



# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST SPECIAL VIDEO MEETING

Thursday, September 23, 2021 at 5:00 PM

## BOARD MEMBERS:

Chair Thomas Hildebrandt  
Vice Chair Carol Lynn Berseth  
Secretary Geraldine Poor  
Board Members: Lisa Anderl, Marie Bender,  
Hillary Ethe, and Craig Olson

## LOCATION & CONTACT

Mercer Island City Hall – Zoom Meeting  
9611 SE 36<sup>th</sup> Street | Mercer Island, WA 98040  
Phone: 206.275.7706 | [www.mercerisland.gov](http://www.mercerisland.gov)

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- 3) If prompted for Webinar ID, enter **833 8606 8347**; Enter Password **204854**

## CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL, 5 PM

## PUBLIC APPEARANCES

### REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Approval of Minutes for the March 18, 2021 and July 15, 2021 Meetings
2. PROS Plan: Review Chapters 4 and 9; Assign OSCT Liaison  
**Recommended Actions:**
  - 1) Review and provide feedback on PROS Plan Chapter 4 (Goals & Objectives) and Chapter 9 (Open Space, Land Conservation, & Stewardship).
  - 2) Assign an OSCT member to serve as the liaison to the Parks and Recreation Commission to represent OSCT interests in the ongoing review and development of the PROS Plan.
3. Annual Herbicide Application Report  
**Recommended Action:** Receive Report
4. 84<sup>th</sup> Ave SE Parking Pilot Project Discussion  
**Recommended Action:** Discuss pilot project and provide staff with direction on next steps.

### OTHER BUSINESS

8. [Quadrant](#) Reports

9. [Next](#) Meeting – November 18, 2021

### ADJOURNMENT



# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES March 18, 2021

## CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Bender called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM

Chair Marie Bender, Vice Chair Thomas Hildebrandt, Secretary Craig Olson, Trustee Carol Lynn Berseth, Trustee Ethe, Trustee Geraldine Poor, and Council Liaison Lisa Anderl participated remotely using a video teleconferencing platform by Zoom.

Staff participating remotely included: City Clerk Deborah Estrada, Deputy Public Works Director Alaine Sommargren, and Natural Resources Specialist Kim Frappier.

**PUBLIC APPEARANCES:** There were no public appearances.

## REGULAR BUSINESS:

### Review and Consider Approving Minutes of the January 21, 2021, OSCT Special Meeting

**MOTION: A motion was made and duly seconded to approve the January 21 minutes as amended; Motion passed.**

### PROS Plan Update

Jason Kintner, Chief of Operations, provided an update on the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (PROS). Kintner explained that the current plan expired at the end of 2019, noting that it is a six-year plan that anticipates the programming and capital projects necessary to meet the community's need for parks, recreation, and open space, as well as trails, arts, and cultural events.

Conservation Technix was selected as the consultant to manage the process, including providing a baseline analysis on existing conditions and community needs, conducting a multi-faceted community engagement process, and developing a draft framework for the final PROS Plan. However, due to the Pandemic, the PROS Plan was suspended in April 2020.

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 completed on the PROS Plan included a review of existing conditions, one presentation to the Parks & Recreation Commission and the Arts Council, a process update to the OSCT (September 2019), and the completion of a community survey.

A virtual public meeting will be conducted on March 23 to include a presentation and provide opportunity to receive community input through live polling and breakout discussions. Following the virtual meeting, the staff and consulting team will utilize input to inform the next steps of the process. Due to the time lapse, additional input is anticipated from both the Arts Council and the Open Space Conservancy Trust later in 2021, ahead of the transmittal of the Parks and Recreation Commission's recommendation to the City Council.

### Code of Ethics – Informal Opinion

City Clerk Estrada provided an abbreviated training on the City's Code of Ethics, noting that it was originally adopted in 2018 and later amended in 2019. Estrada continued, explaining that in January 2021, City Council directed staff to update the Code of Ethics and communicate with Board and Commission Members the option to seek an informal opinion from the City Attorney on the applicability of the Code of Ethics. Trust members were also advised that the City is working with outside counsel to development a revised Code of Ethics and

that training on the revised Code of Ethics is anticipated to begin in April.

### **Forest Health Survey: 10-year update**

Kim Frappier, Natural Resources Specialist, provided a detailed presentation on the Forest Health Survey.

The Forest Health Survey was initiated by the OSCT and City Staff in 2008 to gather quantitative data on the levels of invasive and native species within the park and identify funding levels needed to complete the goals set out on the Pioneer Park Forest Management Plan. At the time, the City had only conducted a high-level qualitative analysis of invasive plants in Pioneer Park and did not have baseline measurements to track progress over time or assess budget needs.

In 2008, the City worked closely with the Seattle Urban Nature Project (which later became EarthCorps Science) to develop the study protocols. The project manager at the time Paul West, hired two staff to collect the data in 2008 – one of whom is our own Alaine Sommargren.

The primary goals of the project were:

- Provide a quantitative inventory of native and invasive species in the park
- Compare the success of previous management efforts
- Create a management plan based on the data collected
- Estimate the time and cost necessary to meet the set goals.

The Forest Health Survey included a detailed Forest Health Plan broken up into Short-term, Mid-term, and Long-term objectives.

Results and Findings addressed the following:

- Canopy Trees & 2018 Canopy Tree Density by Species
- Regenerating Trees
- Invasive Tree Treatment Methods
- Regenerating Trees & 2018 Regenerating Tree Density by Species
- Shrubs
- Herbaceous Plants

A summary of the results included:

- Species richness – 81 documented species during the 2018 survey.
- The density of native canopy species remained constant while the density of invasive canopy species decreased.
- Density and composition of regenerating trees showed overall positive trends – with a decline in broadleaved evergreen invasive trees such as English holly.
- Percent cover of ground ivy showed an increase compared to 2008.

### **Restoration Work Plan**

Alaine Sommargren, Deputy Public Works Director, explained that staff reports to the Trust board each year on planned forest restoration activities in Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space. Restoration activities are performed by professional contractors, volunteers, seasonal crew members, and Natural Resources staff. Restoration work is guided by the Pioneer Park Forest Health Plan and the 10-Year Update to the Open Space Vegetation Management Plan.

Staff reported that the 2021 Work Plan is scheduled in all three quadrants of Pioneer Park as well as Engstrom Open Space and that Pioneer Park work will largely focus on launching comprehensive invasive removal efforts as outlined in the Pioneer Park Forest Health Plan. The following contractor work is out to bid and field work is slated to begin in late April:

- Comprehensive Invasive Removal
- Invasive Removal Maintenance
- Ivy Ring Creation
- Fall Planting
- Watering of New Plantings

- Invasive Tree Treatment

Staff further explained that the Natural Resources crew will continue to monitor and treat noxious weed populations on all Trust properties. The Crew will also be available to respond to restoration related issues and tasks as they arise throughout the field season.

It should be noted that due to ongoing COVID-19 safety concerns and programmatic changes at EarthCorps, the City has not secured a Professional Services Agreement for volunteer management services for 2021. Natural Resources staff will be working with EarthCorps in the next couple of months to develop a plan for revised volunteer event offerings.

#### **Letterboxing Program Update**

Sommargren reached out to the letterboxing volunteers and confirmed that they do have the materials for the letterboxing program. While there was considerable input from volunteers, staff contributed to the development and printing of the booklets, and the outreach. As a result of the Pandemic and without a full recreation program, staff decided that the resources do not exist to support the program within the constraints of the existing timeline. The Recreation Reset plan may provide an opportunity to pick this program up at a later date.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chair Bender summarized the joint meeting with city administration, Mayor Wong, and Board and Commission Chairs outlining virtual meetings and the city's efforts to improve communication across each.

#### **New Email Addresses & Public Records Requests**

Deborah Estrada, City Clerk, explained that city email accounts would be created for each Trust member to ensure that emails to and from staff and trust members is managed in accordance with the Public Records Act.

#### **Board Terms & City Updates**

Staff reported that two positions were due to expire May 31 and that if Trust members wished to reapply, applications were due by May 6 with appointments scheduled for the June 1 City Council meeting.

Sommargren reported that Sam Harb would start as the new Parks Operations Manager on March 22.

Sommargren addressed Kim Frappier's departure and how much she contributed to the city trails. Trust member Ethe read a letter on behalf of the OSCT expressing their gratitude and appreciation for Kim Frappier and all of her work with the City.

#### **Quadrant Reports**

Trust members provided brief reports on each quadrant – other than mud, no major problems reported.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for May 20, 2021, at 5:00 PM.

#### **Adjournment:**

There being no further business to come before the Open Space Conservancy Trust, the meeting was adjourned at 7:19 PM

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Marie Bender, OSCT Chair

Attest:

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Deborah Estrada, City Clerk



# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES July 15, 2021

## CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Bender called the meeting to order at 5:09 PM

Chair Marie Bender, Vice Chair Thomas Hildebrandt, Secretary Craig Olson, Trustee Carol Lynn Berseth, Trustee Ethe, Trustee Geraldine Poor, and Council Liaison Lisa Anderl participated remotely using a video teleconferencing platform by Zoom.

Staff participating remotely included: Deputy Public Works Director Alaine Sommargren, Sam Harb, Lizzy Stone, Andrew Prince, and City Clerk Deborah Estrada.

**PUBLIC APPEARANCES:** There were no public appearances.

## REGULAR BUSINESS:

### 1. Staff Introductions

Staff Harb, Parks Operations Manager, and Lizzy Stone, Natural Resources Specialist, briefly introduced themselves.

### 2. Elections:

Motion by Bender; seconded by Olson to:

**Nominate Tom Hildebrandt as Chair**

PASSED: 7-0

FOR: (Anderl, Bender, Berseth, Ethe, Hildebrandt, Olson, and Poor)

Motion by Bender; seconded by Poor to:

**Nominate Caroline Berseth as Vice Chair**

PASSED: 7-0

FOR: (Anderl, Bender, Berseth, Ethe, Hildebrandt, Olson, and Poor)

Motion by Bender; seconded by Berseth to:

**Nominate Geraldine Poor as Secretary**

PASSED: 7-0

FOR: (Anderl, Bender, Berseth, Ethe, Hildebrandt, Olson, and Poor)

Marie Bender turned the meeting over to Tom Hildebrandt to chair.

### 3. Approve Minutes of the March 18, 2021, Special Meeting

Approval of the March 18 minutes was postponed to the September 23 meeting.

### 4. 2021 Trails Work Plan

Alaine Sommargren, Deputy Public Works Director, provided a brief summary of the 2020 Trail Work, noting that due to the Pandemic, there were no major projects or seasonal staff and the priority was to keep trails brushed and accessible.

Sommargren outlined the 2021 Winter Storm Clean Up as a result of the mid-January wind event, which saw gusts reach 50-70 mph. As a result, there were approximately 32 trail obstructions in Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space and required 23 hours of staff labor to clean.

Additional items addressed included:

**Beaked Hazelnut Pruning** – Deep pruning is underway in all quadrants to address this unruly shrub that tends to encroach on trails.

**Northwest Quadrant Root Intrusion** – All of the dead tree roots were ground down and potential trip hazards are marked with white spray paint quarterly.

**Northeast Quadrant & Engstrom OS** – Ravine trail repairs include retreading, adding wooden curbs, and importing soil or gravel to fill holes.

**Southeast Quadrant:**

- Perimeter Trail Resurfacing
  - Muddy conditions as trail was not shedding water or organic material
  - Scraped surface until inorganic soil or gravel is uncovered
  - Imported and spread a base layer of 5/8 inch crushed rock
  - Final grading with ¼ inch crushed rock
  - Shaped to shed water
  - Wetted and compacted

The OSCT provided **direction** to erect a structure along the center gravel area to encourage people to park solely along the street and report back on the effectiveness at the September meeting.

Motion by Olson; seconded by Bender to:

**Approve the Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space 2021 Trails Work Plan**

PASSED: 7-0

FOR: (Anderl, Bender, Berseth, Ethe, Hildebrandt, Olson, and Poor)

**Restoration Contracting Update**

Staff outlined the contractor, Natural Resources Crew, and Volunteer Stewardship scheduled for each quadrant.

**NW Quadrant:**

- Invasive removal maintenance is scheduled for 3.3 acres of Pioneer NW (PP1902a)
- Ivy ring creation will continue in 3.3 acres of the NW Quadrant (PP2001)
- Watering of new plantings is slated for two sites in Pioneer Park's NW quadrant - one at the junction of the Woodpecker and Dogwood trails within PP1801 and the second is the 2020 Arbor Day planting site at the NW trailhead entrance.

**NE Quadrant**

- Invasive tree treatment is scheduled for 2.4 acres of the NE quadrant of Pioneer Park
- Fall planting is scheduled on 4 acres of the NE Quadrant

**SE Quadrant**

- Comprehensive invasive removal is scheduled in approximately 18 acres of the SE quadrant (PP0902a, PP0902b, PP0902c, and PP1001). This is consistent with benchmarks outlined in the Pioneer Park Forest Health Plan which calls for 15.5 acres of ground ivy and herbaceous weed removal in 2021.
- The seasonal crew will conduct planting maintenance and blackberry knockdown in select areas of PP1002 in the SE quadrant – targeting saplings in canopy gaps where Himalayan blackberry is growing robustly and inhibiting tree survival and growth.

**Engstrom Open Space**

- Comprehensive invasive removal is scheduled in approximately 18 acres of the SE quadrant (PP0902a, PP0902b, PP0902c, and PP1001). This is consistent with benchmarks outlined in the Pioneer Park Forest Health Plan which calls for 15.5 acres of ground ivy and herbaceous weed removal in 2021.
- The seasonal crew will conduct planting maintenance and blackberry knockdown in select areas of PP1002 in the SE quadrant – targeting saplings in canopy gaps where Himalayan blackberry is growing robustly and inhibiting tree survival and growth.

## Parking on 84th Ave SE

Staff reported that current work carried over from the 2020 Work Plan and that there is interest in eliminating gravel parking areas and moving to on-street parking. Staff reviewed the section of 84<sup>th</sup> Ave SE that was identified as a primary bike route and explained the current parking options:

### North Pull-Out:

- At furthest north corner of NW quadrant
- Approximately 167 feet long
- Delineated by fence/in-ground logs
- Extending southward
- Identified in PP Master Plan
- Road narrows in this area on approach to traffic circle

### Central Pull-Out:

- At intersection with SE 66th St.
- Hazelnut Trail trailhead
- Approximately 163 ft feet long
- No delineation
- Expanding significantly to the south
- Not identified in PP Master Plan

### South Pull-Out:

- At furthest southwest corner of NW quadrant
- Approximately 128 feet long
- No delineation
- Identified in PP Master Plan as location for ADA parking stall
- Close to intersection with SE 68th St.
- Many 'styles' of parking

**PROS Plan Update** – At the July Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, Commissioners reviewed and discussed the draft capital project prioritization tool and the draft second community survey.

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.

A more comprehensive update will be available at the September meeting.

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Quadrant Reports

No major problems reported. Trust members overall reported that the trails were easier to traverse and encouraged the City to continue making improvements.

### Next Meeting

Alaine S noted that the September meeting was pushed back a week in recognition of Rosh Hashanah. The next meeting was scheduled for September 23, 2021, at 5:00 PM.

### Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Open Space Conservancy Trust, the meeting was adjourned at 6:39 PM

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Thomas Hildebrandt, OSCT Chair

Attest:

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Deborah Estrada, City Clerk





# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST STAFF REPORT

Item 2  
September 23, 2021  
Regular Business

## AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	PROS Plan: Review Chapters 4 & 9 and Assign OSCT Liaison	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>  Review and provide feedback on PROS Plan Chapter 4 (Goals and Objectives) and Chapter 9 (Open Space, Land Conservation & Stewardship).  Assign an Open Space and Conservancy Trust (OSCT) member to serve as the liaison to the Parks and Recreation Commission to represent OSCT interests in the ongoing review and development of the PROS Plan.	
<b>STAFF:</b>	Jessi Bon, City Manager	
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	Lisa Anderl	
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. Draft: PROS Chapter 4 – Goals & Objectives 2. Draft: PROS Chapter 9 – Open Space, Land Conservation & Stewardship	

## SUMMARY

The City is in the process of updating the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan. The project team is seeking feedback from the Open Space Conservancy Trust (OSCT) to inform further development of the following documents:

1. Draft: PROS Chapter 4 – Goals & Objectives (Exhibit 1)
2. Draft: PROS Chapter 9 – Open Space, Land Conservation & Stewardship (Exhibit 2)

OSCT members are encouraged to share specific edits/revisions and to provide suggestions on other ways these documents can be improved. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Commission for consideration in preparing the final PROS Plan draft for handoff to the City Council in early 2022.

The project team is also seeking an OSCT member to serve as the liaison to the Parks and Recreation Commission to represent OSCT interests in the ongoing review and development of the PROS Plan. The OSCT liaison will be invited to attend all Parks and Recreation Commission meetings where PROS plan items are reviewed, which is likely to be a commitment of three or four meetings between now and the end of 2021.

The first complete draft of the PROS Plan will likely be available in early November and will be shared with the OSCT for review and feedback.

## 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, numerous board and commission meetings, the completion of a community survey, and a Virtual Open House. More than half of the PROS Plan is currently drafted and in the process of internal review. A second community survey was released in August 2021 and the results are pending. A second virtual public meeting is planned on September 28, 2021.

The PROS Plan is intended to complement previously adopted planning documents, including the Pioneer Park Forest Management Plan, the Open Space Vegetation Plan, and all other open space planning documents.

### 1. REVIEW DRAFT: CHAPTER 4 – GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

At the heart of the PROS Plan is the establishment of goals and objectives that provide strategic direction for the Mercer Island Parks and Recreation system. The goals and objectives are included in Chapter 4 of the PROS Plan (see Exhibit 1) and once adopted, will be appended to the Citywide Comprehensive Plan during the next update process.

The Chapter 4 draft includes eight strategic goals:

**Goal 1 – Planning, Acquisition & Access:** Provide a high quality, welcoming, and inclusive parks and recreation system that meets community needs now and in the future.

**Goal 2 – Maintenance & Operations:** Provide the Mercer Island community with safe, well-maintained parks and recreation facilities.

**Goal 3 – Environment & Sustainability:** Provide a high quality, diversified open space system that preserves and enhances urban forests, critical habitat, and other environmental resources. Incorporate sustainability practices into operations, maintenance, and planning.

**Goal 4 – Trails:** Develop and promote an interconnected community through safe, accessible, and attractive trails and pathways easily accessed by a variety of trail users.

**Goal 5 – Recreation Facilities & Programming:** Provide a variety of recreation programs, services, and facilities that promote the health and well-being of residents of all ages and abilities.

**Goal 6 – Arts & Culture:** Facilitate and promote comprehensive and engaging arts and culture experiences.

**Goal 7 – Community Engagement & Partnerships:** Encourage and support community engagement and pursue collaborative partnerships to strengthen and grow parks and recreation programs and services.

**Goal 8 – Administration & Fiscal Sustainability:** Provide leadership and sufficient resources to maintain and operate a welcoming, efficient, safe, and sustainable parks and recreation system.

Accompanying each goal is a list of objectives that describe a means or an outcome to achieve the stated goals.

This is the initial look at the draft of Chapter 4, with the understanding that it was prepared prior to receiving the results of the second community survey and prior to hosting the second virtual public meeting. With support from the Parks and Recreation Commission, the OSCT, and the Arts Council, staff will review outcomes of both public engagement opportunities and further refine the recommended goals and objectives.

For the purposes of this meeting, the project team is interested in receiving feedback from the OSCT on the draft goals and objectives, with a focus on Goal 3 – Environment & Sustainability.

The Chapter 4 draft has been reviewed once by the Parks and Recreation Commission and most of their recommended changes are reflected in this version. The Arts Council has also done an initial review but has not yet provided recommended changes. Areas still under development are highlighted in yellow.

## **2. REVIEW DRAFT: CHAPTER 9 – Open Space, Land Conservation and Stewardship**

Chapter 9 (see Exhibit 2) is a background chapter covering topics related to open space, stewardship, water conservation, healthy forests, and more. This is an early draft, with a number of sections still under development as noted in yellow. This chapter is included in the PROS Plan to provide information on current day happenings and generally describes the future vision for these programs, facilities, and services. The strategic direction, themes, and priorities identified in Chapter 9 are reflected in the goals and objectives in Chapter 4.

The project team is interested in receiving feedback from the OSCT on the Chapter 9 draft.

## **3. OSCT LIAISON TO SUPPORT PROS PLAN REVIEW PROCESS**

The project team is seeking an OSCT member to serve as the liaison to the Parks and Recreation Commission to represent OSCT interests in the ongoing review and development of the PROS Plan. The liaison will be invited to attend all Parks and Recreation Commission meetings where PROS Plan items are reviewed, which is likely to be a commitment of three or four meetings between now and the end of 2021.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The first complete draft of the PROS Plan will likely be available in early November and will be shared with the OSCT for review and feedback.

Work will continue on the PROS Plan through the end of 2021, with a hand-off to the City Council anticipated in early 2022.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

- 1) Review and provide feedback on PROS Plan Chapter 4 (Goals & Objectives) and Chapter 9 (Open Space, Land Conservation, & Stewardship).
- 2) Assign an OSCT member to serve as the liaison to the Parks and Recreation Commission to represent OSCT interests in the ongoing review and development of the PROS Plan.

# Mercer Island PROS

## Goals & Objectives

### Chapter 4

**READER'S NOTE:** This chapter was drafted prior to the September 28, 2021 Virtual Public Meeting and prior to receiving results from the second community survey. With support from the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Arts Council, and the Open Space Conservancy Trust, the staff will review outcomes of both public engagement opportunities and further refine the goals and objectives in this chapter.

Includes in this chapter and at the heart of the PROS Plan is the establishment of goals and objectives that provide strategic direction for the Mercer Island Parks and Recreation system. The goals and objectives from past plans have been reorganized, enhanced, and arranged to align with the common themes noted by the community during the planning process. These goals and objectives will guide the delivery of parks and recreation services for the next six years and beyond.

### Goals & Objectives

The Growth Management Act (GMA), adopted by the Washington State Legislature in 1990, provided a foundation for land use planning in selected cities and counties throughout the state, including King County and the City of Mercer Island. The GMA's purpose is to help communities deal efficiently with growth challenges to ensure long-term sustainability and a high quality of life. The GMA identifies 14 planning goals to guide the creation of comprehensive plans and development regulations (codified in Chapter 36.70A of the Revised Code of Washington). Four of these goals directly affect the development and implementation of this plan.

- “Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.” RCW 36.70A.020(9)
- “Protect the environment and enhance the state’s high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.” RCW 36.70A.020(10)
- “Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures, that have historical or archaeological significance.” RCW 36.70A.020(13)
- “Carry-out the goals of the Shoreline Management Act with regards to shorelines and critical areas.” RCW 36.70A.020(14)

Furthermore, the Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan, previous parks and recreation plans, other City plans, and county-wide planning policies provide a framework for this PROS Plan.

## Goals and Objectives

A goal is a general statement that describes the overarching direction for the parks and recreation system. Objectives are more specific and describe an outcome or a means to achieve the stated goals. Recommendations are specific and measurable actions intended to implement and achieve the goals

and objectives and are contained in the Needs Assessment and Capital Planning chapters of the PROS Plan. Action items not related directly to capital projects are prioritized and adopted as part of the City of Mercer Island biennial budget.

A summary of the PROS Plan goals is provided below.

**Goal 1 – Planning, Acquisition & Access:** Provide a high quality, welcoming, and inclusive parks and recreation system that meets community needs now and in the future.

**Goal 2 – Maintenance & Operations:** Provide the Mercer Island community with safe, well-maintained parks and recreation facilities.

**Goal 3 – Environment & Sustainability:** Provide a high quality, diversified open space system that preserves and enhances urban forests, critical habitat, and other environmental resources. Incorporate sustainability practices into operations, maintenance, and planning.

**Goal 4 – Trails:** Develop and promote an interconnected community through safe, accessible, and attractive trails and pathways easily accessed by a variety of trail users.

**Goal 5 – Recreation Facilities & Programming:** Provide a variety of recreation programs, services, and facilities that promote the health and well-being of residents of all ages and abilities.

**Goal 6 – Arts & Culture:** Facilitate and promote comprehensive and engaging arts and culture experiences.

**Goal 7 – Community Engagement & Partnerships:** Encourage and support community engagement and pursue collaborative partnerships to strengthen and grow parks and recreation programs and services.

**Goal 8 – Administration & Fiscal Sustainability:** Provide leadership and sufficient resources to maintain and operate a welcoming, efficient, safe, and sustainable parks and recreation system.

## Planning, Acquisition & Access

Goal 1: Provide a high quality, welcoming, and inclusive parks and recreation system that meets community needs now and in the future.

Objectives:

- 1.1. Retain publicly owned parks and open spaces in perpetuity. Actively pursue options to permanently protect parks and open space areas through conservation easements, zoning changes, or other strategies. Evaluate the transfer of some or all open space areas to the Open Space Conservancy Trust.
- 1.2 Update the Parks, Recreation & Open Space (PROS) Plan periodically and approximately every six years to ensure facilities and services meet current and future community needs and maintain eligibility for State grants. Incorporate the PROS Plan as an appendix to the Citywide Comprehensive Plan during the next update process.

- 1.3 Periodically review and update level of service standards for parks, trails, open space areas, playgrounds, and athletic fields. Include accompanying standards for maintenance and operations.
- 1.4 Identify and prioritize the need for master plans to guide all significant park development projects, achieve cohesive designs, and ensure phasing of projects is efficient and in alignment with community needs and priorities. Utilize management plans or other adopted strategies to guide the stewardship and maintenance of parks, open space areas, and trails.
- 1.5 Update the six-year Capital Improvement Plan at least every two years and use prioritization criteria, financial guidelines, and other factors to sequence projects. Maintain and publish a companion twenty-year capital project list at least every two years to capture long-term capital project needs and to guide the development of long-term funding strategies.
- 1.6 Design and maintain parks and facilities to offer universal accessibility for residents of all physical capabilities, skill levels, and ages as appropriate and in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design. Seek opportunities to eliminate barriers at existing facilities and address goals identified in the Citywide ADA Transition Plan.
- 1.7 Strive to provide a distributed network of parks, such that all Mercer Island residents live within one-half mile of a developed neighborhood or community park.
- 1.8 Pursue and implement strategies to maximize use of existing park and recreation assets.
- 1.9 Prepare a Land Acquisition Strategy to prioritize property acquisition to meet the future parks, trails, open space, and facility needs of the Mercer Island community.
- 1.10 Maintain a minimum standard of XX acres of developed neighborhood or community park land per 1,000 residents. [Objective under review, per PRC direction.]
- 1.11 Partner with public, private, and non-profit organizations and donors to acquire land for park and recreation needs.
- 1.12 When evaluating the vacation of any right-of-way, consider its appropriateness for use as public park or open space.
- 1.13 Plan for a range of play types, universal access, and a phasing plan when replacing or upgrading playground equipment. Identify partnerships, grants, sponsorships, and other funding opportunities for playground replacement projects.
- 1.14 Improve and upgrade developed and undeveloped street ends where appropriate to enhance public access to waterfront facilities. Identify opportunities where achieving ADA access is feasible and improve parking options.
- 1.15 Ensure public safety is included in all development and planning projects by coordinating with police and fire services and applying crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) techniques.

- 1.16 Integrate public art and park design from the onset of facility planning to create compelling, engaging, and captivating public places. Prioritize experiences that are interactive and allow for dynamic sensory exploration.

## Maintenance & Operations

Goal 2: Provide the Mercer Island community with safe, well-maintained parks and recreation facilities.

Objectives:

- 2.1 Maintain all parks and facilities in a manner that keeps them in a safe and attractive condition.
- 2.2 Continue to improve the City's comprehensive risk management program to ensure regular safety inspections and assess the likelihood and consequence of the failure of its assets in terms of financial, community, and environmental impact.
- 2.3 Track and monitor costs of maintaining parks and recreation facilities, including quantity, location, condition, and expected useful life. Utilize data to inform maintenance and capital investment decisions, including the timing of asset replacement.
- 2.4 Estimate the maintenance costs and staffing levels associated with land acquisition, development, or renovation of facilities, parks, open space areas, or trails, and ensure adequate ongoing funding is available prior to action.
- 2.5 Provide amenities at parks, trails, open space areas, and facilities where appropriate and when feasible to improve the user experience and access.

## Environment & Sustainability

Goal 3: Provide a high quality, diversified open space system that preserves and enhances urban forests, critical habitat, and other environmental resources. Incorporate sustainability practices into operations, maintenance, and planning.

Objectives:

- 3.1 Preserve and protect open space areas with significant environmental features such as wetlands, forests, steep slopes, and plant and animal habitats from development impacts.
- 3.2 Provide appropriate public access (e.g., trails, viewpoints, and wildlife viewing areas) within open space areas to support passive recreation. Provide environmental education



opportunities in open space areas with creative and interactive interpretation strategies, such as hands-on displays, self-guided walks, and other engaging experiences.

- 3.3 Incorporate sustainable practices into management, maintenance, and operations activities. Maintain equipment in good working order, purchase green equipment when feasible (e.g., battery-powered or low-emissions), replace existing lighting with high-efficiency fixtures, and keep systems (irrigation, lighting, HVAC, etc.) updated and fully functional for maximum performance. Pursue pilot programs to field test sustainable alternatives and to implement demonstration projects.
- 3.4 Pursue sustainable design alternatives and include in the project scope of work for construction projects and major maintenance activities, when feasible and appropriate.
- 3.5 Continue to support the Open Space Conservancy Trust and the planning, development, and management of Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space.
- 3.6 Actively work to improve the condition of City-owned parks, trails, and open space areas through invasive species removal, planting of native species, and restoration of urban forests, creeks, wetlands, and other habitat areas. Pursue opportunities to limit or reduce impervious surfaces. Anticipate climate trends and foster climate-resilient landscapes in parks and open space areas. Seek opportunities for community education on invasive species and their safe removal to help reduce their spread on Mercer Island. Maintain an Integrated Pest Management Program that maximizes ecological benefits while minimizing environmental, social, and economic impacts.
- 3.7 Develop a Citywide Urban Forestry Management Plan to articulate a long-term strategy for tree protection, urban forestry management, and public education and outreach. Include forest health, canopy replacement, wildfire, climate change, and general risk planning for City parks and open space areas as part of the overall strategy. Continue to gather and maintain Island-wide data on tree canopy coverage.
- 3.8 Encourage conservation opportunities to buffer and enhance the built environment. Pursue low-cost and non-purchase options to preserve open space, including the use of conservation easements and development covenants. Promote and encourage private property owners to enroll in the King County Current Use taxation programs, emphasizing properties contiguous to existing open space areas.
- 3.9 Promote and expand recycling opportunities at all park facilities and in association with all public and private special events. Include composting options at special events when food vendors are present.
- 3.10 Conserve and reduce water use through sustainable landscape design and maintenance practices.
- 3.11 Design and restore parks, trails, and open space areas to naturally capture and filter stormwater to improve water quality, increase water infiltration and recharge, and promote a healthy watershed and lake environment. Where feasible, coordinate park,

trail, and open space projects with stormwater and utility projects for efficiency and to reduce environmental impacts.

- 3.12 Steward waterfront and shoreline properties with the goal of protecting and enhancing critical shoreline habitat while preserving safe water access for recreational use.
- 3.13 Maintain Tree City USA designation with continued review of tree policy and management. Ensure that City-owned properties are viewed as leading proponents of the Tree City USA designation.
- 3.14 Continue to facilitate volunteer programs that enhance park improvement and restoration efforts, promote environmental education, support ongoing maintenance efforts, and engage the community in stewardship opportunities.
- 3.15 [Impervious surface/sustainability objective under development per PRC direction.]

## Trails (Section 4 to be revised and condensed per PRC Direction)

Goal 4: Develop and promote an interconnected community through safe, accessible, and attractive trails and pathways easily accessed by a variety of trail users.

### Objectives:

- 4.1 Develop and implement a trail system hierarchy to accommodate different user types and different user experiences. Publish an Island-wide map of City trails.
- 4.2 Support the planning and prioritization of Transportation Improvement Program projects for pedestrian and bicycle connections and improvements that safely link parks to other city destinations including other parks, schools, neighborhoods, the library, transit stops, the Eastlink Light Rail Station, commercial areas, and regional trail networks.
- 4.3 Expand and link the pedestrian and bicycle circulation system by acquiring rights-of-way and easements for trails and trail connections. Prioritize project implementation to address gaps between existing paths, create longer, more usable connections, improve safety, and coordinate trail projects with utility and transportation projects.
- 4.4 Integrate the siting of proposed trail segments into the development review process; require development projects along designated trail routes to be incorporated as part of the development project.
- 4.5 Utilize and implement park or open space site master plans to guide the development of trails within existing properties to provide maintenance and recreational access and to connect to external trail networks.
- 4.6 Design and construct new trails with consideration of and attention to users' safety and a priority to accommodate multiple trail uses.
- 4.7 Develop clear and consistent wayfinding signage and information materials for trails and associated facilities.
- 4.8 Continue to support use of non-motorized small craft along the Mercer Island shoreline via the "water trail." Seek opportunities to integrate and enhance water trail use through upgrades to access points, including at street ends.

## Recreation Facilities & Programming

Goal 5: Provide a variety of recreation programs, services, and facilities that promote the health and well-being of residents of all ages and abilities.

### Objectives:

- 5.1 Refine the City's role as a provider of recreation programs and services by implementing the Recreation Reset Strategy's cost recovery and resource allocation philosophy. Revisit and update business planning goals at least every six years to address changing community needs and to revisit performance goals. Provide annual updates on work progress and implementation.
- 5.2 Enhance the diversity of recreation programs offered, focusing on programs that are in high demand or serve a wide range of users and adhere to the guidelines established in the Recreation Reset Strategy.
- 5.3 Expand service offerings for water-oriented .
- 5.4 Continue work to restore and expand youth and teen programs to provide engaging, affordable, enriching, inclusive, and safe options for children on Mercer Island. Identify programs and activities that provide for whole-family participation.
- 5.5 Identify and address recreation and service accessibility barriers (socio-economic, language, physical, mental health, geographic, transportation). Seek to reduce access barriers and expand inclusive opportunities. Implement diversity, equity and inclusion policies and a priority matrix to guide the allocation of resources to address known service gaps over time.
- 5.6 Work to restore and expand opportunities for seniors to engage in social, recreational, educational, nutritional, and health programs designed to encourage social connections, independence, physical fitness, and overall well-being.
- 5.7 Review and establish a funding strategy for the Mercer Island Community and Event Center to sustain annual operating needs to include periodic review of the fee policy for programs, indoor facility uses, and rental rates to meet operational requirements and cost recovery goals.
- 5.8 Maintain and enhance program scholarships and other mechanisms to support and promote recreation access for low-income community members.
- 5.9 Evaluate the City's role and function in community events and pursue sponsorships, partnerships, and outside funding to support existing or additional events and festivals.
- 5.10 Leverage City resources by forming and maintaining partnerships with other public, non-profit, and private recreation providers to deliver recreation programs and services and secure access to existing facilities for community recreation.
- 5.11 Conduct periodic evaluations of program offerings. Utilize data to inform program and service planning decisions.

- 5.12 Coordinate facility scheduling, in partnership with other public and private organizations, to maximize usage and programming of limited recreational assets (e.g., athletic fields, gymnasiums, sport courts, etc.) Develop and implement indoor and outdoor facility use and scheduling protocols and policies based on principles of fairness and equity, supporting diverse and emerging uses, reflecting good stewardship and sustainability principles, and adhering to cost recovery goals. [Objective under review, per PRC direction.]

## Arts and Culture

Goal 6: Facilitate and promote comprehensive and engaging arts and culture experiences.

Objectives:

- 6.1 Foster the City's role as a convenor of artists, arts organizations, and community groups to facilitate collaboration and efficiently serve the community through arts and culture programs and experiences.
- 6.2 Support the priorities of the Mercer Island Arts Council and the goals and initiatives of the Comprehensive Arts & Culture Plan.
- 6.3 Identify and implement opportunities for integrating arts and culture into parks and open space areas, including through permanent and temporary public art installations, interpretive strategies, and other dynamic expressions. Collaborate with diverse groups to ensure incorporation of any art in public space occurs through a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- 6.4 Partner with the community and local organizations to foster a variety of cultural events and support community cultural celebrations.
- 6.5 Develop a long-range project plan for the 1% for Art in Public Places Fund that articulates the City's vision for the public art program and includes integration with the Capital Improvement Program, strategies for engaging the community in public art acquisition, and updated policies for public art acquisition, siting, security, maintenance, and deaccession.
- 6.6 Encourage private contributions and donations for the arts, consistent with City gift and donation policies, and the City's pursuit of grant funding to enhance widespread public access to arts, culture, and heritage.
- 6.7 Encourage the collaboration of arts and culture marketing and communication efforts through shared event calendars, social media management, and other cohesive strategies.

## Community Engagement & Partnerships

Goal 7: Encourage and support community engagement and pursue collaborative partnerships to strengthen and grow parks and recreation programs and services.

### Objectives:

- 7.1 Involve the community in system-wide planning and site design. Use a variety of communication tools and engagement strategies to solicit community input, facilitate project understanding, and build community support.
- 7.2 Enhance and strengthen the Mercer Island School District partnership, seeking opportunities to collaborate on facility use, maintenance, programs, and other services. Review and update existing Interlocal Agreements regularly, approximately every two years.
- 7.3 Identify and implement partnerships with other public, private, and non-profit organizations to support capital projects, community events, programs, and other special initiatives.
- 7.4 Support the Parks & Recreation Commission as the forum for public discussion of parks and recreation issues and ensure collaboration with the Open Space Conservancy Trust and the Arts Council. Conduct periodic joint sessions between the Parks & Recreation Commission, other standing City boards, and the City Council to improve coordination and discuss policy matters of mutual interest.
- 7.5 Provide informative, timely and consistent communication, informational materials, and signage to help community members connect with and fully utilize the many parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services. Maintain a consistent brand identity through marketing campaigns, social media presence, and other communication mediums. Adapt community outreach efforts to ensure a broad reach.
- 7.6 Track and evaluate recreation trends, park use patterns, and park user needs.

## Administration & Fiscal Sustainability

Goal 8: Provide leadership and sufficient resources to maintain and operate a welcoming, efficient, safe, and sustainable parks and recreation system.

### Objectives:

- 8.1 Promote a welcoming and inclusive environment, seeking opportunities to address barriers and expand program and service offerings to meet a diverse audience. Provide diversity, equity, and inclusion training opportunities for staff, volunteers, and appointed officials.

- 8.2 Plan for and recommend sufficient resources to maintain, preserve, and protect the parks and recreation system consistent with best practices and established levels of service and to protect the public investment. [Objective under review, per PRC direction.]
- 8.3 Pursue alternative funding options and dedicated revenues for the acquisition and development of parks and facilities.
- 8.4 Periodically review and update the Park Impact Fee rates and methodology approximately every 5 to 7 years and utilize impact fees to accommodate growth through the expansion of the parks system.
- 8.5 Develop a recommendation for City Council consideration to renew the Parks Maintenance and Operations Levy, scheduled to end in 2023.
- 8.6 Collaborate with the Community Planning and Development Department on economic development initiatives and other opportunities to support local businesses. Seek opportunities to buy-local when procuring services and other opportunities to partner with Mercer Island small businesses in the delivery of programs and services. [Objective under review, per PRC direction.]
- 8.7 Stay abreast of best practices in technology and implement systems and tools to improve customer service and support efficient operations.
- 8.8 Continue to use part-time, seasonal, and contract employees for select functions to meet peak demands and respond to specialized or urgent needs. Maintain flexibility in the staffing structure to address changing program and service needs.
- 8.9 Promote volunteerism to involve individuals, groups, organizations, and businesses in the development and stewardship of the park and recreation system.
- 8.9 Promote professional development opportunities that strengthen the core skills and engender greater commitment from staff, advisory board members, and volunteers. Include trainings, materials, and/or affiliation with the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA), Washington Recreation & Park Association (WRPA), and others.

# Mercer Island PROS

## Open Space, Land Conservation & Stewardship

### Chapter 9

Mercer Island’s open space and natural areas are a critical component of the City’s green infrastructure, and play key roles in supporting healthy, well-functioning ecosystems. These many benefits include maintaining air and water quality, mitigating impacts of climate change, capturing stormwater runoff, and providing healthy, recreational, and scenic opportunities to connect with nature.

### Open Space

The Mercer Island community is fortunate to have retained several significant natural areas across the city, and the City owns and/or manages nearly 300 acres of open space properties and natural lands in coordination with the acreage of the developed park areas. These open space properties include forested lands, riparian corridors, wetlands, and steep slopes across 15 different sites. Pioneer Park, the largest of the public open spaces, accounts for nearly half of the open space in the City. Other natural area sites are scattered across Mercer Island and are generally less than ten acres in size.

The classification of “open space” distinguishes natural lands from parks that have been developed or partially developed and contain natural areas. In both parkland classifications (‘parks’ and ‘open space’), natural areas are managed to preserve, restore, and conserve ecosystem functions, native vegetation, and wildlife habitat. Open space properties are undeveloped and are managed to retain or enhance natural or scenic resources, though an open space may include trails, interpretive signs or artwork, along with modest support amenities such as parking or restrooms.

Figure \_\_\_\_ Open Space Areas in Parklands

<Insert table >

In addition to protecting habitat and providing ecological services (e.g., stormwater management and air quality), the open space system provides educational and stewardship opportunities and is the primary framework for off-street recreational trails. The open space system provides access to nature for passive recreation (including opportunities for viewpoints and wildlife viewing areas) and relaxation.

### Pioneer Park

As the largest single open space in the City, Pioneer Park provides an expansive forested area in the southcentral portion of Mercer Island, divided into three quadrants separated by Island Crest Way and SE 68<sup>th</sup> Street. The property was transferred to the Mercer Island Open Space Conservancy Trust in 1992



as a way to protect and preserve the land in its natural state. Pioneer Park offers passive and low-impact recreation, such as walking, jogging, and picnicking.

Pioneer Park contains a range of trail types, access points, and trail surfacing. Trails are the primary way that park users experience Pioneer Park, so the trail system is crucial to the recreational value of the open space. Trail users include pedestrians (runners, walkers, and dog walkers), cyclists, and horseback riders. Equestrian use has been limited to the southeast quadrant and the eastern and southern perimeter trails of the northwest quadrant. Large format trail maps are posted at the primary trailheads in each quadrant, with informal trailheads dispersed along the roadsides. Existing amenities in the park include benches, a picnic table, interpretive signs, and trash receptacles.

Several studies were prepared in the 1990s to define vegetation management and consider trail improvements. The 2001 Pioneer Park Master Plan provided assessments on the ecological systems and trail conditions to guide preservation and improvements to the park. The master plan proposed upgrades and trail improvements that would address compliance with ADA accessibility standards. Additional recommended improvements included expanded parking, improved park entries, expanded picnic areas, and safer road crossings. The master plan also proposed trail design standards that would establish a clear hierarchy of trail types: accessible, primary pedestrian, secondary pedestrian, primary equestrian/pedestrian, secondary equestrian/pedestrian, and bicycle trails.

Figure \_\_\_\_\_. Map of Pioneer Park trail system

<Insert map>

### Engstrom Open Space

Acquired in two transactions in the early 2000s, the 8.5-acre Engstrom Open Space abuts the northeast quadrant of Pioneer Park and provides ravine habitat, additional second growth forest, and perched wetlands. The property has been permanently dedicated for park and recreation uses and, in conjunction with a pedestrian trail easement on adjacent private property, provides for a trail connection to East Mercer Way. The Open Space Conservancy Trust also is chartered to guide management of Engstrom Open Space.

### Other Open Space Properties

Additional open space properties, including SE 53<sup>rd</sup> Open Space, Mercerdale Hillside, Upper Luther Burbank Park, Gallagher Hill Open Space, Parkwood Ridge Open Space, and Clise Park, have trails that connect across their properties to local streets and neighborhoods. These open spaces provide valuable ecosystem services as well as recreational trail uses and pedestrian connections.

Other open space properties have no developed trails or site improvements. These open space properties include: Cayhill Open Space, Hollerbach Open Space, Salem Woods, SE 47<sup>th</sup> Open Space, and SE 50<sup>th</sup> Open Space. Development of these sites for public recreational use, including the construction of trails, may be limited, or prohibited by natural characteristics of the land, including steep slopes, wetlands, and other features.

### Parks that Include Open Space

In addition to the designated open space properties, eight of the City's developed parks also contain significant natural areas that are managed and maintained as open space. The developed areas of these parks provide active and passive recreational amenities, while considerable acreage is retained in its natural condition. The two parks that contribute the most open space acreage within developed parks are Island Crest Park (27.6 acres) and Luther Burbank Park (19.6 acres). Across all parks in this category, natural areas make up xx% of the total acreage. Figure \_\_\_ highlights designated open space acreages within developed parks.

Figure \_\_\_ Acreage of Open Space within Developed City Parks

<Insert summary table >

[This section under development]

## Land Conservation

The City of Mercer Island has demonstrated its commitment to conservation of its natural resources within the context of a major metropolitan region. The preservation of Pioneer Park is a shining example of the importance of land conservation to the community. This commitment is also evident in the 8% increase in Mercer Island tree canopy between 2007 and 2017. The City has also preserved an impressive variety of public shorefront access and public park amenities along the edges of Lake Washington.

Luther Burbank Park contains three-quarters of a mile of lakefront water's edge, much of which is managed as natural shoreline. Two waterfront community parks, Clarke Beach and Groveland Beach Park, provide public access to Lake Washington, while also retaining much of their park acreage in natural forested condition. The conservation and continued restoration of these open spaces further highlight the conservation values of the Mercer Island community.

Conservation may also take the form of acquiring important lands that contribute to the ecological health of Mercer Islands' forests, wetlands, and watercourses. In situations where private landowners or non-profit organizations are looking to donate or sell their properties to the City as future conserved open space or parkland, consideration should be given to how the property adds either recreational value or conservation benefits to the parks and open space system.

The acquisition of properties that accommodate trail connections or provide access to the waterfront provide high value contributions to the open space system. The Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan encourages water-dependent recreational activities to be available to the public and an increase in public shoreline that is suitable for water-related recreational uses, balanced with protection of critical shoreline areas. Street rights-of-way abutting bodies of water are generally encouraged to remain in the public domain to preserve public access to the waterfront. Any potential consideration of the vacation of rights-of-way should require a detailed analysis of the City's projected needs for waterfront access.

Undeveloped lands or sections of existing properties are often restricted in their potential development by steep slopes, wetlands, or critical areas, features which are often highly valued for habitat conservation. These areas may serve as expansions of existing natural areas, or as important habitat

corridors between larger open space lands. Conservation easements and public access easements are tools that could be applied to extend natural vegetation benefits and access across the parks and open space system.

As noted in the Goals and Parks chapters, the City should initiate a Land Acquisition Strategy to further explore and develop an approach for prioritizing acquisition of habitat areas and park lands to expand the existing parks, trails, and open space system.

### Watercourses, Wetlands, and Shorelines

Stewardship and management of the parks and open space system is integral to maintaining and improving the health of watercourses, wetlands, and shorelines. Providing safe public access to shoreline and open space properties needs to be carefully balanced with the important goal of environmental stewardship and protection of natural habitat.

Mercer Island's shoreline presents one of its most aesthetic and environmentally important characteristics. Shorelands directly impact water quality as surface and subsurface waters are filtered back into the lake. Additionally, shorelines are a valuable fish habitat area, characterized by lake bottom conditions, erosion tendencies, and the proximity to watercourse outfalls that combine to provide a suitable environment for spawning fish. The City's Shoreline Master Program includes goals, policies, and regulations consistent with state guidelines to protect shorelines.

The City of Mercer Island has identified approximately 90 sub-basins as part of its stormwater management plan. Within these sub-basins, approximately 55 previously identified watercourses (streams) drain into Lake Washington. Watercourses are naturally occurring or partially altered streams, which are characterized by perennial or seasonal flows that contribute to water quality, stormwater and erosion control, and the provision of wildlife habitats. City code also protects and regulates wetlands on Mercer Island, which are characterized by hydric soils, water-tolerant plants, and surface waters that are either saturated or inundated for a minimum period of time.

[This section under development]

### Stewardship

Mercer Island benefits from a robust open space system covering nearly 300 acres of natural lands providing dynamic and diverse natural environments. Their close proximity to urban development, which can alter the natural processes of native landscapes, presents challenges that must be addressed with active management. Without this management, these open space lands will be heavily impacted by invasive plant species, low tree regeneration, and canopy deterioration, limiting their associated ecological benefits. In 2004, more than 50% of Mercer Island's public open space was significantly impacted by invasive plants.

### System-wide Open Space Vegetation Management

In 2004, the City adopted the Open Space Vegetation Management (OSVM) Plan that identified major threats to the parks system, established work priorities based on research and public involvement, and outlined restoration goals for open spaces. The 2004 OSVM Plan focused on maintaining functional benefits derived from Mercer Island's open space areas and noted that native canopy trees, regenerating conifers, and native understory vegetation were critical factors in maintaining these benefits.

During the subsequent ten years, Parks and Recreation Department staff managed a systematic restoration program to reduce invasive plant cover and plant native species, particularly coniferous trees, to improve forest cover. During this period, 43,000 native plants were installed (covering more than 50% of the open space area) and over 100 acres of trees were freed from climbing ivy.

The ten-year re-evaluation of the OSVM Plan, conducted in 2014, updated program goals to focus on maintaining the functional benefits of native vegetation and fostering resilient plant communities that can recover from disturbances and adapt to climate change. The 2014 OSVM Plan defined and characterized optimal conditions for the urban forest to facilitate ongoing restoration planning, which included the following:

- Primarily native vegetation with few invasive species
- High structural diversity (including trees, shrubs, herbs, and large woody debris)
- Uneven age distribution of trees (i.e., seedlings, saplings, and more mature trees present)
- High biological diversity with a mixture of native coniferous and deciduous canopy trees and a diverse native understory
- Landscape-level diversity with areas of differing vegetation, soils, and topography; high quality aquatic resources; healthy soils
- Safe trails and access routes for human users
- High level of investment, involvement, and interest by human users

### Pioneer Park Forest Management

In 2003, the Pioneer Park Forest Management Plan was adopted specifically to address the needs of Mercer Island's largest forest tract. The Pioneer Park Forest Management Plan directs site management and intervention to maintain the native forest ecosystem, protect public safety, and enhance positive uses of the park over time. Included by reference in the 2004 OSVM Plan, the Pioneer Park Forest Management Plan addresses a range of considerations for vegetation in the park, including tree risk assessment and management, fire management, tree pruning and removal, tree protection, invasive plant control, rare or unusual plants, off-trail use, and habitat management. In 2009, the Pioneer Park Forest Management Plan was amended to include the findings of the Forest Health Survey, a comprehensive study of the park's vegetation and forest structure. This data was used to shape the restoration work plan for the next 20 years, shifting from a site-based approach to a systemic approach, with a more comprehensive focus on canopy regeneration, invasive tree removal, and ivy management.

### Stormwater Management / Ecological Services

Our region is experiencing more severe rainstorms as the result of climate change, and more of that rain is falling on impervious surfaces: roads, parking lots, and rooftops. This untreated surface water runoff is

a major source of contamination all along the Lake Washington shoreline and in other riparian areas, impacting both humans and wildlife, especially salmon populations.

State requirements for surface water management are becoming more stringent and costly for both developers and the City. Runoff volumes, peak stream flows and local flooding can be reduced by incorporating trees into stormwater management planning, lessening the need for expensive detention facilities (e.g. catch basins) and the cost of treatment to remove sediment and other pollutants such as lawn chemicals. Green infrastructure is far more cost-effective than grey infrastructure.

Using open space areas and green spaces to capture stormwater runoff encourages infiltration into the soil, prevents excessive streambed erosion, and reduces sedimentation in Lake Washington. In addition, a healthy tree canopy increases carbon sequestration potential, encourages local biodiversity, and enhances overall environmental resilience by reducing heat island effects and offering cooler, shaded air.

### Habitat Restoration and Invasive Species Management

The control of invasive species is a key element of the restoration process and essential in the maintenance of a healthy natural landscape. Many invasive and non-native species exhibit strong adaptability to Pacific Northwest environments and displace native species, especially in the disturbed landscapes proximate to urban development. Mercer Island continues to engage in practices that reduce the impacts of invasive species, while also expanding partnerships that help with this effort. While removal efforts are ongoing, the restoration sites cleared of invasives will require ongoing monitoring and intervention to reduce or limit the re-establishment of the invasive plants.

The Parks and Recreation Department has been diligent in working to restore disturbed natural landscapes in open spaces and developed parks. Each year, natural resources staff evaluate open space properties to determine the success of past restoration activities and plan the next scope of restoration work that will move each landscape toward greater health and resiliency. Funding for restoration work has been included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the past XX years, with annual funding levels ranging from \$XXX to \$XXX. The majority of restoration field work is performed by contracted landscape crews knowledgeable in native and invasive species identification, and ecological restoration best practices. In addition, the City employs a small seasonal crew to perform targeted and complex restoration tasks, such as noxious weed monitoring, mapping and control.

### Developed Parks

Managing the natural and cultivated landscapes across parklands is an ongoing process. In developed park landscapes, the Parks Maintenance and Natural Resources teams aim to ensure optimal growth of shade trees, shrub beds, and turfgrass in active lawn areas. From mowing open lawn areas to trimming vegetation from trail and pathway edges, parklands require continual attention and an investment of significant resources to properly manage and maintain the living landscape.

[This section under development]

## Water Conservation

Despite the rainy winters, water is not an infinite resource in Puget Sound, and summers are expected to get hotter and drier as climate change intensifies. It is increasingly likely that not just voluntary, but occasionally mandatory, water conservation measures will become necessary in order to preserve supplies for the most critical uses, such as domestic consumption. In recent years, the City has allowed some grassland and recreational areas to brown out for the summer months in order to conserve water and save on significant irrigation costs. In addition to reducing irrigation volumes and frequency, planting the most drought-tolerant species, and altered maintenance protocols will also help reduce future water demand.

[This section under development]

## Community Partnerships & Volunteers

While the COVID-19 pandemic eliminated many parks and open space volunteer activities in 2020 and 2021, the engagement and management of volunteer resources is an important element in restoration and stewardship of Mercer Island's public lands.

For over a decade, the City has contracted EarthCorps and Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, two local non-profit organizations, to provide volunteer management services for restoration events in open space areas. These organizations coordinate and lead 45-50 volunteer events each year in natural areas across the island, providing training, tools, and support for volunteers of all ages and abilities. They have established long-standing partnerships with schools, places of worship, and community groups, and perform regular outreach to draw new volunteers and forest stewards. Between 2008 and 2018, 20,980 volunteers contributed over 64,000 hours to restoration work in Mercer Island's natural areas.

The Department's Natural Resources team oversees the Forest Stewardship program, which provides dedicated volunteers with training, tools, and ongoing support to run effective volunteer projects. Training includes information about native plant identification, invasive plant identification and removal, native plant installation, and volunteer event coordination. People who complete the training become Forest Stewards who are qualified to lead projects on behalf of the City's park and open space system. Due to the on-site training program and ongoing support of these Forest Stewards, which require significant staff resources, this program is limited to a small number of community members who express an interest in long-term stewardship of Mercer Islands' natural areas.

In addition to training local volunteers, community partnerships are a vital component of stewardship activities. Past and current partners include:

- EarthCorps
- Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust
- Student Conservation Association
- Washington Conservation Corps
- Washington State Department of Natural Resources
- Mercer Island Youth and Family Services VOICE Program
- Starbucks
- Mercer Island Preschool Association
- Friends of Luther Burbank Park
- Wildwood Park neighborhood
- Ellis Pond neighborhood
- Boy and Girl Scouts
- Mercer Island School District

The City manages Luther Burbank Park's wetland areas in partnership with Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust's volunteer program and Friends of Luther Burbank Park. Many wetland enhancement projects have been implemented that involve replanting activities, invasive species removal, and boardwalk development. Through proper management of public open spaces and natural areas, the City and its partners can maintain and enhance the open space system, as well as the critical ecosystem and community benefits they provide.

From time to time, other volunteer groups engage with the City of Mercer Island to contribute their time to park and open space restoration projects. These opportunities should continue to be made available and should be supported by sufficient staff oversight resources.

### Future Initiatives

In addition to ongoing monitoring of open space conditions and implementation of existing management plans, the City should consider the development of a citywide urban forest management plan to define goals for local forested ecosystems and outline the best management tactics to sustain forest canopy. Such a plan could include a citywide tree inventory, tree preservation and protection code amendments, and considerations for climate resiliency. A more broadly defined urban forestry plan can also be a means to engage the community in tree-related activities and facilitate community conversations about the overall health and diversity of the urban forest in Mercer Island.

The City should initiate a Land Acquisition Strategy to further explore and develop an approach for prioritizing acquisition of habitat areas and park lands to expand the existing parks, trails, and open space system.

The community has also expressed an interest in protecting these lands in perpetuity, so future work items should include implementation of additional measures to permanently protect these lands. Ideas considered thus far include zoning changes, conservation easements, and exploring the opportunity to move more properties under the umbrella of the Open Space Conservancy Trust.

[This section under development]



# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST STAFF REPORT

Item 3  
September 23, 2021  
Regular Business

## AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	Annual Herbicide Application Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Receive report.	

<b>STAFF:</b>	Lizzy Stone, Natural Resources Project Manager
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	Lisa Anderl
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2020 Herbicide Application Map</li> <li>2021 Monitoring and Planned Herbicide Treatment Map</li> </ol>

## SUMMARY

In May 2010, the Open Space Conservancy Trust adopted the Herbicide Use Protocol which prescribes the situations in which herbicide may be used on Trust properties. The Herbicide Use Protocol was updated in September 2016 to reflect changes in best management practices for invasive tree treatments. The protocol requires City staff to report to the Trust annually on the recent use and planned uses of herbicides for the year.

### 2020 REPORT

Due to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mercer Island’s Natural Resource team did not employ an in-house crew in 2020. For this reason, some invasive weed monitoring and treatment was put on hold for the year. In 2020, monitoring was limited to only knotweed, garden loosestrife, and yellow flag iris, none of which were found in Pioneer Park or Engstrom Open Space.

Professional contractors conducted invasive tree treatment in select areas of Engstrom Open Space, Pioneer Park SE, and Pioneer Park NW. Trees included in these treatments are: English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), English laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), bird cherry (*Prunus avium*), European mountain ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*), English hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), cherry plum (*Prunus cerasifera*), and Portugal laurel (*Prunus lusitanica*). Invasive tree treatment was performed using the EZ-Ject lance, with Copperhead shells containing the herbicide imazapyr, which were inserted into the trunks of invasive trees.

### 2021 PLAN

Throughout the spring and summer of 2021, the Mercer Island Natural Resources crew monitored noxious weed populations in Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space. The crew surveyed for yellow archangel (*Lamiastrum galeobdolon*), knotweed (*Polygonum spp.*), yellow flag iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), and spotted jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*).



Yellow archangel was first identified and treated in Pioneer Park in 2010. This initial treatment was very successful and eradicated approximately 90-95% of the infestation. Regular monitoring of the area has resulted in subsequent treatments to manage remaining infestations. In 2021, seven small patches of yellow archangel were identified along the north edge of the NW quadrant and one small patch was identified in the SE quadrant. More than half of these patches were small enough to be dug up by hand, while three infestations will need to be treated with the following formulation: 2.5% percent Roundup Custom and 2% AgriDex adjuvant. This aquatic-approved formulation reduces harm to amphibians.

The patch of knotweed that has been monitored in the SE quadrant since 2013 was surveyed in 2021. No stems of knotweed were found. Monitoring will continue in 2022 to ensure no new knotweed patches take hold in the park. Similarly, a small patch of yellow flag iris that has been monitored for several years was surveyed and no plants were found in 2021. Small spotted jewelweed populations were identified in the SE quadrant, which were removed manually. No herbicide was used on these populations this year.

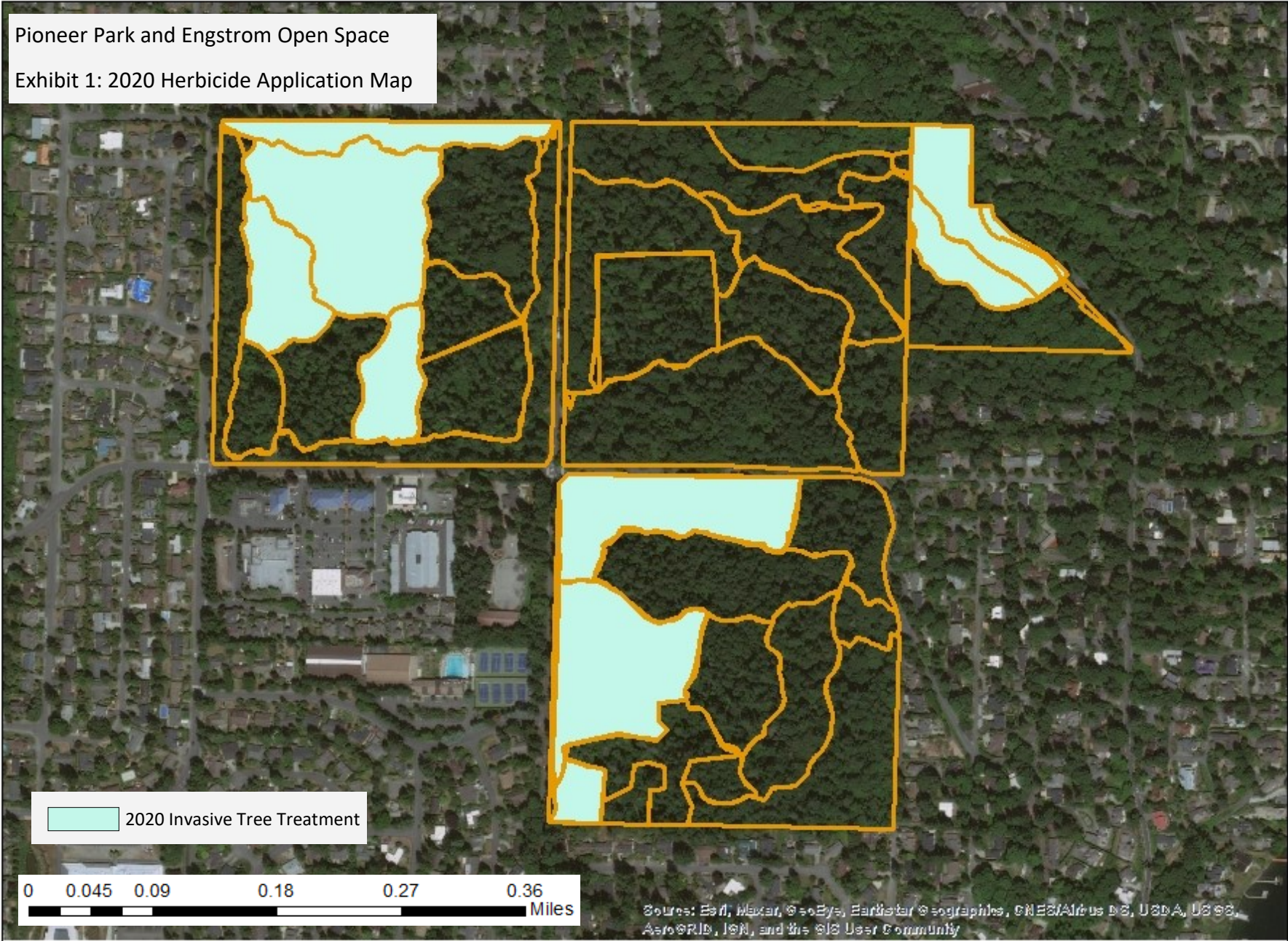
King County Noxious Weed Program staff monitored for shiny geranium (*Geranium lucidum*) populations on the north edge of the SE quadrant. Two small infestations were treated with a formulation of 1% triclopyr and 0.1% Gallery to manage the patch. Additional monitoring will take place in the fall of 2021.

This month, professional contractors will begin restoration work in the NW and NE quadrants. As part of these contracts, EZ-Ject shells will be used to manage invasive trees.

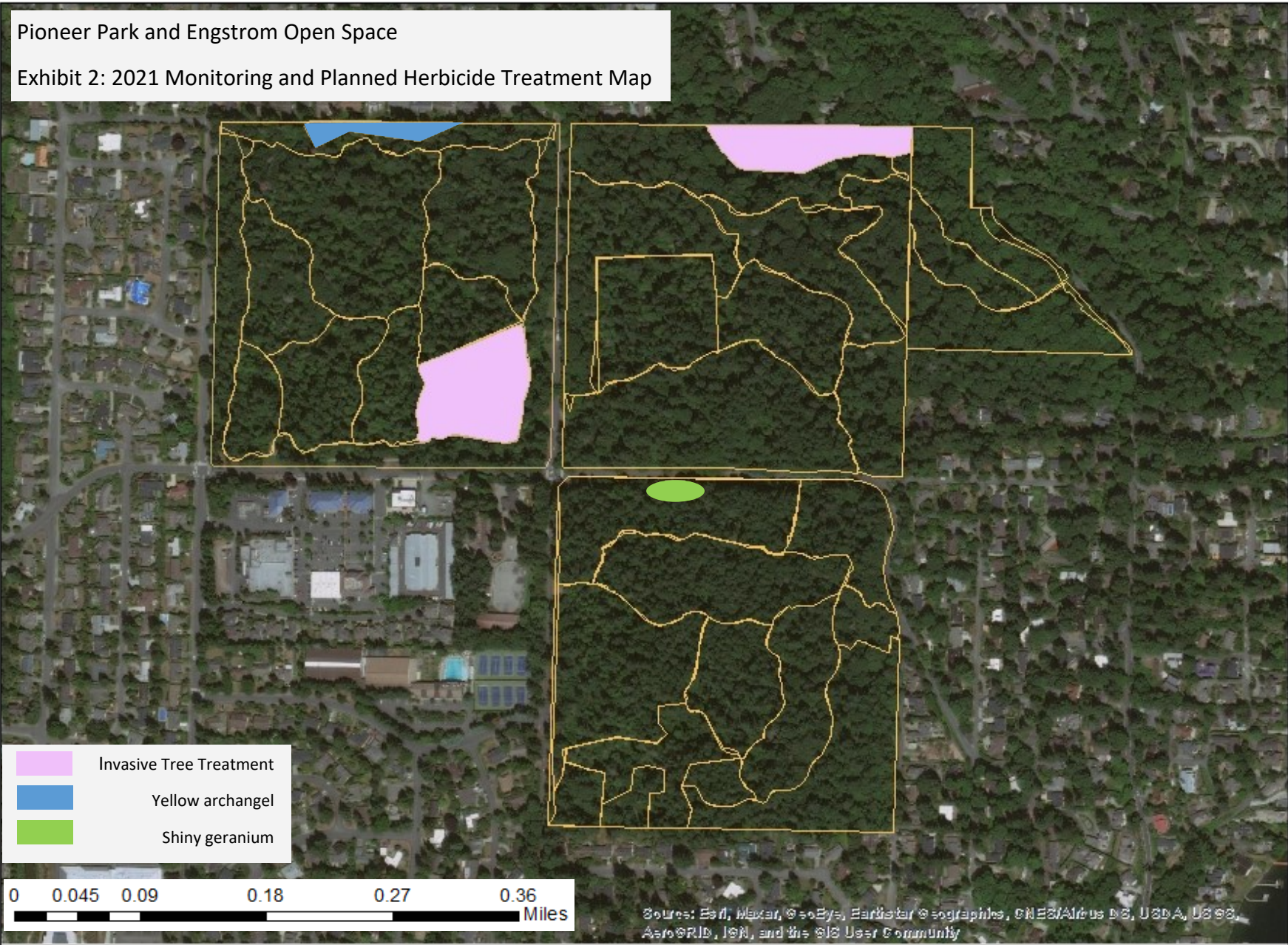
## RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive report.

Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space  
Exhibit 1: 2020 Herbicide Application Map



Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space  
Exhibit 2: 2021 Monitoring and Planned Herbicide Treatment Map



Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space  
Exhibit 1: 2020 Herbicide Application Map



Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space

Exhibit 2: 2021 Monitoring and Planned Herbicide Treatment Map

Item 3.



# Invasive Tree Treatment

- English laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*)
  - English holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
  - European mountain ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*)
  - English hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
  - wild cherry (*Prunus avium*)
  - Portugal laurel (*Prunus lusitanica*)
  - black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)
  - cherry plum (*Prunus cerasifera*)
  - tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)
- EZ-Ject lance for larger trees
  - Cut and paint for smaller trees



# Yellow archangel

- Fast-growing, herbaceous perennial
- Spreads by stem fragments, root fragments, and seeds
- Class B noxious weed in King County- Control is recommended, not required
- Hand pulled small patches
- To be treated this fall- glyphosate+ surfactant (spreader-sticker)



# Shiny geranium

- Resembles other weedy geraniums, i.e. herb robert, dovefoot geranium
- Annual plant, reproduces by seed
- Early treatment required (March-April)
  
- Regulated Class B Noxious Weed in King County- required control by private and public landowners
  
- Treated by KC Noxious Weeds with formulation of triclopyr and Gallery







# OPEN SPACE CONSERVANCY TRUST STAFF REPORT

Item 4  
September 23, 2021  
Regular Business

## AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	84 <sup>th</sup> Ave Parking Pilot Project Discussion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Discuss pilot project and provide staff with direction on next steps.	

<b>STAFF:</b>	Alaine Sommargren, Deputy Public Works Director
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	Lisa Anderl
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. Public comments received by Public Works staff

## SUMMARY

At the July 15, 2021 meeting, the Board requested that staff implement a pilot project in the mid-block parking area on 84<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, located on the west side of the northwest quadrant. This goal of this pilot project was to evaluate the possible removal of the graveled off-street parking area and encourage Pioneer Park visitors to park their cars on the road, along the paved curb.

On August 3, 2021, the Natural Resources crew installed metal stakes and rope on the edge of the graveled parking area, to block the off-street parking area. Fluorescent flagging was hung from the rope to increase visibility. The trailhead at this location was left open, as was access to the adjacent fire hydrant. On August 25, Parks staff added signage to the temporary fencing, which explained the intent of the enclosure and requested feedback from the public about the project. Parks staff received a total of nine e-mails, which can be found in Exhibit 1.

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

Discuss pilot project and provide staff with direction on next steps.

**From:** [Barbara Bauer](#)  
**To:** [Restoration Natural Resources](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed planting taking away parking at Pioneer Park  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 7, 2021 11:29:51 AM

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I frankly think this is not a good idea at all. The parking is needed and there is no reason to spend money at planting at that particular spot. Where are all of us supposed to park if you take away that particular spot. Some of us are elderly with dogs to walk and it is too hard to park across the street at the QFC lot. Please restore that area to parking for all of us. Thank you.. Barbara Bauer

**From:** [alex bau](#)  
**To:** [Restoration Natural Resources](#)  
**Subject:** 84th st parking  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 1, 2021 11:08:10 AM

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Dear Sir/Madam:

I note your restriction of parking on 84th Ave near Pioneer Park. **IT IS APPALLING !** Mercer Island has almost no available public parking space and you intend to cut it down even more? We do not have enough trees and greenery that requires expensive maintenance and burdens us with recurrent power outages? The 84th Ave space is used for parking by walkers, especially elderly ones, utilizing one of the few available areas of level ground on the South end where such can be done. Could someone please think a little about facilitating the parking resources for the residents of this community rather than the greenery that we are obliged to pay for in return for continuing and recurrent inconvenience as well as actual damage caused by its wildlife?

HELP !!!  
alex baumgarten

**From:** [Jackie Bollen](#)  
**To:** [Restoration Natural Resources](#)  
**Subject:** Pioneer Park parking  
**Date:** Saturday, September 11, 2021 2:28:02 PM

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I am not in favor of removing off-street parking at Pioneer Park unless some other parking is provided.  
Jacqueline Bollen

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Cohen, Don](#)  
**To:** [Alaine Sommargren](#); [Lisa Anderl](#)  
**Cc:** [Alaine Sommargren](#); [Jessi Bon](#)  
**Subject:** 84th Avenue parking  
**Date:** Saturday, August 7, 2021 11:29:24 AM

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Hi Alaine and Lisa—I had seen on the Open Space Conservancy Trust agenda for the July Board meeting the item about parking on 84<sup>th</sup> Ave. This morning, I watched that portion of the meeting video. I had a few thoughts to share during this “pilot” period, although I’m not sure which way they cut. I also went over to that area (I live close—near 84<sup>th</sup> Ave. and 61<sup>st</sup> St.) after I watched the video, talked to one person and took some photos (see below). I’ll comment on those in a moment. The photos were at 10:30 a.m. or so this morning, a Saturday with weather in the low 60s and cloudy. Here are my comments.

1. I was a little surprised in the meeting that fire risk of off street parking wasn’t directly mentioned (although fire suppression infrastructure for the future was). I had thought that maybe, as hot and dry as it’s been and probably will continue to be in the future, maybe an idea was to keep cars, with their hot components and potential sparks, farther away from the park vegetation and grass margins. But maybe that was just my thought.
2. If parking is moved to all on street, is there increased risk of unhappy interactions among bicyclists, park users (e.g., dog walkers, walkers, and runners), and motorized vehicles—despite the fact that 84<sup>th</sup> Ave. may be overall wider than some other island streets?
3. Given the various potential interests, is more formal public engagement appropriate in the future, with publicized opportunity for public meeting comment?
4. The photos I took are interesting, understanding this is a Saturday and the weather isn’t as warm and sunny as it’s been.
  - There is a dark car parked near the 68<sup>th</sup>/84<sup>th</sup> intersection.
  - There is a white car parked on the street just south of the cordoned off area.
  - There is one red car parked on the street in the cordoned off middle area near the trail entry, faced the wrong way. I nicely chatted with the owner, who had his dog, too. After asking permission to ask him a few questions and telling him why I was asking, I inquired what the message was he gleaned from the poles, ropes, etc. He replied that they obviously want people to park on the street. We talked a little about bike users, and he said he is one. I asked him which side of 84<sup>th</sup> he rides on if he is riding north between 68<sup>th</sup> and 63<sup>rd</sup>, and he said he rides on the east side, even tho the striped walking lane is on the west side, and he does that because bikes are supposed to be on the side going with traffic. [BTW—this is what I do also). He wasn’t really too concerned about having less width for biking. He did comment that the city has more difficult issues than this one to deal with.
    - There were 4 cars or so parked at the northmost parking area.
    - Three cars with dogs pulled up and parked on the west side of 84<sup>th</sup> across the street from the north parking area. The two front ones are parked on gravel. The third one is parked on parched grass, fairly close to a new tree that’s been planted along with a few

others.

5. I also ran into a man I know who walks his dog on 84<sup>th</sup> regularly. After I told him a little about the issue, he wondered about possible increased negative interactions between some people if, for example, cars had to park on the street and drivers (parked the right way) opened their doors without first checking for bicyclists and walkers.

=====

I'm not sure where all of this leads, other than to suggest that there are various constituencies that might be interested: e.g., park users (walkers, dog owners, runners, mountain bikers); on-street bicyclists; on-street walkers, homeowners backing up onto 84<sup>th</sup> Ave.; the public in general. The "pilot" cordoning off idea may provide some useful information, as may observations at various times of day and week. Different members of the public may well have different views on this issue, too.

I hope these thoughts and the photos below are useful.

Don

**Donald S. Cohen**  
T 206 676 7531













Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Natalie Coombes](#)  
**To:** [Restoration Natural Resources](#)  
**Subject:** off street parking  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 31, 2021 4:40:55 PM

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Yes please don't allow motorists park in the grass, vegetation. They should park in the street; that's where cars belong. And I know there are homeowners who illegally park off road in the vegetation at south Mercer playfields on a regular basis because their driveways and garages aren't big enough for all the vehicles and boats they own. The island is beautiful and these motorists are ruining the natural beauty of it.

**From:** [Ken Glass](#)  
**To:** [Restoration Natural Resources](#)  
**Subject:** iParking near 84th ave SE and Pioneer Park  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 1, 2021 6:31:43 AM

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I like the idea of restoring the land to parkland instead of having people park there.

Thanks!  
Ken

*The best source for gifts:* [www.karaartwork.com](http://www.karaartwork.com)

**From:** [Ralph Jorgenson](#)  
**To:** [Restoration Natural Resources](#)  
**Cc:** [Council](#)  
**Subject:** Fencing along Pioneer Park  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 31, 2021 5:34:55 PM  
**Attachments:** [Screen Shot 2021-08-31 at 5.33.34 PM.png](#)

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Regarding the temporary fencing off the easement area along pioneer park from parking (along 84th Ave SE Pioneer Park). I very much appreciate this as it helps keep cars on the street (a street that is wide enough to handle on-street parking) while reserving the park for plants, trails, etc.

Great idea.

Best regards,  
Ralph Jorgenson  
8040 84th Ave SE



**From:** [Sally Loeser](#)  
**To:** [Restoration Natural Resources](#)  
**Subject:** Pioneer park pilot project  
**Date:** Sunday, September 5, 2021 4:30:32 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

Please take down the ropes near West entrance at middle of west section of Pioneer Park. It makes it very hard for passengers to exit vehicles and get back in, puts those walking along side park into the moving traffic on road, and narrows the road because cars are now forced to park at a distance from rope to get children and passengers out. Bikers and those on electric scooters are now at increased danger from car doors being opened. If you are looking for projects to do, it would be great to have trash receptacles back on bike path, pocket parks etc. and pocket parks need some care that has been sorely lacking over past year.

Thanks,  
A daily MI park user

Sent from my iPhone  
Sal1002@comcast.net

**From:** [patricia peters](#)  
**To:** [Restoration Natural Resources](#)  
**Subject:** Pioneer park project  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 14, 2021 11:03:20 AM

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It has always seemed to me, because people have always parked off the road, that parking on the road is not ok? If it is fine to park on the road, then that works! I feel like it will be a massive endeavor to get plants growing on that strip and wonder if it is worth the money and effort?  
But I do love the park and appreciate all you are doing!

Patricia peters

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [Stan Shurygailo](#)  
**To:** [Restoration Natural Resources](#)  
**Subject:** Restoration at 6730-6740 84th Avenue Southeast, Mercer Island, WA  
**Date:** Thursday, September 2, 2021 1:07:51 AM

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Hi,

I live at the south end and regularly park in this area. I would pull up off the street for the following reason. There is a lot of foot traffic on that street, and often it is the type of foot traffic that is more than one person wide, such as a group walking side to side or someone with dogs. As there is no sidewalk, they tend to take a 6-10 foot wide swath. With no parked cars and the full width of the road, there is plenty of space for the pedestrian swath, any bicycles coming through, and cars going both ways.

I think that pushing the cars out onto the street will just push the pedestrians into car traffic. This is a slow road without too much traffic, so not a huge issue. But consider the case when it is dark early, people are parked there, and other people are now walking in the traffic lanes - add a rainy day when they have a hood on and can't see/hear behind them. Having as much space as possible helps keep everyone safe and in their own lanes.

I fully agree that a restoration is needed, but my suggestion would be to keep 3 or 4 well defined parking spots off the road by the trailhead - perhaps defined by wooden barriers/ties. The first few cars would probably park in those, keeping the street fully available for other uses. Then most of the time the full width of the street would be available; of course, for the rarer times when there are more cars, they'd now have to park in the street. I think this would allow restoration of 70% or more of the area with minimal impact on the traffic patterns.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback.

-Stan Shurygailo



# 84<sup>th</sup> Ave SE Parking Pilot Project

Open Space Conservancy Trust

September 23, 2021

# Location



- West side of NW quadrant
- East side of 84<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, 6500-6700 block



# Background

- July 2021 meeting
  - Trust discussed off-street parking on 84<sup>th</sup> Ave SE
  - Directed staff to cordon off central gravel parking area temporarily, to encourage on-street parking
- Early August
  - Natural Resources crew installed rope fence on approximately 230 ft of road edge
  - Added flagging tape and small woody debris to increase visibility



# Public feedback



- August 25
  - Staff added signage explaining enclosure and requesting feedback
- Staff received nine e-mails in response

# Discussion

