Staff will post updates on the [Town Center Parking Plan Let's Talk page](#), provide outreach to the business community and the Chamber of Commerce, promote information on social media, and publish articles in the MI Weekly.

Staff will continue to monitor enforcement data, regional trends, and the relationship of the citation fee to the price of any paid parking in Town Center when evaluating any future changes to the citation amount.

At the July 16, 2024, City Council meeting, Council directed staff to implement an on-street parking system where a motorist would register their vehicle for two hours of free parking and have the option to extend this parking up to four hours for a paid fee. Staff work on this new parking program is underway and anticipated to be presented to the City Council for further review and consideration no later than Q1 2025.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Schedule Ordinance No. 24C-14 establishing the fee for parking citations and sunseting the Town Center Commuter Parking Permit Program for second reading and adoption on October 1, 2024.