



**MAYOR SALIM NICE**  
**CITY OF MERCER ISLAND, WASHINGTON**  
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July 5, 2022

Ms. Jessi Bon  
City Manager  
City of Mercer Island  
9611 S.E. 36<sup>th</sup> Street  
Mercer Island, WA 98040

RE: Annual performance review of Mercer Island City Manager by City Council

Dear City Manager Bon:

Each year the Mercer Island City Council reviews the performance of the City Manager. This process considers several factors, including the completion of a work plan, execution of the budget established by the Council and advancing the Council's goals and objectives. This letter reflects the views of the City Council relative to your performance in accomplishing these three primary responsibilities.

The Council's process in determining the City Manager's performance spanned multiple meetings, including face-to-face discussions between yourself and the Council, and a deliberative process that arrived at this consensus view.

The Council desires to highlight several areas of strength, areas that have served the community and City exceptionally well over the past twelve months and that the Council believes set you apart as the chief executive of the City of Mercer Island.

At a high level the Council believes you demonstrated exceptional strength in the following areas:

- Building and maintaining strong connections to the community.
- Good decision-making.
- Being a strong leader with the understanding to manage all levels of the organization.
- Developing and executing a strategic vision.
- Communicating with transparency and clarity.
- Your demonstrated ability to solve problems.

You have proven that your deep connection with the community and historical understanding of Mercer Island is not lost in the decision-making process and that these characteristics you possess serve you well in your decision-making. The Council believes you are incredibly connected to the community and that these connections have grown stronger because of your good decision-making. The trust you have established with Council is further bolstered by your decision to consult Council even when a decision was yours to make. This has allowed you to check signals and seek direction as you deliberate the decision-making process.

Leadership within the organization is another strength that has earned you the respect of staff and the Council. You have leveraged that trust while demonstrating your ability to manage through any crisis and realize outcomes that have genuinely benefitted the City and residents of Mercer Island.

Under your leadership, the Council has witnessed significant professional staff development and growth. This has been most evident by the myriad of new faces supporting Council, Board, and Commission discussions while executing the Council work plan. Your ability to roll up your sleeves and learn what is going on within the organization has allowed staff to follow you to successful outcomes. Often this has been through the fog of criticism and in the face of multiple reorganizations, difficult decisions, and negotiations, all in pursuing a new normal. But your bold and brave leadership has allowed the organization to find this elusive path forward.

You have been deliberate in executing your strategic vision for the organization. You identified the shortcomings of the existing organizational structure and sought to flatten and simplify the functional components. With this restructuring, you have transformed the organization to be more agile and able to react to the changing circumstances, and you leveraged areas of strength and applied them to areas that lacked vital skills. The benefits of your strategic vision are manyfold, and the Council is confident you will continue to refine and deliver value in this area.

The Council has seen tremendous growth in the communication strategies and standards you developed. Your ability to communicate swiftly and with deliberate intent has cascaded through the organization, making departments and the City nimbler and more effective in executing the day-to-day work. You have demonstrated, mainly through your communications, that transparency and an emphasis on speed of response are among the most effective tools.

Leading an organization through significant change would not have been possible without your keen problem-solving abilities. You are a natural problem solver, and it is an area in which you excel. You have repeatedly demonstrated the ability to immerse yourself in the data, ask good questions, and work to find swift resolutions. Some problems require time and resources, which you have brought to the Council to resource. But at the end of the day, your voice has often identified "a third way," which is your defining difference.

We are thankful to have a competent and experienced City Manager leading the City and we are grateful for your service, expertise, and vision for the future of Mercer Island. Under your leadership, we are confident the City will continue to provide outstanding municipal services to the Mercer Island community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Salim Nice". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "S" and a vertical line for the "N".

Mayor Salim Nice

Cc: City Council