



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR VIDEO MEETING

Thursday, July 1, 2021 at 5:30 PM

BOARD MEMBERS:

Chair Rory Westberg
Vice Chair Jodi McCarthy
Board Members: Don Cohen,
Sara Berkenwald, Peter Struck,
Sara Marxen

LOCATION & CONTACT

Zoom Meeting
Phone: 206.275.7626 | www.mercerisland.gov

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for meetings should notify the Staff Liaison at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 206.275.7706.

Virtual Meeting Notice

The virtual meeting will be broadcast live on Zoom and recorded and saved on the City Council's [YouTube Channel](#)

Registering to Speak: Individuals wishing to speak live during Appearances will need to register their request with the staff liaison at **206.275.7871** or [email](#) and leave a message before 4 PM on the day of the Commission meeting. Please reference "Appearances" on your correspondence. Each speaker will be allowed three (3) minutes to speak.

Join by Telephone at 5:30 PM: To listen to the meeting via telephone, please call **253.215.8782** and enter Webinar ID **896 5507 6791** and Password **694967** when prompted.

Join by Internet at 5:30 PM: To watch the meeting over the internet via your computer, follow these steps:

- 1) Click [this link](#)
- 2) If the Zoom app is not installed on your computer, you will be prompted to download it.
- 3) If prompted for Webinar ID, enter **896 5507 6791** Enter Password **694967**

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL - 5:30 PM

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Approve minutes of the following Parks & Recreation Commission meetings:
 - A. May 6, 2021 Regular Meeting
 - B. June 3, 2021 Regular Meeting
2. PROS Plan: Capital Project Prioritization Tool and Second Community Survey
Recommended Action: Review and provide feedback on the draft capital project prioritization tool and the draft of the second community survey.
3. Recreation Reset Update
Recommended Action: Receive update (verbal presentation).
4. Recreation - Differential Pricing Policy
Recommended Action: Discuss the policy framework and draft policy. Provide input to City staff regarding the policy.

OTHER BUSINESS

5. Planning & Meeting Schedule Update
6. Department Report & Update
7. Commissioner Reports/Work Plan Updates

ADJOURNMENT



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES May 6, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Westberg called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm via Zoom Online meeting.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Rory Westberg, Don Cohen, Jodi McCarthy, Lyn Gualtieri, Amy Richter, Sara Berkenwald and Peter Struck were present.

City Council Liaison Jake Jacobson and Consultants Steve Duh, Jean Akers, and Emily Moon were present.

Staff present were Jessi Bon, City Manager, Ryan Daly, Operations Transition Team Manager, Jason Kintner, Public Works Director, Paul West, CIP Projects Manager, Katie Herzog, Recreation & Operations Coordinator and Merrill Thomas-Schadt, Recreation & Operations Coordinator.

APPEARANCES

1. Jon Hamer spoke in support of the Mercedale Playground project and inclusive play elements and to consider inclusivity in consideration of the PROS Plan process.

REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Approve Meeting Minutes of the April 1, 2021

Recommended Action: Approve minutes.

Cohen motioned, Berkenwald seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Recreation Reset Plan (Cont.)

Recommended Action: Receive report

Daly and Moon provided verbal update- brief summary of the Council's reception of the April 20, 2021 meeting; staff monitoring State phase changes, and bringing on a new staff member. Staff proposes to use appropriation on limited number of community events, limited use of drop in and gym rentals at MICEC, and facilitating limited outdoor recreation in the fall. Staff will develop preliminary budget and phasing plan for next phase of services in the summer, to be considered by Council in the fall for 2022.

3. PROS Plan Update - Virtual Open House update and initial discussion of Parks Conditions Assessment and ADA Compliance

Recommended Action: Receive presentation and provide input.

Bon provided a summary of the project of late. Duh presented a summary of the Virtual Open House on March 23, 2021. No questions from Commissioners.

Akers presented on the park facility assessment and ADA compliance material. Struck encouraged more information on how items on the assessment might be prioritized for attention or resources.

Duh stated that more on that will come further along in the PROS process. Westberg asked if ADA information would be published in order to help prioritize. Kintner stated that the City's ADA Transition Plan process will be managed in conjunction with publishing the park ADA compliance assessment. Westberg stated interested in park use data. McCarthy observed a significant difference in usage during a recent tour of various park areas. A discussion **occurred** about the balance of resources that go toward more-and-less-used parks.

Kintner asked the group about their reaction to the conditions assessment. Westberg and Richter found that matrix presented overall a more positive picture of park facilities than expected.

BREAK 6:57-7:05PM

4. Mercedale Playground Update

Recommended Action: Receive presentation, provide input, and make recommendation to City Council for preferred option for Mercedale park playground.

Kintner and West presented on the April _ public meeting and design options. West asked for direction on:

- 1) Option 1: 72" platform or 2: 60" platform
- 2) Accessible Whirl
- 3) Simple or more elaborate design in the resilient ("poured in place") surfacing

Commissioners overall supported mixed surface of poured and grass.

Commissioners overall did not support the accessible whirl feature.

Commissioners overall did not support the enhanced design option in the surface.

Commissioners overall supported design option 2.

Commissioners discussed color scheme preferences- were overall split between options 2 and 4.

5. Commission Planning and Meeting Schedule Update

No updates.

6. Department Report and Updates

Daly presented a report.

7. Commissioner Report and Workplan Updates

Gualtieri spotted a pileated woodpecker!

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:23PM



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES June 3, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Westberg called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm via Zoom Online meeting.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Rory Westberg, Don Cohen, Jodi McCarthy, Sara Berkenwald, Peter Struck and Sara Marxen were present.

Consultants Steve Duh and Emily Moon were present.

Staff present were Jessi Bon, City Manager, Ryan Daly, Operations Transition Team Manager, Jason Kintner, Public Works Director, Katie Herzog, Recreation & Operations Coordinator and Merrill Thomas-Schadt, Recreation & Operations Coordinator.

COMMISSIONER VACANCIES UPDATE

Daly gave an update on the recent vacancies and newly added Commissioner.

APPEARANCES

No appearances.

REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Approve Meeting Minutes of the May 6, 2021

Recommended Action: Approve minutes.

Westberg requested two revisions to the minutes. Staff will revise and bring them back to the July 1 meeting for approval.

2. Recreation Reset Plan (Cont.)

Recommended Action: Receive update.

Moon provided a verbal summary of planning for Recreation and MICEC programs and services for the remainder of 2021. The next update to City Council on July 6 for endorsement of the Reset Strategy. Daly reminded Commission that Thrift Shop donation processing will still occur at the Community Center while Mercer Room rentals are paused.

Westberg asked when policy items will come to Commission for discussion. Moon replied that staff anticipates returning at July meeting with outline of policy questions, specifically differential pricing and facility allocation.

Struck suggested providing information online to clearly show the timeline of services as they are offered.

Cohen expressed interest in the Commission reviewing budget request materials prior to presentation to the City Council on July 6. Moon noted that the Commission's primary role is to advise on services and programs and that the City Council holds budget authority. Staff committed

(if possible) to provide packet materials set for the July 6th City Council meeting to the PRC when available. Staff anticipates engaging the PRC as a follow-up to July 6th City Council meeting. Moon asked for input on 2022 programs and services. Westberg and Struck noted that more information and detail is needed in order to give feedback. McCarthy voiced support for the categories anticipated first- preschool programming and socially focused programs for seniors.

BREAK 6:27-6:35

Commissioner Marxen exited the meeting at 6:36PM

3. PROS Plan Update - PROS Plan Capital Project Prioritization Tool and Second Community Survey
Recommended Action: Receive presentation and provide input.

Duh presented draft materials for prioritization criteria in order to draft a capital project list. Commissioners discussed the seven criteria in the draft rating scale. Commissioners previewed a draft of questions proposed for a second community-wide survey and gave feedback.

Commissioner Berkenwald exited the meeting at 7:45PM.

4. Elections of Officers

Westberg explained the process for electing new Commission officers according to the by-laws.

Cohen nominated McCarthy for the position of Chair. McCarthy was elected 4-0 (Commissioners Berkenwald and Marxen were absent).

Cohen nominated Struck for the position of Vice Chair. Struck was elected 4-0 (Commissioners Berkenwald and Marxen were absent).

5. Commission Planning and Meeting Schedule Update

No updates.

6. Department Report and Updates

Daly presented a report.

7. Commissioner Report and Workplan Updates

Cohen shared a photo of a successful fishing expedition with his grandson.

Struck shared appreciation for the Parks Maintenance team as the nice weather brings more visitors to our parks.

Struck shared appreciation for Westberg's service as Chair.

Westberg thanked the Public Works staff for quick work on a service request he submitted.

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:31PM



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Item 2
July 1, 2021
Regular Business

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

TITLE:	PROS Plan: Capital Project Prioritization Tool and Second Community Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Review the capital project prioritization tool and provide feedback. Review the draft of the second community survey and provide feedback.	

STAFF:	Jessi Bon, City Manager Jason Kintner, Chief of Operations
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Jake Jacobson
EXHIBITS:	A. Draft: Capital Project Prioritization Memo, dated 06-24-21 B. Draft: Capital Facilities Plan Priority – Ranked by Priority C. Draft: 2021 Community Survey (Part 2)

SUMMARY

At the July 1, 2021, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, the Commission will continue work on the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan update. The discussion topics will include:

- Review and feedback on the draft capital project prioritization tool, which has been revised since the last PRC meeting based on feedback provided by the Commission.
- Review and feedback on the draft of the second community survey, which has been revised since the last PRC meeting based on feedback provided by the Commission.

The project team is seeking input from the Commission to inform development and further revisions to these documents.

BACKGROUND

As directed by the City Council in September 2019, the Parks & Recreation Department, in collaboration with the Parks & Recreation Commission (PRC), began the process of updating the PROS Plan. The previous PROS plan expired at the end of 2019.

The PROS Plan is a six-year plan that anticipates the programming and capital infrastructure investments necessary to meet the community’s need for parks, recreation, open space, trails, arts, and cultural events. Conservation Technix was selected as the consultant to manage the process, including providing a baseline analysis of existing conditions and community needs, facilitating a community engagement process, and developing a draft framework for the final PROS Plan.

Work was suspended on the PROS Plan update in April 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

At the end of 2020, the staff and consulting team resumed the planning process for the PROS Plan, with an initial focus on assessing the work that was already completed, adjusting the project timeline, and modifying the scope of work to reflect the need for virtual engagement strategies. To date, work that has been completed on the PROS Plan includes a review of existing conditions, completion of a capital facilities assessment, four presentations to the Parks and Recreation Commission, the completion of a community survey, and a Virtual Open House.

On January 19, 2021, the City Council hosted a joint study session with the PRC (see [AB 5797](#)) to kick-off the re-start of the planning process for the PROS Plan update.

A subsequent meeting was held with the PRC on February 4, 2021, to gather input to help inform the first Virtual Open House held on March 23, 2021.

At the March 6, 2021, meeting, the PRC received a report out on the March Virtual Open House, reviewed the parks condition assessment, and discussed the consultant's initial findings related to ADA compliance.

At the June 3, 2021, meeting, the PRC reviewed and provided feedback on the draft capital project prioritization tool and the second community survey.

CAPITAL PROJECT PRIORITIZATION TOOL

The Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) is a component of the PROS Plan and will provide a list of all of the potential parks, trails, and open space capital projects under consideration over the next 10 to 20 years. Types of CFP projects include:

- Renovations or enhancements to existing facilities
- New facilities or amenities
- Planning projects
- Property acquisitions

The projects in the CFP will be ranked based on a prioritization tool to be developed as part of the PROS Plan process. The draft prioritization tool was presented to the PRC at the June 2021 meeting and has since been revised based on the feedback received, see Exhibit 1. The project team is seeking additional feedback on the proposed prioritization tool with the intent of finalizing the approach so that it may be applied to the parks capital project list in preparation for the fall discussions with the PRC.

The project team has also compiled a preliminary list of capital projects including park planning projects and potential land acquisitions (see Exhibit 2) and ranked the projects according to the prioritization criteria. This is not intended to be an all-inclusive capital project list, but was developed to illustrate how the prioritization tool is applied to the potential list of capital projects. The PRC will begin their review of the proposed capital project list, including cost estimates, this fall.

SECOND COMMUNITY SURVEY

The draft of the second community survey was presented to the PRC at the June 2021 meeting. Feedback and suggestions from that discussion were incorporated into a revised draft (see Exhibit 3). The project team is seeking feedback from the PRC on the draft survey with the intent of finalizing the survey questions. The survey will be released at the end of August 2021 and concluded by mid to late September.

NEXT STEPS

The following agenda items are anticipated for the September 2 PRC Meeting:

- Introduction to goals and policies
- Review of the 10 to 20-year preliminary capital project list (with cost estimates) including a discussion of potential new capital projects

Work will continue on the PROS Plan through the end of 2021, with adoption of the plan anticipated for the end of 2021 or early 2022.

RECOMMENDATION

Review and provide feedback on the draft capital project prioritization tool and the draft of the second community survey.

Mercer Island PROS Plan

Capital Project Prioritization – Updated 06-24-21

Background

The Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) is a component of the PROS Plan and will provide a list of all of the potential parks, trails, and open space capital projects under consideration over the next 10 to 20 years. Types of CFP projects include:

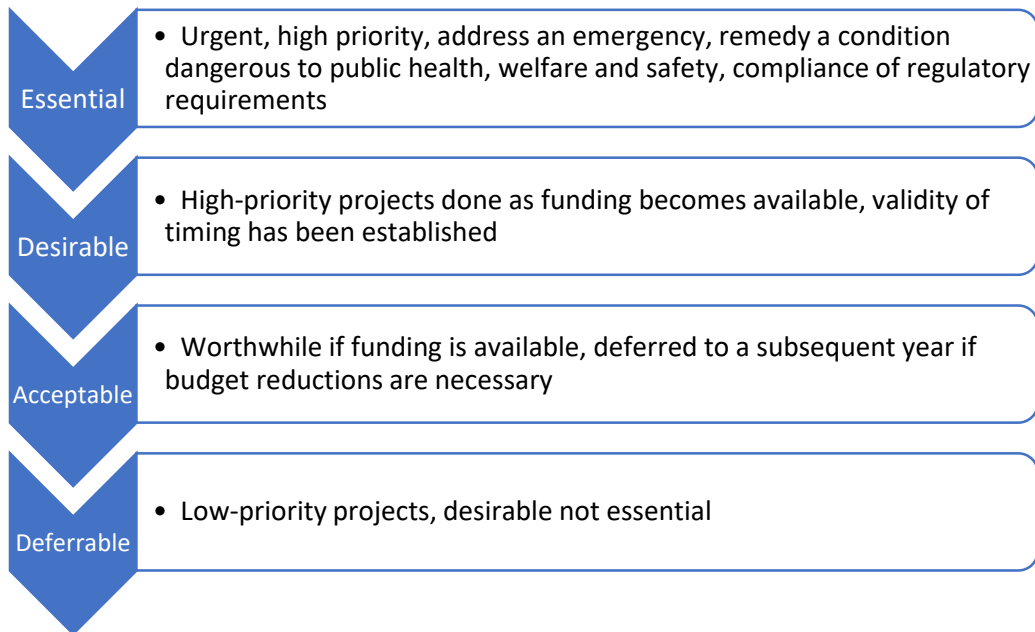
- Renovation or enhancement to existing facilities.
- New facilities or amenities.
- Property acquisitions.

The Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) will include a brief description of each project and assign an estimated project cost. The CFP is not an approved budget, but instead serves as a guiding document to inform preparation of departmental budgets, identify project priorities, estimate capital funding loads, and prepare grant funding strategies.

The projects in the CFP will be prioritized based on a scoring tool to be developed as part of the PROS Plan. The framework for developing the CFP prioritization tool is further described in the next section.

Primer on Capital Planning Prioritization

Capital project prioritization tools range from value-based ranking systems to complex rating scales. In developing the prioritization tool, we want the criteria to align with the values of the community and be easy to understand and apply. At a high level, system improvements could be weighed in a tiered system, as shown below.



Other considerations for project prioritization may include the following:

Park Capital Renovation & Repair Projects

- Capital repair projects that address public safety should receive the highest priority for budget allocations and implementation.
- Minor capital repair projects that prevent the need for major renovation at a later date should be prioritized and scheduled in a timely fashion.
- Capital repair projects for transportation, water, sewer, or stormwater should be evaluated to consider how/if/when coordination with the Parks CFP could achieve multiple benefits or project efficiencies.
- Park system renovation and repair projects should address existing barriers and seek compliance with ADA guidelines to the extent possible.

New Park Capital Facility Projects

- New capital projects should be consistent with the goals and policies of the PROS Plan, the City's Comprehensive Plan, and relevant, adopted park or open space site master plans.
- New capital projects should be compliant with ADA guidelines to the greatest extent possible and incorporate identified ADA upgrades or improvements, where feasible.
- New capital projects in transportation, water, sewer, or stormwater, should consider how to compliment and/or coordinate with parks capital projects (*especially for trail and utility connections and water access*) to leverage public funding and facilitate park or trail improvements.
- Public involvement should be incorporated into any master planning and park design development and should inform the recommendation on new capital projects.
- New capital projects should clearly demonstrate how they meet an identified public need or maintain an existing asset.
- Funding for new capital projects should seek funding from state and federal grant programs.

Framework Considerations to Establish Project Priority Criteria

Higher Significance:

- Addresses public and/or physical safety issue
- Completes a multi-phase project (e.g., Luther Burbank or Aubrey Davis master plans)
- Enhances existing site conditions (i.e., improves efficiency, enables better connections, expands capacity, reduces overuse by patrons, etc.)
- Addresses multiple goals or values (i.e., stormwater management, recreation, civic engagement, ADA, cultural arts, etc.)

Medium Significance:

- Reduces repetitive maintenance needs
- Maximizes current site use or adds to future capacity
- Adds significant recreational value (i.e., fill a major need or gap)
- Creates more diverse or varied recreational options systemwide
- Improves walkability and/or addresses gaps in trail system
- Promotes stewardship, sustainability & public health

Lower Significance:

- Improves visual or aesthetic value and civic pride
- Expands the distribution of recreational opportunities systemwide

DRAFT Prioritization Criteria – Revised 06-24-21

The CFP will prioritize projects based on public feedback, Commission guidance, and staff review. A preliminary list of seven criteria have been identified to be applied to the draft capital project list.

Criteria	Rating Scale	Rating Definitions	Weighting Factor	Max. Score
Safety & Security: projects that address safety and security needs in order to provide safe public park spaces that are accessible to all, with a higher rating applied for projects with high risk of safety concern or amenities at the end of useful life.	(0, 1, 2)	0: No / Low risk 1: Moderate risk of safety or failure to be addressed 2: High risk of safety or failure to be addressed	6	12
Operating Budget Impact: assesses the project impact on the operating budget.	(0, 1, 2)	0: Increase to operating budget (i.e., >5% impact) 1: Nominal or no material change to operating budget (i.e., <5% impact) 2: Decrease in operating budget	3	6
Extending Useful Life / Enhancing Level of Service: projects that repair or replace existing amenities, or projects that improve parks and facilities that are used heavily and/or where cost of project is evaluated against the volume of usage/resident benefit.	(0, 1, 2)	0: Nominal / No extension of amenity life 1: Moderate extension of amenity life (i.e., 5-10 years) 2: Significant extension of amenity life (i.e., 10-20 years)	3	6
Expanding Opportunities: projects that offer additional or expanded recreation opportunities based on public feedback and/or projects that improve conditions for ADA usage and equity.	(0, 1, 2)	0: No new recreational amenity or opportunity 1: Moderate / Minor improvement to recreational opportunity (i.e., small trail connections, small ADA enhancements) 2: Significant / New recreational improvements (i.e., newly added features, major ADA upgrades)	2	4
Maintain / Enhance Environmental Conditions: projects that maintain or enhance environmental characteristics of the site.	(0, 1, 2)	0: Significantly impacts or diminishes existing environmental characteristics (i.e., removes substantial number of trees, hardens additional shoreline, requires substantial mitigation) 1: Nominally impacts or maintains existing environmental characteristics 2: Enhances or improves environmental characteristics (i.e., reforestation, substantial invasive species removal, removes hardened shoreline, serves as mitigation bank)	1	2
Unique Recreation Feature: projects that are high value and unique amenities, such as docks, piers, all-weather turf, splash pad or specialized equipment.	(0, 2) Binary	0: Does not pertain to a unique amenity 2: Does pertain to a unique amenity	1	2

The (draft) ranking criteria, once confirmed, will be applied to a preliminary project list. Each project will be scored using the rating scale per criteria. The individual project scores for each criterion will then be multiplied by a weighting factor and summed to arrive at a weighted matrix value.

Other considerations: The sorting of the CFP project list may be segmented between major project classifications, such as Park Renovations & Upgrades, Trail Improvements, Open Space Management, Facilities & Centers, and Property Acquisitions.

Mercer Island PROS Plan
Capital Facilities Plan - Ranked by Priority
 WORKING DRAFT - REVISED 6/24/21

Use the matrix below to INSERT RATING SCORES ONLY, based on the rating scales noted. Total score calculated to the right.

			0, 1, 2	0, 1, 2	0, 1, 2	0, 1, 2	0, 1, 2	0, 2	
			6	3	3	2	1	1	32 max
ID#	Project Name - Site	Project Description	Safety / Liability	Operating Budget Impact	Extends Useful Life	Expands Opportunities	Enhances Environmental Conditions	Unique Feature	Total
Capital Projects									
PA0122	Luther Burbank Park	Dock Repair and Reconfiguration	2	1	2	1	2	2	27
PA0105	Aubrey Davis Park	Lid A Playground Replacement	2	1	2	1			23
PA0106	Aubrey Davis Park	Lid B Playground Replacement	2	1	2	1			23
	First Hill Park	Court Resurfacing & Playground Replacement	2	1	2	1			23
PA0130	Roanoke Park	Playground Replacement	2	1	2	1			23
	Deane's Children's Park	Playground Replacement (Castle/Swings/Climbing Rock)	2		2	1		2	22
	Deane's Children's Park	Playground Replacement (Main Play Area/Swings)	2		2	1		2	22
PA0112	Clarke Beach	Shoreline Repair/Restoration	1	1	2	2	2	1	22
PA0119	Luther Burbank Park	Tennis Court Renovation for multi-sport to include pickleball	2	1	1	1		2	22
PA0114	Groveland Beach	Bulkhead Replacement and Beach Upgrade	2		1	1	2	2	21
	Secret Park	Playground Replacement	2		2	1			20
	Island Crest Park	North Infield Replacement	2	1	1			2	20
	South Mercer Playfields	Synthetic Turf Replacement (shared \$)	2	1	1			2	20
	Aubrey Davis Park	Tennis Court Resurfacing/Conversion	1	2	2		1		19
PA0124	Luther Burbank Park	Boiler Building Roof and Seismic Retrofit	1		2	2		2	18
PA0110	Aubrey Davis Park	Lid A Backstop Lifecycle Replacement	2	0	1		1	1	17
PA0134	Aubrey Davis Park	Lid C Field Drainage Renovation		2	1	2	1	1	15
	Groveland Beach	Playground Replacement	1		2	1			14
	Homestead Park	Playground Replacement	1		2	1			14
	Proctor Landing	Install benches, bike rack, signage; Install low floating dock	1		1	1	1	2	14
PA0104	System-wide	Lake Water Irrigation Development		2	1		2	2	13
	Garfield Landing	Replace and Upgrade Amenities (benches, tables); Vegetation management	1	1	1		0		12
	77th Ave SE Landing	Modify concrete breakwater for shorelaunch; Repair steps; ADA enhancements	1		1	1	1		12
	Clarke Beach	ADA & Added Amenities		1	1	2			10
PA0116	Island Crest Park	South Lights and Backstop Lifecycle Replacement and Upgrade			2	2			10
PA0120	Luther Burbank Park	Parking Lot Lighting	1	1					9
PA0128	Pioneer Park	Bike Trail Path Lighting	1	1					9
	Upper Luther Burbank Park	BMX Course Improvements		1		2		2	9

			0, 1, 2	0, 1, 2	0, 1, 2	0, 1, 2	0, 1, 2	0, 2	
			6	3	3	2	1	1	32 max
ID#	Project Name - Site	Project Description	Safety / Liability	Operating Budget Impact	Extends Useful Life	Expands Opportunities	Enhances Environmental Conditions	Unique Feature	Total
	South Point Landing	Modify stone bulkhead for shorelaunch; upgrade benches and table		1	1	1	1		9
PA0132	Upper Luther Burbank Park	Ravine Trail Phase 2		1		2		2	9
PA0117	Island Crest Park	North Infield Backstop Replacement			2			2	8
	Roanoke Park	Court Resurfacing & Added Amenities		1	1	1			8
	Wildwood Park	ADA Upgrades & Added Amenities		1	1	1			8
	Groveland Beach	Added Amenities		1		2			7
PA0115	Hollerbach Open Space	SE 45th Trail System		1		2			7
PA0121	Luther Burbank Park	Swim Beach Renovation			1	1		2	7
PA0108	Aubrey Davis Park	Luther Lid Connector Trail				2	1	2	7
	Homestead Park	Splash Pad with ADA Improvements				2		3	7
PA0107	Aubrey Davis Park	Outdoor Sculpture Gallery Improvements		1				2	5
	72nd Ave SE Landing	Install amenities (tables, benches, signage) and ADA enhancements		1		1			5
	Franklin Landing	Install ADA parking stall and signage		1		1			5
	Fruitland Landing	Install ADA parking, improvements and signage		1		1			5
	SE 56th St Landing	Install amenities (tables, benches) and ADA enhancements		1		1			5
	Island Crest Park	Restroom Upgrades			1				3
	Mercerdale Park	Storage/Restroom Roof Replacement			1				3
PA0131	South Mercer Playfields	Ballfield Backstop Upgrade			1				3
	Park/Land Acquisition								
	Land Acquisition	2-3 acres south Island, near South Point Landing		1		2		2	9
	Land Acquisition	1-2 acres mid-Island, near SE 47th St		1		2			7
	Land Acquisition	0.5-1 acres south Island, near SE 72nd St		1		2			7
	Land Acquisition	Trail Connections & Open Space Habitat Additions				1	2		4
	Park Planning								
	Clarke Beach	Master Plan	2	2	2	2	2	2	32
	Overwater Structures Plan	Overwater Infrastructure & Beachfront Investment Plan	2		2	1		2	22
PA0127	MICEC	Annex Facilities Plan	1	2	2	1		2	22
	Mercerdale Park	Master Plan		1	2	2	1	2	16
	Secret Park	Master Plan		1	1	1	1		9
	Slater Park	Landscape Plan		1	1		1	2	9



City of Mercer Island

2021 Community Survey on Parks and Recreation

Item 2.

Dear Mercer Island Resident:

The City of Mercer Island began updating the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan in early 2020. The PROS Plan will help inform parks and recreation priorities for the next 6 to 10 years. Work on the PROS Plan was suspended in early 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and resumed in early 2021. For more information on the PROS Plan, please visit the Mercer Island Let's Talk Page.

In early 2020, the City facilitated a community survey on parks and recreation and now is conducting a second PROS Plan survey to better understand local priorities for improvements to the parks system. We understand that COVID-19 may have impacted your ability to visit parks and trails this past year. We ask that you consider the future orientation of the parks plan as you evaluate needs and priorities for the parks and recreation system. Your opinions are important to the City.

You can return the survey in the reply-ready envelope provided or with this QR code:

1. How often do you visit or use Mercer Island Parks & Recreation facilities, parks, or open spaces?

- At least once a week A few times over the year
 Two or three times a month Do not visit facilities / parks / open spaces
 About once a month Don't know

2. Rate your household's overall satisfaction with Mercer Island Parks & Recreation facilities, parks or open spaces.

- Very Satisfied Somewhat Dissatisfied
 Somewhat Satisfied Very Dissatisfied
 Don't Know

3. How did the COVID-19 Pandemic impact your use of Mercer Island parks, trails, and open space areas?

- Use increased during the COVID-19 Pandemic
 Use decreased during the COVID-19 Pandemic
 Use was about the same during the COVID-19 Pandemic

4. For each of the items listed below, please indicate whether you think the City of Mercer Island should focus its efforts and prioritize more, prioritize less, or maintain the current priority as the right amount.

	Prioritize More	Current Priority is the Right Amount	Prioritize Less	Not Sure
Natural areas/open space areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pocket parks or small neighborhood parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walking/jogging trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public beaches, waterfronts, and docks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picnic areas/picnic shelters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Biking trails and paths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Athletic or sports fields (soccer, baseball/softball, football, lacrosse)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sport Courts (tennis, pickleball, basketball)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Off-Leash Dog Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community gardens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Take this survey [online](#) or use the QR code, and enter the unique ID number on the front:

miprosplan.com

Or send it back in the Reply-ready envelope provided. Thank you in advance for participating!

Item 2.

5. How important are each of the following parks, trails, or open space amenities to your household? Then, Select UP TO THREE amenities from the list that are the most important to you and your household.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Less Important	Not Important	Not Sure	TOP 3 Priorities
Picnic shelters/covered picnic areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Restrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Walking/jogging trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Open space and natural areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pickleball courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Synthetic/artificial turf athletic fields	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pocket parks/small neighborhood parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BMX/mountain biking facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skate park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bike lanes or bike paths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoor fitness equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spray park/splash pad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Basketball courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Off-leash dog areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Boating / water sport facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community gardens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: The City of Mercer Island has enough land for parks, trails, and open space to meet community needs, today and in the future.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
Enough land today	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enough land for the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. If the City of Mercer Island were to acquire additional park land, please rank your land acquisition priorities from 1st (highest priority) to 5th (lowest priority). Select each priority only once.

Item 2.

	Select each priority ONLY ONCE .					Don't know
	Highest priority -----> Lowest priority					
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	
Acquire land for new or expanded waterfront access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acquire land to preserve habitat and open space areas that can include walking/jogging trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acquire land for active recreation such as sports fields and playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acquire land for pocket parks or small neighborhood parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acquire land for indoor recreation facilities, like gyms or classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. For your household, please indicate your interest in the following recreation programs and activities.

	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Less Interested	Not Interested	Not Sure
Swimming & water safety (classes or for fitness)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boating programs (sailing, kayaking, paddle boarding)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor classes (fishing, environmental or orienteering)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educational classes (technology, safety or health)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Performing arts (music, dance or theater)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs for adults 55+ (drop-in activities, trips)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fitness programs (yoga, aerobics or sports training)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's after-school programs or summer day camps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arts & crafts programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth sports programs and camps during school breaks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. For your household, please indicate your interest in the following aquatic programs and activities.

	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Less Interested	Not Interested	Not Sure
Swimming lessons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sailing classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kayak / paddleboard rentals or other watercraft rentals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing programs (classes, casting practice, derbies)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water-oriented special events such as dragon boat races, sailing races, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water-oriented summer camps (sailing, kayaking, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Prior to COVID-19, if your household did not often participate in or utilize recreation programs or activities offered by the City of Mercer Island, what are the reasons? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> N/A - Does not apply; I/We used programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Classes or programs are often full |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not aware of programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Need childcare in order to participate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't have activities I'm interested in | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of parking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor quality of programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor quality or outdated facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Too expensive / Fees too high |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Held at inconvenient times | <input type="checkbox"/> Too busy; no time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Held at inconvenient locations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

11. The City of Mercer Island is exploring options to enhance revenue generation to support the parks and recreation services. How would you rate your level of support for each of the following suggestions? Item 2.

	Very Supportive	Somewhat Supportive	Not Supportive	Not Sure
Install and rent additional picnic shelters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charge fees for outfield fence banners or other advertisements at athletic fields	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institute a seasonal, paid parking program at Luther Burbank Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institute a paid reservation system for tennis and pickleball courts at heavily used parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institute/expand concessions, such as vending or food carts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increase rental scheduling at the Community Center for private events and gatherings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sell limited term (5 to 10-years) naming rights at park facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. If you wanted the City of Mercer Island to do just one thing to improve parks, trails and/or open space areas, what would it be?

The following questions help us understand whether we have a cross-section of the community responding to this survey. It's important that you provide a response to each question. Please remember your answers are confidential.

13. How many children under age 18 live in your household?

0 2
 1 3 or more

14. What is your age?

Younger than 20 45 to 54
 20 to 34 55 to 64
 35 to 44 65 and older

15. Using the map, in which section of Mercer Island do you live?

(A) North of SE 40th (C) South of SE 68th
 (B) Between SE 40th and SE 68th Don't live on Mercer Island



Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

Your input will help guide the development of the Mercer Island Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan.

Save a stamp! Take this survey online with the QR code or link: [NEWLINK.com](https://newlink.com)

Learn more about why Mercer Island needs a PROS Plan and stay informed about the process at <https://letstalk.mercergov.org/miproplan>

The City of Mercer Island is using the services of a consultant team who specializes in park and recreation planning. Please return your completed survey in the enclosed Return-Reply Envelope addressed to:

Conservation & Planning
 PO Box 885
 Orinda, CA 94563



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Item 3
July 1, 2021
Regular Business

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

TITLE:	Recreation Reset Update	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Receive update and provide input	

STAFF:	Ryan Daly, Operations Transition Team Manager
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Jake Jacobson
EXHIBITS:	A. Fee Schedule – Accelerated Phase 1

SUMMARY

The purpose of this staff report is to inform the Commission on the status of recreation programming and services, and to inform that staff will be presenting a preview of 2022 programming and services to the City Council on July 6 and asking for acceptance of the Mercer Island Community and Event Center (MICEC) & Recreation Programs and Services Strategy. At which time staff will solicit Council input on 2022 recreation, MICEC and arts services.

BACKGROUND

During the [Parks & Recreation Commission’s June meeting](#), the Reset Team provided an update of the implementation of the Accelerated Phase 1 plan, which included readying the Mercer Island Community and Event Center (MICEC) and grounds for summer camps, facilitating the Arts Council’s Immediate Action Plan, recruiting for temporary and customer service support staff, organizing a few outdoor recreation activities or programs, and providing permitting and collaboration for some community special events.

RECREATION PROGRAMMING/SERVICE UPDATE

At the time of this writing, the MICEC and limited areas of the parking lot have been hosting participants in various summer camp programs. These programs include LEGO, JCC day camps, Pedalheads bike camp, and TGA tennis camps at Luther Burbank Park. In the coming weeks additional programs will begin, including kayaking and art camps. To date, we have surpassed the Division’s initial goal of 750 camp registrations and will be accommodating over **1,100 summer camp participants** in 2021.

A subcommittee of the Arts Council along with staff, have begun implementing the Arts Council’s Immediate Action Plan. This plan includes hosting a Mostly Music in the Park concert series at Mercerdale Park. This year’s concert series will include (3) dates in late August/early September. The subcommittee is in the process of finalizing dates and bands. It is also anticipated that a volunteer recognition event will be coupled with the final concert date.

Staff have finalized the fee schedule for the remainder of 2021 (see Exhibit 1) and are currently developing fees for programs and services into 2022. This process involves applying the pricing strategy - cost recovery targeting, reviewing market data, and analyzing demand, updating marketing materials and software system settings accordingly and publishing the final fees for transparency.

Finally, the Reset Team has been working to update and/or develop policies laid out in the Reset Strategy, which are crucial to the success and sustainability of the division. Examples of these include establishing an “interim” special events permitting policy in order to accommodate outdoor event requests with limited staff capacity in 2021, amending the outdoor fitness class policy and fee structure in order to promote outdoor activities and support small business, and developing the division’s differential pricing and facility allocation policies. Over the remainder of the year and into 2022, the PRC will be reviewing these draft policies and making recommendations.

CITY COUNCIL ACTION

On [April 20, 2021](#), the Recreation Reset Team and the Parks & Recreation Commission presented the “Strategy for Mercer Island Community and Event Center and Recreation Programs and Services” (known as the “Reset Strategy”) to the City Council during a joint study session.

On July 6, Council will get a second look at the Reset Strategy, and staff will ask for their acceptance of this path forward. This meeting will also provide Council with a high-level preview of the Recreation Division’s intended portfolio of programs and services for 2022 and preliminary budget range estimate. Staff will seek Council’s input on this initial plan. That input, along with suggestions received from the Parks and Recreation Commission, will be drafted into a refined budget proposal for Council to review in fall 2021, and incorporated into the biennial budget adjustments that City Council will consider in November.

Following the July 6th meeting and receiving Council input, Staff will seek further input from the Commission on the approach to policy development, programming priorities, private rental accommodations, and timeline for 2022 services at the Parks & Recreation Commission meeting in September (City Boards & Commissions will not meet in the month of August).

During the June 3rd Parks & Recreation Commission meeting, staff committed to providing Commissioners with the July 6th City Council packet materials as soon as they became available. It is anticipated the packet will be available on June 30, at which time staff will forward materials to the Parks & Recreation Commission.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive update (verbal presentation).

CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

PARKS & RECREATION

8236 SE 24TH STREET | MERCER ISLAND, WA 98040

PHONE: 206.275.7609 | www.mercerisland.gov



FEE SCHEDULE - RECREATION PROGRAMS & MICEC

Effective July 1, 2021

Fees are set, authorized and modified by the Director of Parks & Recreation or designee, pursuant to MICC, Chapter 4.44, and are subject to change.

Fees reflect programs and services consistent with the current phase of the Recreation Reset Strategy.

MERCER ISLAND COMMUNITY & EVENT CENTER FEES AND CHARGES

Gymnasium and Dance Room Rentals

General hourly	\$	75
Resident hourly	\$	65

Extended Building Hours

Hourly in addition to rental fee	\$	50
----------------------------------	----	----

RECREATION PROGRAMS & EVENT FEES AND CHARGES

Recreation Courses & Events

See seasonal Recreation Guide

Boat Launch Parking

Daily pass	\$	15
Monthly pass	\$	50
Annual pass	\$	120

Drop-In Activities

Daily drop-in	Youth/Senior Resident	\$	4
	Adult Resident	\$	5
	General	\$	6
25-Punch Pass	Youth/Senior Resident	\$	70
	Adult Resident	\$	90
	General	\$	110

OUTDOOR FACILITY RENTAL FEES AND CHARGES

Picnic Area Reservations

Resident (Full day)	\$	175
General (Full day)	\$	300

Athletic Fields

Grass fields	Resident Youth hourly	\$	20
	Non-Resident Youth hourly	\$	25
	Adult hourly	\$	30
Synthetic Turf Infields	Resident Youth hourly	\$	35
	Non-Resident Youth hourly	\$	45
	Adult hourly	\$	55
Full Synthetic Turf/Lit Fields	Resident Youth hourly	\$	65
	Non-Resident Youth hourly	\$	75
	Adult hourly	\$	85

Additional Athletic Field Fees

Field lights hourly	\$	20
Baseball/Softball game prep	\$	45
Field lining		Varies
Soccer goal fee per field, per season	\$	50

Fitness Classes/Outdoor Personal Training

Application fee	\$	75
Monthly fee	\$	100

Special Event & Special Use Permits

Application fee	\$	50	
Anticipated Attendance up to 200	Resident/501(c)(3) per day	\$	350
	General per day	\$	500
Anticipated Attendance 200-300	Resident/501(c)(3) per day	\$	600
	General per day	\$	1,000
Anticipated Attendance 300-600	Resident/501(c)(3) per day	\$	1,100
	General per day	\$	1,500

Administrative Fee

Per booking and program registration fee to cover technology replacement costs	\$	4
--	----	---

Staffing Rates

Parks Maintenance staff member hourly	\$	75
MICEC custodial hourly	\$	50
Mercer Island Police Officer (off-duty) hourly; 3 hour minimum	\$	58
Mercer Island Fire Department Aid Car Unit		Varies



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Item 4
July 1, 2021
Regular Business

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

TITLE:	Recreation- Differential Pricing Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Discuss and provide input on the draft policy	

STAFF:	Ryan Daly, Operations Transition Team Manager Emily Moon (Consultant)
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Jake Jacobson
EXHIBITS:	A. Pricing section of the Reset Strategy B. Draft: Differential Pricing Policy

SUMMARY

In April 2021, the Parks and Recreation Commission endorsed the *Strategy for the Mercer Island Community and Event Center and Recreation Programs and Services* (also known as the Reset Strategy). The Strategy included guidance regarding pricing and recommended examining the policy of differential pricing. (This section of the Strategy is attached for the Commission’s use; see Exhibit 1.) The Commission received a brief introduction to differential pricing as part of a presentation at the March 18, 2021 meeting.

BACKGROUND

The City of Mercer Island currently uses differential pricing for some recreation programs and services but does not have an official policy. As part of the Recreation Reset workplan, City staff drafted a policy (Exhibit 2). that more fully describes the rationale, intentions, and practices that would govern discounting fees. Tonight, the Reset Team requests the Parks and Recreation Commission’s review of the draft policy. After the Commission has approved the policy, it will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration.

While this policy addresses the topic of differential pricing, this is only one facet of the City’s overall pricing strategy. The goal of the pricing strategy is to:

Set reasonable fees that are responsive to demand, market realities and minimum cost recovery goals, such that the overall operation is financially sustainable and Mercer Island residents of all income levels can participate.

Therefore, the level and beneficiary of the discount needs to be considered carefully with these goals in mind.

Most cities in the Puget Sound area charge different prices to recreation participants or facility users depending on certain factors. The most common differential pricing is to charge residents less than non-residents, in recognition of the ongoing tax investment by community members and to promote superior access for residents. These discounts, as is the case in Mercer Island, typically apply to both recreation programs as well as facility rentals. Some cities choose to vary their rates according to additional factors, to help the municipality address other goals such as diversity, equity and inclusion, or to prioritize resource allocation and access to particular user groups (such as charging a lower rate for youth programs versus adult programs or offering a reduced-fee room rental for community non-profit partners). Mercer Island does this

to a degree. For example, currently the field rental charges are differentiated by the age of the user group, seniors receive discounts for drop-in activities and the fitness center, and there are three different classifications and rates for facility rentals. Most cities keep their differential pricing policies focused on a few simple goals and limit the number of pricing tiers to ensure consistent and fair application. Some cities have a simple policy statement such as “Individuals and family members living in the City limits are eligible to receive resident rates for classes and activities.” Other cities have more broadly worded policies that express intentions and correlate to adopted strategies or goals. In each of these cities, the level of discounts across programs and services varies widely but tend to fall within a 10-50% range.

Additionally, most cities provide an income-based fee waiver or scholarship program to better ensure access for people of all income levels. Mercer Island residents who demonstrate income-based need and who are eligible for other types of governmental financial assistance (such as SNAP food benefits) can qualify for a scholarship of up to \$300 per year for an individual or up to \$500 per year for a household.

Some cities in the Puget Sound area also attempt to focus the benefits of taxpayer-supported services and programs on residents by allowing residents the first opportunity to register for those activities or to reserve facilities.

PROPOSED POLICY FRAMEWORK

Staff suggests that the City’s policy should:

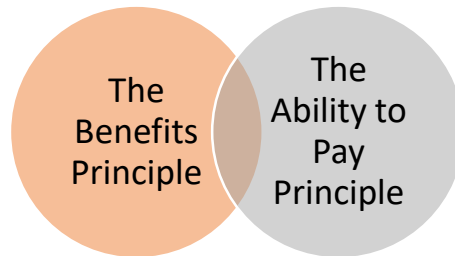
- Support the Strategy’s cost recovery and resource allocation philosophy and aims.
- Reflect updated national best practices for fee setting, which suggest that cities should not provide residents with a discount for all services and programs, always.
- Permit staff to set the level of the discount for all appropriate programs and services after examining the respective cost recovery goals and fee study data. This recognizes that the department director has the responsibility to manage the fee setting requirements found in the Strategy, and that the department director has the municipal code authority to set fees.
- Target the use of differential pricing toward programs that receive more tax subsidy. This recognizes taxpayers’ sustaining contributions to these programs and services.
- Require that residents and non-residents pay the same fees for programs and services that are designed to be full cost recovery. This recognizes that the cost of providing these programs and services is the same regardless of residency status and that these programs and services are sustained to a greater degree by user fees. Many of these programs and services (found in Tiers 4 and 5 of the pyramid) are also found in the private marketplace and are less likely to be viewed as fundamental services of a municipality.
- Where feasible, provide preferential treatment to residents and defined partners for facility rentals through prioritizing their reservation access. (Categories of user groups and partners will be addressed in the Facility Use Allocation policy.)
- Where feasible, provide preferential treatment to residents by allowing them an opportunity to register before non-residents.
- Allow the Division to implement differential pricing as incentives to drive quantity of use (such as offering a discounted punch card for multiple visits to the fitness center), full use of the facility (such as filling longstanding rental vacancies) or to drive participation in a new program.

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss the policy framework and draft policy. Provide input to City staff regarding the policy.

PRICING

The City’s pricing strategy is the method for establishing and charging fees for recreation and MICEC services. The chosen method reflects both the Benefits Principle and the Ability to Pay Principle, where taxpayers or users’ contributions for a service reflect the benefits received from it, and where the price for the service reflects an individual’s ability to pay for the service such that an individual is not excluded from receiving that service. The City’s pricing strategy reflects the City’s desire to promote equity and inclusion.



There are typically four types of pricing strategies in the realm of recreation services:

1. Arbitrary (prices are set to reach an overall revenue target)
2. Market-based (prices are a product of demand for services or what the target market is willing to pay; in many cases this strategy results in setting fees at the midpoint or higher)
3. Competitor-based (prices are established to match, beat or exceed other providers; in many cases this strategy results in setting fees at the midpoint or lower)
4. Cost recovery pricing (prices are designed to reach cost recovery goals, within the range allowable by market and other conditions)

In addition, all of the strategies above could include a second strategy called “differential pricing,” where different fees are charged for the same service when there is no real difference in the cost of providing the service. (Differential pricing is explained in a subsequent section of this report.)

MICEC and Recreation Pricing Strategy

The City's strategy reflects market-based, competitor-based, cost recovery and differential pricing.

The goal of the pricing strategy is to set reasonable fees that are responsive to demand, market realities and minimum cost recovery goals, such that the overall operation is financially sustainable and Mercer Island residents of all income levels can participate.

The method for determining pricing includes conducting market and competitor research, employing established cost recovery targets, and applying policies and procedures related to differential pricing.

Fee study

The City conducted a fee study to review the market and competition prices for benchmarked programs and services. The study helped the City understand what other providers are charging for similar services and how they are structuring those charges (e.g., as part of a membership fee, an ala cart fee, or a package). The City gathered information from area municipalities and private and non-profit providers for a sampling of programs and services. Here are a few examples of the programs or services that were benchmarked:

- Meeting room rental
- Special events facility rental and related services
- Youth martial arts classes
- Fitness center use
- Drop-in activities

Collecting the fee study data was only one part of establishing the City's prices. Fees were also a product of the cost recovery targets and differential pricing.

Fee Schedule

Fees will be set and maintained by the department director, per the municipal code. The list of fees, called a fee schedule, will be publicly posted annually as a reference for all potential users and participants.

A systematic approach to fee revisions is necessary to be thoughtful of customer tolerance for revisions, to give participants and users time to adjust, and to successfully communicate and demonstrate the value of the service or program. The fees should be evaluated every two years

through a fee study and through an evaluation of the cost performance of each category and aggregated tier. Fees may be adjusted annually to keep up with the cost of delivering programs.

The City may establish differential pricing for some programs in the fee schedule or utilize a scholarship or financial assistance program that participants could utilize for those same programs or services.

Differential Pricing and the Scholarship Program

Differential pricing involves offering variations of the price of a service or program to a particular group, which may result in more equitable and efficient service delivery. In differential pricing, different groups are charged different prices for the same service, even though there is no direct corresponding difference in the costs of providing the service to each of these groups. Price differentials or fee waivers can be based on resident (taxpayer)/non-resident, age of participant, location of facility, time or season, quantity of use, incentives, reciprocity benefits for affiliates, or other considerations. Differential pricing can help stimulate demand, reach an underserved population, or shift demand to another time, place or date.

The City of Mercer Island has employed some differential pricing for many years by offering discounted rates for residents versus non-residents, an occasional break on prices for households registering multiple children, and through a scholarship or financial assistance program. The Reset Strategy recommends continuing these practices but examining the policy and procedures of the scholarship program for potential improvements and contemplating other potential ways differential pricing could be offered to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion. Many area municipalities offer similar scholarship programs, setting aside a budget each year for fee waivers. One critical element of these programs is how eligible recipients are defined and authorized.

Under the City's current program, Mercer Island residents who demonstrate income-based need and who are eligible for other types of governmental financial assistance (such as SNAP food benefits) can qualify for a scholarship of up to \$300 per year for an individual or up to \$500 per year for a household. Potential beneficiaries must apply for the scholarship for each program in which they wish to participate during the upcoming quarter, as Staff currently awards funds on a quarterly basis. Applications are screened by Youth and Family Services and then approved for the applicant's desired programs by Recreation's administration. In the future, the City may be able to accept applications for eligibility that continues for the entire year, and the City's financial management or recreation information system may be able to proactively apply the approved level of differential pricing or scholarship balance to each registration.

Mercer Island Policy and Procedure
DIFFERENTIAL PRICING



Effective Date: 2022	Last Updated: N/A	Approved By:
Code and Statutory Authority: MICC 4.44.010 MICC 3.53.020	Related Polices: Strategy for MICEC and Recreation Programs and Services (“Strategy”)	

Purpose

The City of Mercer Island uses the following differential pricing policy as a part of its comprehensive approach to pricing and its overall strategy¹ for the Recreation Division’s programs and services. This policy describes the circumstances and requirements that must be present and satisfied to allow the City to charge one individual or group less than another for programs and services.

Scope/Background

Differential pricing is one component of how the City establishes and levies fees. The City endeavors to “set reasonable fees that are responsive to demand, market realities and minimum cost recovery goals, such that the overall operation is financially sustainable and Mercer Island residents of all income levels can participate.”¹ Differential pricing can assist the City in stimulating demand, leveraging residents’ tax subsidy, reaching an underserved population, shifting demand to another time, place or date, and driving full participation and use of the City’s recreation amenities. This policy also describes how some categories of participants and customers may be given prioritized access to programs and services.

Definitions

1. “Division” means Mercer Island Recreation Division
2. “Cost recovery” means the degree to which the operational (and sometimes maintenance) costs of providing a program or service are supported by user fees and/or other funding mechanisms such as grants, partnerships, donations, sponsorships, or other alternative (non-tax) funding sources.
3. “Fee study” means a review of market and competition prices for benchmarked programs and services.
4. “Resource allocation philosophy” means the guidance for which programs and services should be offered, why and with what resources (e.g., facility space, staff time, tax support, user fee funding).
5. “Strategy” means the *Strategy for Mercer Island Community and Event Center & Recreation Programs and Services (also known as the Reset Strategy)* endorsed by the Parks and Recreation Commission in April 2021 and City Council in July 2021.
6. “Tax subsidy” is the degree to which a program or service is supported by the City’s taxes.
7. “Resident” means an individual or business whose permanent residency is located within the City limits, or an individual or business that owns property within the City limits.

¹ *Strategy for Mercer Island Community and Event Center & Recreation Programs and Services*

Policy

- The level of the discount for all appropriate programs and services will be set after examining the respective cost recovery goals and fee study data, and in support of the Strategy’s cost recovery and resource allocation philosophy and aims.
- Use of differential pricing will be focused on programs that receive more tax subsidy. This recognizes that residents and taxpayers provide an ongoing contribution to the community’s programs, services and facilities. In the Strategy, these programs are labeled as “social or public good core” and the “desirable set.” These programs are found predominately in Tiers 1 through 3 and provide for significant community benefit in addition to benefitting the participating individual. As such, tax revenue supports these programs and services to a greater degree than those that more narrowly focus a benefit on individuals.
- Residents and non-residents will pay the same fees for programs and services that are designed to be full cost recovery (Tiers 4 and 5), unless (1) non-resident participation is necessary to make a program viable, or (2) non-resident participation reduces the city’s net cost of operating a program, or (3) interlocal agreements are in place with other municipalities that subsidize their residents’ participation in Mercer Island’s program.
- Where feasible, the Division will provide preferential treatment to residents and defined partners² for facility rentals through prioritizing their reservation access.
- Where feasible, the Division will provide preferential treatment to residents by allowing them an opportunity to register for activities and programs before non-residents.
- The Division may implement differential pricing as incentives to drive quantity of use (such as offering a discounted punch card for multiple visits to the fitness center), full use of the facility (such as filling longstanding rental vacancies) or to drive participation in a new program.

Procedure(s)

TBD following adoption of policy; will be established and approved, administratively, by the department director and division manager.

² See *Facility Space Allocation and User Categorization Policy* for definitions of “defined partners.” (This policy has not yet been drafted nor approved as of July 2021.)