



# PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

PRC 25-01  
January 9, 2025  
Special Business

## AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	PRC 25-01: Parks Zone Development Discussion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Review and provide feedback on the draft Parks Zone development regulations.	
<b>STAFF:</b>	Jessi Bon, City Manager Carson Hornsby, Management Analyst II Alison Van Gorp, Deputy CPD Director Kellye Hilde, Deputy Public Works Director Ryan Daly, Recreation Manager Sam Harb, Parks Operations Manager Alaine Sommargren, Deputy Public Works Director	
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. Draft Parks Zone Development Regulations 2. Park Critical Areas Maps	

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Parks Zone is a proposed new zoning district that will establish development regulations for most City-owned and/or managed parks. The purpose of the new zone is to ensure park lands are preserved and managed appropriately, in alignment with the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan, City code, master plans, and similar guiding documents.

- During the January 9, 2025, Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) meeting, the PRC will review and provide feedback on the draft Parks Zone development regulations (see Exhibit 1), which were prepared by staff based on PRC input from the October and November 2024 PRC meetings.
- Staff and the PRC will continue to collaborate on the draft text for the new Parks Zone and finalize the PRC recommendation by April 2025.
- It is currently anticipated that the PRC will hand-off a recommendation to the Planning Commission (PC) in Q2 2025 and the City Council will undertake review and adoption of the new Parks Zone by the end of 2025.

## BACKGROUND

### Parks Zone/Open Space Zone Background

The scope of work for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, adopted by the City Council in 2022 with [Resolution No. 1621](#), included the creation of a new Parks Zone and development regulations for the new zone. In January 2024, a preliminary draft of the Parks Zone development regulations was presented to the PRC and PC. Following community and commission feedback, the legislative review was paused, and the draft was returned to the PRC for further review. In March 2024, the PRC recommended dividing the Parks Zone planning into two phases: creating a zone for City-owned open space lands and another for public park properties.

The PRC and Open Space Conservancy Trust (OSCT) Board held several joint meetings to develop legislation for the Open Space Zone. On May 8, 2024, PRC and OSCT Chairs presented a joint recommendation to the PC, which completed its review in June 2024 as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update. On September 25, 2024,

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the PC approved a recommendation for the Open Space Zone code amendment. The City Council adopted the [Open Space Zone](#) on November 4, 2024, with an effective date of December 31, 2024.

Now that the PRC's first phase of work is complete on the Open Space Zone, the PRC has shifted focus to the development of the new Parks Zone with the goal of providing a recommendation to the PC in Q2 2025.

Establishment of the Parks Zone will require the following amendments to the MICC and Comprehensive Plan:

- Development Regulations – create a new subsection or subsection(s) under MICC 19.05, amend [MICC 19.01.040](#) to establish the Parks Zone, and amend [MICC 19.16.010](#) to adopt new definitions as needed.
- Zoning Map – amend the Zoning Map in the MICC to reflect where the Parks Zone applies.
- Land Use Designations – amend the Land Use Designation table in the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan (if needed).

### **Legislative Review Process**

Once the PRC makes its recommendation to the PC, the PC will commence the formal legislative review process to gather public input and provide a recommendation to the City Council, as established in [Chapter 19.15 MICC](#).

The legislative review process includes the following steps:

- The Planning Commission holds a public hearing ([MICC 19.15.020](#)).
- The Planning Commission makes a written recommendation to the City Council following the public hearing ([MICC 19.15.260\(B\)\(2\)](#)).
- The City Council considers the Planning Commission recommendation during a public meeting, deciding to adopt, reject, or amend the recommendation ([MICC 19.15.260\(B\)\(3\)](#)).
- If the Comprehensive Plan requires an amendment for the Parks Zone, the City Council will consider the Parks Zone amendments with the City's annual comprehensive plan amendments, which are limited to once a year by the Growth Management Act ([RCW 36.70A.130\(2\)](#)).

### **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan**

The PROS Plan is a six-year plan that anticipates the programming and capital infrastructure investments necessary to meet the community's needs for parks, recreation, open space, trails, arts, and cultural events. The City Council adopted the [Parks, Recreation and Open Space \(PROS\) Plan](#) on March 1, 2022. The PRC served as the lead advisory board on the PROS Plan update with support provided by the Arts Council and OSCT. The 2022 PROS Plan community engagement process included two statistically significant mail-in surveys with concurrent surveys available online, virtual open houses, a dedicated project webpage, and numerous board and commission meetings.

Chapter 4 of the PROS Plan establishes goals and objectives that serve as the policy framework for the provision of parks and recreation services by the City of Mercer Island. Development of master plans, policies, code, and other work products should align with this policy framework, which includes development of the Parks Zone.

### **Development Code, Parks Code, and Park Operating Policies**

As the PRC provides input on the draft Parks Zone development regulations, staff recommend commissioners consider the various tools used by the City to regulate development, operations, and allowed uses and activities in parks. The City's development code, parks code, and park operating policies and procedures each have a distinct purpose and consist of specific types of rules and regulations regarding parks. Rules and regulations applicable in areas other than the proposed new zone and its associated development regulations are outside the scope of the Parks Zone project. However, the PRC may wish to provide recommendations to

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the City Council to address other items in future work plans. The purpose and type of regulations included in the development code, parks code, and park operating policies and procedures are summarized below.

#### Development Code

The Mercer Island Development Code is established in [MICC Title 19 - Unified Land Development Code](#). Title 19 classifies land within the City into zones and regulates land uses and development permitted within each zone. Title 19 zones and regulations work together with the rest of the MICC, Parks Code, and park operating policies. For example, if the Parks Zone includes cycling as a permitted use, the City may develop traffic rules or regulations separately for speed limits or designated cycling areas. Similarly, picnic shelters may be included as a permitted use in the Parks Zone, but Title 19 would not include policies or rules regarding shelter use, rentals, or maintenance.

#### Parks Code

The Mercer Island Parks Code (aka “Parks Rules”) is established in [MICC Chapter 9.30 - Park Rules](#). The Parks Code is part of the Criminal Code, which is a collection of laws that define crimes and their punishments within the City's jurisdiction. The Parks Code consists of laws that apply to the City's public parks and are enforced by the Mercer Island Police Department. The Parks Code is where unlawful acts are codified, such as building fires in undesignated areas ([MICC 9.30.170](#)), posting unauthorized signs and posters ([MICC 9.30.040](#)), and riding horses in undesignated areas ([MICC 9.30.060](#)). The Parks Code is on the City's work plan to be updated in 2025-2026. Staff will assist the PRC in identifying and logging items for follow-up that are best suited for consideration as part of the Parks Code update.

#### Park Operating Policies and Procedures

Operating policies and procedures are established to guide citywide operations, including the City's parks and recreation facilities and programs. Operating policies and procedures include operational processes, activities, tasks, decision-making structures, levels of delegation, and responsibilities of staff. Some operating policies and procedures are intended for internal use, such as roles and responsibilities of parks and recreation staff or equipment repair and maintenance schedules. Some operating policies and procedures are public facing, such as facility rental or recreation program policies. Examples of operating policies and procedures can be found on the [Parks Information & Policies webpage](#).

#### **Parks Zone Materials from Prior PRC Meetings**

- [Tuesday, October 8, 2024](#)
- [Thursday, November 7, 2024](#)

## **ISSUE/DISCUSSION**

#### **Draft Parks Zone Development Regulations**

Staff have prepared a draft of the Parks Zone development regulations (see Exhibit 1) which includes the purpose, designation requirements, uses permitted, development standards, and definitions. The draft development regulations were prepared based on feedback from the PRC at the October and November 2024 meetings and will be further refined as review and discussion continues.

Discussion items are listed below and further described in the following sections.

1. Recommendation to include public art as a permitted use in the Parks Zone without any development standards based on feedback from the Arts Council.
2. Analysis and background information on Aubrey Davis Park and its zoning designation as “Public Institution.”
3. Information on “split-zoning” parks that include critical areas.
4. Information on street ends and landings and their zoning designation.

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5. Information on wireless communications facilities.
  6. Other Discussion Items

## **1. Arts Council Recommendation on Public Art**

Recommendation: The proposed Parks Zone development regulations (see Exhibit 1) include public art as a permitted use. This recommendation is based on feedback provided by the Arts Council.

Background: Staff attended the November 18, 2024, Arts Council meeting to gather feedback from the Arts Council on the development standards for public art in the Parks Zone. Staff gave a short presentation on the Development Code and public art installations in parks and engaged the Arts Council in discussion.

The Arts Council unanimously approved a motion recommending public art as a permitted use without any development standards in the Parks Zone. The Arts Council preferred to continue carrying out their process of providing recommendations to the City Council on a case-by-case basis instead of establishing additional regulations for public art in parks. The Arts Council is in the process of updating their Six-Year Public Art Work Plan and may consider recommending additional policies or guidelines for public art installations as part of the work plan update.

## **2. Aubrey Davis Park, WSDOT, and the Public Institution Zone**

Recommendation: Based on the information provided below, staff recommends that Aubrey Davis Park remain zoned as Public Institution.

Background: Aubrey Davis Park (formerly "The Lid Park") was built in 1992 to mitigate impacts from reconstruction of Interstate 90 (I-90). Today, it encompasses 90+ acres and a 2.8-mile-long recreation and transportation corridor. The park includes the Park on the Lid, the Mountains to Sound Trail, the Boat Launch, and the Greta Hackett Outdoor Sculpture Gallery.

The I-90 corridor, which includes Aubrey Davis Park, is in the Public Institution Zone ([MICC 19.05.010](#)). The Public Institution Zone is a special purpose zone that permits land use for government services, public schools, public parks, transit facilities, hazardous waste treatment and storage facilities, and wireless communications facilities. The current I-90 corridor was unclassified in the Mercer Island zoning code until 1987, when the City zoned the land as Public Institution with a series of ordinances amending the comprehensive plan and zoning code shortly before the construction of the "new" I-90.

Aubrey Davis Park is unique in comparison to Mercer Island's other parks because it is located within airspace of I-90 right of way owned by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). The City of Mercer Island and WSDOT executed a series of turnback and landscape maintenance agreements in the late 1980s to permit the construction and use of recreational facilities within WSDOT right of way and transfer maintenance responsibilities of the premises, including Aubrey Davis Park, to the City. As a result of the turnback agreements, WSDOT and the City executed airspace leases for I-90 right of way with a 40-year term in the early 1990s to permit specific uses of the lid and the east channel boat launch. The permitted uses of the premises under these agreements include landscaping and maintenance, approved concessions, special events, waterfront access, and use of sports and recreation facilities.

According to Washington State law ([RCW 47.01.260\(1\)](#)), "The department of transportation shall exercise all the powers and perform all the duties necessary, convenient, or incidental to the planning, locating, designing, constructing, improving, repairing, operating, and maintaining state highways, including bridges and other structures, culverts, and drainage facilities and channel changes necessary for the protection of state highways..." RCW 47.01.260(1) gives WSDOT preemptive authority to exercise all powers over the state highway system. This means cities have no authority to adopt conflicting provisions regarding state highways, including zoning development regulations. The City must comply with the numerous prior agreements with

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WSDOT and cannot adopt regulations attempting to control the same uses covered by these agreements that permit the City to maintain Aubrey Davis Park and other recreational facilities within WSDOT right of way.

### 3. Critical Areas in Parks

Recommendation: A question was posed by a PRC member about the possibility of split-zoning park properties so that critical areas in parks are included in the Open Space Zone (instead of the Parks Zone). Staff do not recommend further consideration of split-zoning park properties based on the analysis provided below. Wildwood Park, however, should be evaluated to determine if the property is best suited for the Parks Zone or the Open Space Zone.

Background: The PROS Plan identifies eight parks that include critical areas such as watercourses, wetlands, geologically hazardous areas, and shorelines. These parks include Luther Burbank Park, Clarke Beach Park, Groveland Beach Park, Homestead Park, Island Crest Park, Mercerdale Park, Wildwood Park, and Secret Park. There have been conversations at prior PRC meetings about split zoning park properties to designate the critical areas within these parks as part of the Open Space Zone.

However, [MICC 19.01.040\(G\)\(2\)](#) regulates situations where a boundary between zones divides a lot. In such cases, the entire lot must be assigned a single zone based on a prioritized list:

“Where a boundary between zones divides a lot into two or more pieces, the entire lot shall be deemed to be located in the first zone on the following list in which any part of the lot is located: R-15, R-12, R-9.6, R-8.4, MF-2L, MF-3, MF-2, PI, PBZ, C-O, TC, and B. The location of the zone boundary shall be determined by use of the scale appearing on the zone map unless the location of the boundary is indicated by dimensions.”

Simply stated, this means that if a parcel spans multiple zones, the zone highest on the priority list governs the entire property. For example, a lot containing both Parks and Open Space zones would be assigned entirely to the higher-priority zone, as determined by this hierarchy.

While this provision ensures consistency in zoning, it creates challenges when trying to use zoning designations to manage or protect critical areas within parks. Assigning the entire parcel to a higher-priority zone might inadvertently limit opportunities for specific protections or development limitations intended for critical areas, such as those found in the Open Space Zone.

Despite these challenges, the goals of protecting critical areas do not rely solely on zoning. Environmental protections that were being sought by proposing split zoning for critical areas in parks are already addressed through existing regulations in the MICC as well as state and federal regulations. The City’s regulations for critical areas are established in [MICC Chapter 19.07 – Environment](#), which heavily restricts development within critical areas. [MICC Chapter 19.13 – Shoreline Master Program](#) provides additional regulations for development within shoreline buffers.

The regulatory framework ensures that critical areas within parks are effectively managed without requiring split zoning. Once the Parks Zone is adopted by the City Council, it will be integrated into the MICC zoning hierarchy outlined in Title 19, alongside the Open Space Zone. This integration will enhance consistency in zoning regulations by incorporating these new zones into the existing framework. If split zoning were applied to park properties, the provisions of this code would mandate assigning a single zone to the entire parcel based on the prioritization hierarchy established in MICC Title 19.

Maps of the critical areas in parks are illustrated in Exhibit 2. A summary of critical areas and shoreline regulations is also provided below. The park critical areas maps were created using the City’s GIS software, but it is important to note the City’s GIS is not survey accurate and does not include complete information about all land within city limits. Critical areas are typically identified, confirmed, and recorded in GIS during the review of development proposals, preparation of park master plans, or during any other process that

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requires formal analysis and completion of a land survey. As a result, the City's GIS may not fully represent all critical areas, and there could be additional unrecorded critical areas.

#### Geologically Hazardous Areas

Geologically hazardous areas are regulated in [MICC 19.07.160](#). Geologically hazardous areas are lands that are susceptible to erosion, landslides, seismic events, or other factors. Development proposals within geologically hazardous areas generally require completion of a critical area study documenting that the proposal will not adversely impact critical areas, the subject property, or adjacent properties, and that the proposal will appropriately mitigate impacts to the geologically hazardous area. Landslide hazard areas, seismic hazard areas, and erosion hazard areas each have specific development standards with critical area study and buffer regulations in addition to regulations for trails and land clearing, grading, filling, and foundation work in landslide and erosion hazard areas.

#### Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas

Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas are regulated in [MICC 19.07.170](#). Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas include areas associated with state or federally listed endangered or threatened species, [Priority Habitats and Species \(PHS\)](#) identified by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, bald eagle habitats, watercourses and wetlands, and biodiversity areas. Development proposals in these areas must submit a critical area study identifying endangered or threatened species and the extent of their habitats in addition to the vegetative, faunal, and hydrologic characteristics. The critical area study must also evaluate potential impacts on habitats and adequately address mitigation of those impacts.

#### Watercourses

Watercourses are regulated in [MICC 19.07.180](#). Watercourses are streams and constructed water channels that include the following types: Type S (Shorelines of the State, there are no known Type S watercourses on Mercer Island), Type F (fish habitat), Type Np (non-fish habitat), Type Ns (non-fish, seasonal), and Piped. Critical area studies are required for development of sites that contain watercourses or their buffers. Development within watercourses and/or their associated buffers is prohibited unless specific exemptions apply. Each type of watercourse has a unique buffer that prohibits lot coverage and hardscapes within. Buffer widths are determined based on the watercourse type and boundaries can be "averaged" or reduced under certain circumstances to provide limited flexibility for development while minimizing impacts to the watercourse. All watercourse types have minimum setbacks for buildings and structures, and piped watercourses have specific setback requirements. Additionally, watercourse crossings such as bridges and culverts must meet specific state standards and trails are subject to additional regulations.

#### Wetlands

Wetlands are regulated in [MICC 19.07.190](#). Wetlands are designated according to adopted federal and state manuals and generally include areas saturated or covered by water that support vegetation adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Critical area studies for development in wetland areas must include additional elements including wetland rating forms and data sheets, discussion of the landscape setting, demonstration of impact on ecological function, and a mitigation plan. Wetlands are classified in four categories each with unique buffers along with trail standards that apply to all four categories. Buffer boundaries are determined based on the wetland classification and can be "averaged" or reduced under certain circumstances to provide limited flexibility for development while minimizing impacts to the wetland. Development proposals for wetland areas must specifically demonstrate lack of disturbances to the wetland associated with lights, noise, toxic runoff, stormwater runoff, changes in water regime, pets and human disturbance, dust, and disruptions of corridors or connections. Mitigation for wetland and/or wetland buffer impacts are required when impacts cannot first be avoided or minimized and must achieve equal or greater biologic function.

#### Shorelines

The City's Shoreline Master Program (SMP) regulations are located in [MICC Chapter 19.13](#). The SMP is adopted pursuant to the authority and requirements of [RCW Chapter 90.58](#) and [WAC Chapter 173-26](#). The purpose of MICC Chapter 19.13 is to achieve SMP mandates from the State of Washington and adopt

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shoreline development regulations that protect the health, safety, welfare, values and property interests of the City and its residents. MICC Chapter 19.13 includes detailed regulations for an extensive list of uses and developments within the shoreline jurisdiction both landward and waterward of the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM), along with development standards that regulate setbacks, height limits for structures, hardscapes, and other standards. Additional requirements are provided for moorage facilities and development located waterward from the OHWM, overwater structures, breakwaters, jetties, groins, weirs, public access piers, docks, boardwalks, ecological restoration, dredging, marinas, and other general requirements.

#### **4. Landings and Street Ends**

Recommendation: The PRC asked for additional information on street ends and landings to inform the zoning discussion. The staff recommendation is that landings and street ends that include utility infrastructure should not be included in the Parks Zone. The policies that guide their “above-ground” and “secondary” use as parks should continue (see PROS Plan).

Background: The City of Mercer Island owns a number of properties commonly referred to as “street ends” or “landings.” These are small properties located on the shoreline that contain utility infrastructure. Some of the utility infrastructure found at landings and street ends is visible, but much of it is located underground. Fruitland Landing is a good example of this – it is a major sewer facility where City and King County sewer infrastructure connects. Fruitland Landing includes a pump station, generator, pressurized lines, sewer mains, a storm main, a storm lateral, sewer stubs, and catch basins. However, the only visible utility infrastructure at Fruitland Landing is the generator situated above ground, which ensures facilities continue to operate during power outages. The utility infrastructure at Fruitland Landing is vital to City and County wastewater systems and any applicable development regulations for the property should be based on its primary land use.

The PROS Plan classifies “landings” and “street ends” as mini parks because they offer lake access and passive recreation opportunities as secondary uses. However, the primary use of landings and street ends, as noted previously, is critical utility infrastructure for the water, wastewater, and stormwater systems that serve Mercer Island.

It is a best practice to zone land based on its primary use. In this case, the primary use of landings and street ends is utilities. Application of Parks Zone development regulations to landings and street ends would restrict the ability of staff and utility agencies to operate, maintain, and upgrade utility infrastructure on these properties.

#### **5. Wireless Communications Facilities**

Recommendation: The topic of regulating wireless communications facilities in parks was raised at the last PRC. The staff recommend development standards for wireless communications facilities in the Parks Zone similar to the development standards included in the Open Space Zone. The staff also recommend including in the transmittal memo to the Planning Commission and the City Council a statement advocating for limited siting of these facilities in parks, to the extent that City authority allows.

Background: Wireless communications facilities consist of infrastructure that transmits and receives data for wireless services, such as radio and satellite antennas and cell towers. Wireless communications facilities are regulated Citywide in [MICC 19.06.040](#) (macro wireless communications facilities), [MICC 19.06.070](#) (small wireless facilities deployment), and [MICC 19.06.075](#) (small wireless facility deployments design and concealment standards).

Local zoning regulation of wireless communication facilities is severely constrained by an intricate set of limitations contained both within federal and state law and by regulations and orders promulgated by the

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Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Any changes to how the City regulates wireless communications facilities should be addressed as a separate and holistic City-wide project due to the many complexities involved with these types of communications. Any change to the City's existing regulatory scheme with respect to wireless communications facility siting will require lengthy legal review and analysis, to ensure both that any such regulations do not conflict with federal law/regulations and do not create any unintended consequences, such as creation of legal nonconforming uses for existing facilities.

## 6. Other Discussion items

The draft Parks Zone (Exhibit 1) includes draft development standards that address a range of other matters. Staff will be working with the PRC to refine these sections over the course of the next several meetings. The list below summarizes the discussion items for the January 9, 2025, meeting.

- a. Setbacks: The development standard language proposed for setbacks is taken from the Open Space Zone, however, there are a few additional structures in parks that are proposed to be exempt from setbacks in the Parks Zone including bollards, kiosks, and parking areas. Staff are seeking feedback from the PRC on the draft text.
- b. Signs: The development standard language proposed for signs was tailored to address park operation needs, the PRC will need to make a recommendation on the maximum size for signs. Staff are recommending 16 to 18 sq. ft. based on current park operations.
  - i. Signs in the Open Space Zone are limited to a maximum size of 10 sq. ft.
  - ii. There are many signs in parks larger than 10 sq. ft. For example, the sign in the Bike Skills Area is 12 sq. ft. and the notice board at Mercerdale Park is approximately 15 sq. ft.
- c. Scoreboards: Scoreboards likely fall under the definition of a "sign" in City Code and need to be referenced in the Parks Zone since scoreboards are present at athletic fields. The PRC will need to make a recommendation on the maximum size for scoreboards and identify any other regulations they wish to implement. Staff are recommending 200 to 220 sq. ft. as the maximum allowed size.
  - i. The largest scoreboard in the park system is 20 ft. x 10 ft.
- d. Kiosks: Kiosks are present in most parks and provide important information about park use. Kiosks are also used to promote upcoming events, volunteer work parties, and other community programs. The PRC will need to make a recommendation on the maximum size and height for kiosks. Staff are recommending 22 sq. ft. as the maximum size and 10 ft. as the maximum height, consistent with the Open Space Zone.
  - i. Kiosks in the Open Space Zone are limited to 15 sq. ft. and 10 ft. in height with an exception for Pioneer Park, where kiosks are limited to 22 sq. ft. and 10 ft. in height.
  - ii. The Luther Burbank Park kiosk is the same model that is located at Pioneer Park. This model of kiosk is the largest in the park system other than the Mountains to Sound kiosk at Aubrey Davis Park, which is 8 ft. 8 in. wide and 4 ft. 5 in. in height.
- e. Trails: The language for trail standards is taken from the Open Space Zone. The PRC will be asked to make a recommendation on maximum trail width.
  - i. Lid bathroom area at widest point: 14 ft.
  - ii. Lid C I-90 trail: 12 ft.
  - iii. Lid I-90 trail WZ5 area path: 12 ft. with a 2 ft. crushed gravel shoulder on each side.
  - iv. Luther Burbank meadow trail: 10 ft. standard, 18 ft. at widest part where trail to beach meets, 14 ft. around bends.
  - v. Luther Burbank area close to the Administrative Building at widest point: 16 ft.



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- f. Buildings: The sections on park building development standards is still in progress. The intent of this section is to allow for the larger buildings in Luther Burbank Park to continue to operate in a conforming status by identifying them by name in the Parks Zone with key details included such as size and height. Staff are still working to gather the specific information to populate the table in this section. The PRC will be asked to make a recommendation on development standards for other buildings and structures, which includes restrooms, maintenance buildings, batting cages, etc.
- g. Picnic Shelters: The development standards for picnic shelters are currently proposed at a maximum height of 16 ft. and 1,200 sq. ft. of gross floor area. Staff are seeking feedback on these proposed regulations.
- i. There are currently only two picnic shelters in the parks system (Aubrey Davis Park and Deane’s Children’s Park), but there is high demand for these facilities. The Luther Burbank Park Master Plan calls for the addition of a picnic shelter in the future. The shelter at Deane’s Children’s Park is in poor condition and anticipated for replacement.
  - ii. The picnic shelter at Aubrey Davis Park is 15 ft. tall, 36 ft. long, and 30 ft. wide (1,080 GFA).
  - iii. As picnic shelters are replaced, there is a desire to standardize them, meaning that new shelters will likely be designed and built to match the shelter at Aubrey Davis Park.
- h. Parking: The development standards for parking were drafted to address parking design, ingress and egress, and begin to explore parking minimums and maximums. For example, placeholder language was added to address parking minimums for athletic fields as this specific park use creates high parking demands at park facilities. PRC feedback on “right-sizing” parking requirements is needed to further revise and develop this section of the Parks Zone.
- i. Impervious Surface: The development standards for impervious service are currently proposed to prohibit a “net” increase in impervious surfaces in parks with some exclusions.
- i. Improvements identified in an approved Master Plan are exempt. This allows for the City to undertake a public process to evaluate the addition of a new park amenity. A new spray park, for example, would introduce new impervious service, but if approved via a Master Plan process, would be allowed.
  - ii. Improvements that meet the City’s ADA Transition Plan requirements are proposed to be exempt as these improvements address accessibility requirements to address federal ADA requirements. Accessible parking is included as part of this exemption.
  - iii. Emergency access is exempt to ensure that emergency responders have suitable access to respond to emergencies in parks.
  - iv. Public trails are excluded because any trail that has surfacing other than natural soil is considered impervious. Please note, trail width is proposed to be regulated in the “Trail Standards” section of the development standards.
  - v. Synthetic turf fields are excluded because they are artificial surfaces that contain synthetic, non-living elements. If synthetic turf fields are not exempted, the City is likely to be unable to upgrade existing fields to synthetic turf as it has done in the past. Conversion of natural grass fields to synthetic turf fields increases field capacity and is a long-term strategy to address athletic field demands.
  - vi. Utilities are excluded because they are vital facilities that require impervious surfaces in their construction to operate effectively and efficiently. Many parks have water, sewer, drainage, and other utility systems that are installed in parks out of necessity.

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- j. General Outdoor Lighting: The development standards for general outdoor lighting are currently proposed to minimize glare, sky glow, and light trespass onto neighboring properties. This section includes shielding and installation requirements as well as a number of exemptions for lighting that serves specific purposes or is required by state or federal law.
  - k. Lighting for Outdoor Performance, Sport and Recreation Facilities, and Play Fields: The development standards for this section are currently proposed to meet the standards of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA), minimize illumination of surrounding areas, and require that lights be turned off when not in use.

## NEXT STEPS

The PRC will continue to provide input on the draft Parks Zone development regulations over the course of several meetings. It is currently anticipated that the PRC will provide a recommendation on the draft Parks Zone to the PC in Q2 2025. The PC will then conduct the legislative review process and provide a final recommendation to the City Council regarding amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and MICC. The anticipated PRC meeting schedule for this work is provided below.

- Thursday, January 9, 2025
  - Review Draft Parks Zone: Full Code Review, discussion, and feedback. Reach consensus on items where possible.
- Thursday, February 6, 2025
  - Review Draft Parks Zone: Full Code Review (continued).
  - Test Fit Analysis – Review Applicability of Draft Parks Zone to Existing Parks, identify non-conforming issues and discuss potential resolution.
- Thursday, March 6, 2025
  - Follow-up Discussion on Test-Fit Analysis, revisions to draft Parks Zone if necessary.
  - Review draft Hand-Off Memo to PC.
- Thursday, April 3, 2025
  - Finalize All Materials.
  - Discussion: Next Steps (hand-off to PC, legislative review process, timelines of the Comprehensive Plan annual update and code amendment).

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

Review and provide feedback on the draft Parks Zone development regulations.