



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

**AB 4311  
June 2, 2008  
Study Session**

**PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLES FACILITIES  
PLAN UPDATE - KEY ISSUES**

**Proposed Council Action:**  
No action required

**DEPARTMENT OF**

Development Services Group (Steve Lancaster)

**COUNCIL LIAISON**

n/a

**EXHIBITS**

1. Key Issues Memorandum
2. PBF Plan Update Scope of Work (approved under AB 4258)

**APPROVED BY CITY MANAGER**

*Rich Council 5-29-08*

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

**SUMMARY**

Staff has retained Dugan Consulting Services to assist in preparing an update to the City's 1996 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan. As provided by the Plan Update "Scope of Work" (reviewed by the City Council earlier this year) we have scheduled this study session so that our work may benefit from a City Council discussion of key policy issues. Exhibit 1 is a memorandum outlining several such issues. Staff and consultant will be prepared to briefly introduce each issue and will incorporate Council concerns, questions and perspectives into our follow-on work in developing policy and programming recommendations for the Plan Update.

**RECOMMENDATION**

*Development Services Director*

**MOVE TO:** No action needed.



## **CITY OF MERCER ISLAND, WASHINGTON**

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### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan Update**

#### **Key Issues Memorandum**

**June 2, 2008**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a format for the discussion of topics and issues to be considered in the process of updating the City of Mercer Island Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities Plan. This discussion will provide direction to City staff and the consultant team to follow in updating the plan

This memorandum provides an overview of the range of issues that the plan addresses. It identifies and describes several key issues and some of the trade-offs that might be involved in each. The potential topics and issues are not limited to those discussed here and others may be suggested.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The objective of the Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities Plan is to create a more smoothly functioning network of bicycle and pedestrian routes responsive to all users of the facilities and to provide a safer and more efficient means of accessing local destinations by non-motorized means. The Plan is a sub-element to the City's Transportation Element, an Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. It is also integrated with the City's Parks and Recreation Plan. Opportunities for new or enhanced pedestrian/bicycle facilities are coordinated and evaluated with other planning and implementation processes, including the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), the Six Year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), land or easement acquisition, and park master planning. All City Departments participate in identifying opportunities as part of their normal and customary planning and development efforts. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan serves as a basic reference for identifying these opportunities.

Several principles guided the formulation of the current Mercer Island Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities Plan in 1996:

- Arterial corridors are shared-use assets. Automobile, bicycle and pedestrian use must be integrated. These needs should be considered in planning street projects.
- Incremental solutions are preferred. Consideration should be given to the minimal facility or improvement that can balance our competing priorities.

- Appropriate facilities balance our community values, expected uses, and site. Preserving Mercer Island's woodsy, rural character and neighborhood scale is important. So is affordability. Let's not overbuild. Instead, let's choose facility designs that accommodate the basic needs for the types of users and amount of use expected.
- The Mercer Ways are a unique and valuable community asset. Trade-offs here are especially complex.
- Maintenance, parking and speed control policies affect use of these facilities. These issues must be addressed to assure full value is obtained from investments.

*Should these principles still guide the plan?*

The Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities Plan addresses the needs of a diverse range of users. These users may be generally grouped into several categories, including but not limited to:

- Bicycle commuters and similar bicyclists who use bicycles for transportation,
- Serious recreational bicyclists some of whom may include City routes as part of a more extensive “ride,”
- Casual bicyclists—the occasional “weekend” rider, including families,
- Recreational walkers—people who regularly walk for their form of exercise and may include a wide range of age groups, with varying abilities,
- Recreational runners: people who regularly run or jog for exercise,
- Casual walkers: people out for a stroll, a weekend “hike” or who routinely walk their dogs,
- Commuting walkers and other walkers for transportation purposes—including walking to bus stops as well as other destinations such as shopping or recreational facilities,
- Children—children may fall into any of the above categories but with different patterns than adults including commuting to schools and playing, and
- Lesser-abled people using pedestrian/bicycle facilities for basic access to various uses and for general mobility.

Each of these groups place different expectations and needs on pedestrian/bicycle facilities design and construction. Recreational users of pedestrian/bicycle facilities may desire facilities that provide enjoyable amenities while transportation oriented users may desire direct routes between their trip origin and their destination. “Serious” recreational and commuting users would generally be more expert in their use of facilities and aware of appropriate safety considerations, while the casual users would be less expert and less aware of potential hazards. Facilities that maximize accessibility for all users (including wheelchairs, strollers, bicycles, skaters etc.) need to be considered and pursued where appropriate.

*How well does the current plan address the needs of the full range of pedestrian/bicycle users and activities?*

## KEY ISSUES

Several key issues relevant to the Plan Update have been identified through initial discussions with the City Council and the Parks and Recreation Subcommittee. It should be noted that these issues frequently overlap and topics discussed under one may be further expanded upon in another. These issues include:

- Pedestrian/bicycle/vehicle conflicts.
- East and West Mercer Way shoulder use options.
- Town Center connectivity.
- Safe Routes to Schools.
- Sustainability.
- “Centerline” vs. “Routine Accommodation” approach to transportation improvements.
- Relationship to Parks and Recreation Plan.

- **Pedestrian/bicycle/vehicle conflicts**

Pedestrians and bicycles often must share the same facility and right-of-way as motor vehicles. Unless the pedestrian/bicycle facility is physically separated from the motor vehicle facility, conflicts are inherent as different users share the right-of-way. Even when it is possible to separate the rights-of-way, conflicts in movement will nonetheless occur where pedestrian/bicycle routes cross motor vehicle routes. The nature of these conflicts is particularly severe where there is limited space for all of the users of the limited rights-of-way.

While in some cases it is appropriate and effective to physically separate all the various uses and activities to avoid conflicts, such separation is often impractical and may even not be desirable. To meet transportation objectives, pedestrian/bicycle users often must compete for space on existing street rights-of-way since pedestrian/bicycle routes usually need to follow the same routes as streets to connect neighborhoods to employment, retail centers, schools, and other primary destinations. Reducing conflicts in these situations involve measures to better share the available space and managing the interaction between the various modes. Some of the ways to reduce these conflicts are described below under the topic of “routine accommodation.”

Along major streets, reducing or improving the management of conflicts between motor vehicles and pedestrian/bicycles may not only improve the safety and movement of pedestrians and bicycles, but it may also allow motor vehicles freer movement without conflicting with slower moving non-motorized movement.

In neighborhoods, traffic calming measures may be used to reduce conflicts between motorized vehicles and non-motorized alternatives. ‘Traffic calming’ refers to a wide range of techniques that can be used to improve safety, reduce negative

effects of motor vehicles in impacted neighborhoods, and encourage non-motorized (bicycling and pedestrian) street uses.

Conflicts can occur between all of the various user classes.

*How well are conflicts being managed and how can potential conflicts be reduced?*

- *Between motorized and non-motorized activities?*
- *Between the various types of pedestrian/ bicycle activities?*

- **East and West Mercer Way shoulder use options**

Some of the most extensive conflicts and the ones that may be the most difficult to resolve are those that are located along streets that have constrained right-of ways and are popular for non-motorized activities. The Mercers typify these issues. The physical constraints of the street rights-of-way allow only a limited separation of activities. Since the full range of non-motorized activities take place on these streets, the full range of conflicts occur between not only motorists and pedestrian/bicyclists, but also between the various types of pedestrian/bicycle activities and users.

These conflicts are further exacerbated by use of the constrained right-of-ways as “parking strips” for neighboring residences, particularly during adverse weather conditions when egress and ingress up and down the steep sloped driveways are impaired.

Reducing the potential conflicts between the various users of the Mercers has been a frequent topic of public comment. In the public review of the proposed Transportation Improvement Program, there were three roadside shoulder project requests for segments of West Mercer Way. Reconsideration of the “one-way” Mercer Ways roadside shoulder development policy was also suggested.

Pursuant to the 1996 plan, some improvements have been made along the Mercers to better accommodate the various conflicting needs and uses of the right-of-way. During the 2002 Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) update process, the Roadside Shoulder Development Program was established to construct new roadside shoulders, suitable for pedestrian and bicycle uses, along the Mercer Ways, independent of roadway improvement projects. Since 2002, Council has continued to approve and fund additional projects, primarily along East Mercer Way. To date, eight roadside shoulder projects have been constructed – three on North Mercer Way, four on East Mercer Way, and one on West Mercer Way. The North Mercer Way projects constructed over 4,100 linear feet of paved shoulder, at a total cost of \$466,000. On East Mercer Way, four projects created 9,900 linear feet of paved shoulder for \$763,000. The West Mercer project widened and resurfaced over 8,000 linear feet of existing asphalt and gravel shoulder, at a total cost of \$173,000.

The proposed 2009-2014 TIP identifies two final East Mercer Way Shoulder projects: Phase 6 in 2009 and Phase 7 in 2010.

*What should be the next issues and projects to examine along the Mercers?*

- **Town Center connectivity**

### **Connectivity between Town Center and Adjacent Neighborhoods**

Geography is the major factor in providing connectivity between the Town Center and nearby residential areas. North-south connectivity is enhanced by moderate slopes to the south and the freeway lid to the north, providing opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to residential areas north and south of the center. In contrast, steep slopes to the east and west severely constrain pedestrian connectivity.

The topography south of the Town Center is more conducive to bicycle access than east and west. However, there are no formally designated bicycle lanes or routes on the streets connecting downtown to the neighborhoods to the south. The fully developed pedestrian/bicycle paths along the I-90 lid provide excellent connectivity to the north. There is excellent connectivity to Bellevue and Seattle as well, since these paths connect to the cross-lake pedestrian/bicycle facilities on the bridges,.

While the strategic location of open space areas to the west of the Town Center provides opportunities for trails to connect residential areas with the Town Center, the steep slopes in these areas prevent effective use of these trails for non-motorized access to shopping (especially since the return trip with the purchased goods is uphill). However, these trails do provide excellent recreational opportunities for the growing number of Town Center residents and allow walking access to employment in the Town Centers (with some good exercise on the way home). There is also good connectivity between the Town Center and active recreational sites on the I-90 lid and at Luther Burbank Park.

Although the sharply sloping terrain also constrains bicycle access, the freeway lid to the north and the moderate slopes to the south offer opportunities to “go around the hill” for some residential areas by bicycle.

Access from the east to the Town Center is more restricted with very limited pedestrian/bicycle facilities and sharp slopes. (There are several multiple family complexes in this area with very limited pedestrian facilities).

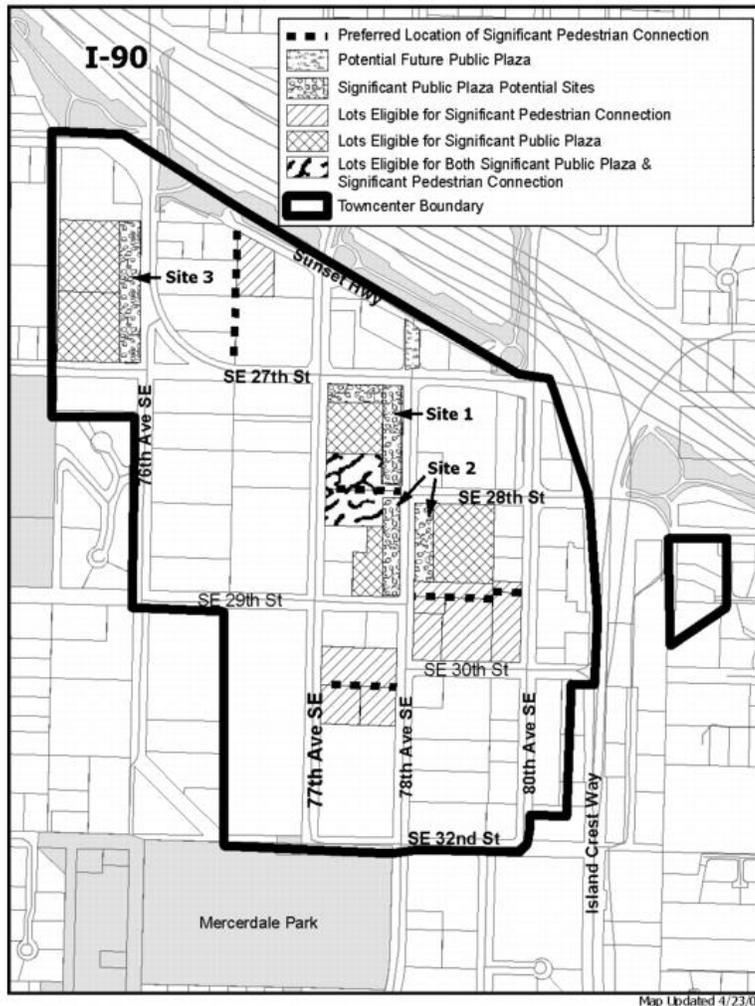
Park planning for the parks to the east of the town center and on the I-90 LID reflects the potential role of these parks in pedestrian/bicycle circulation. Park planning has and will continue to place emphasis on connecting parks/open space areas on the west (Mercerdale Hillside & North Mercerdale Hillside), north (I-90 LID, CCMV,

Luther Burbank Park), south (Mercerdale Park) and east (SE 28<sup>th</sup> Street overlook, Luther Burbank Park LID and Upper Luther Burbank Park) to the Town Center. The Luther Burbank Park Master Plan addresses connectivity issues for pedestrians and bicycles between lower and upper Luther Burbank and with the Town Center through a number of new trails/pathways.

*Are there additional opportunities to improve Town Center Connectivity with the surrounding neighborhoods?*

### **Connectivity within the Town Center**

Pedestrian connectivity is particularly important within the Town Center, since the City's vision for the Town Center depends on creating a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. The City's Comprehensive Plan's vision for downtown is a vibrant mixed-use area. As detailed in the Unified Development Code (MIMC 19.11.010), the City's urban design vision for the Town Center is intended to support an environment that is convenient and accessible to the pedestrian, motorist and public transit user. The code encourages building designs to be pedestrian oriented and development to enhance the Town Center as a vibrant, healthy, mixed-use center. The code encourages new development to increase the attractions and pedestrian amenities that bring residents to the Town Center. Pedestrian-oriented and customer intensive retail businesses and offices are encouraged by the code to locate on the ground floor level in most areas of the Town Center to promote active use of sidewalks by pedestrians, thus increasing the activity level and economic viability of the Town Center. Under the code, new development should also enhance and support a range of transportation choices and be designed to maximize opportunities for alternative modes of transportation and maintain individual mobility. The code seeks to require each individual development or redevelopment project to favor the pedestrian over the automobile in terms of site design, building placement and parking locations.



**Exhibit 3: Lots Eligible For Significant Public Plazas Significant Pedestrian Connections**

**NORTH**  
Not To Scale

**IGS**  
Infrastructure & Geographic Systems

Currently within the Town Center, the major streets provide pedestrian circulation with sidewalks. These sidewalks are enhanced with pedestrian amenities along 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. Since the streets are oriented in a north-south pattern, pedestrian movement is best when going north and south.

East West Pedestrian movement and accessibility could be constrained by the absence of formally developed mid-block pedestrian opportunities between 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE within the larger blocks north and south of SE 29<sup>th</sup> Street, and between 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE (the Uniform Development Code identifies another needed pedestrian link running north of SE 27<sup>th</sup> Street between 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE). While currently there are informal cross block routes through parking lots between 77<sup>th</sup> and 78<sup>th</sup>, and there are two developed pathways providing cross block access to McDonalds and Wells Fargo, these pedestrian routes could be lost as the Town Center development intensifies

uses to create the mixed-use Vision as provided by the City's comprehensive plan and development code.

The City's development code recognizes the importance of retaining and formalizing these connections. MIMC 19.11.010 specifically identifies potential connection for pedestrian connections, and plazas, (as illustrated by Exhibit 3 of the Town Center Development and Design Standards, preceding page) and provides incentives in the form of allowable building height if the property owner provides the identified pedestrian amenity associated with the property. The current Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities Plan do not reflect these measures.

The only specifically designated bicycle facilities in the Town Center are designated bicycle lanes along 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue and on one block along 32<sup>nd</sup> Street SE. These lanes provide the foundation for a north/south bicycle route through downtown. However, this facility ends at SE 27<sup>th</sup> Street before making connection with the pedestrian/bicycle paths on the I-90 lid. Elsewhere, bicycles mingle with traffic in no specifically designated lanes.

The current bicycle/pedestrian plan does not identify any projects nor does it describe any specific measures for improving the pedestrian/bicycling opportunities or safety in the town center.

*Should the Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan give more attention to Town Center?  
If, so, what town center issues or considerations should the plan address?  
Should the Plan identify options for providing a continuous north/south and a continuous east/west dedicated bicycle route through the Town Center?*

- **Safe Routes to Schools**

Pedestrian/Bicycle facilities are an important part of the transportation system for school age children going to and from schools.

Not long ago, children routinely moved around their neighborhoods by foot or by bicycle, and that was often how they traveled to and from school. That is no longer the case. Nationally, about twenty percent to 25 percent of morning rush hour traffic is due to parents driving children to school.<sup>1</sup> The percentage of children walking and bicycling to school continues to decrease as parents become more convinced that walking to school is unsafe for their children. Traffic-related danger was the second most common reason (behind distance from school) cited by parents for not allowing their children to walk to and from school, according to a nationwide survey.<sup>2</sup> Parents may believe that the safest way to school is for them to drive their children, but may not be aware that by driving they contribute to the traffic congestion and traffic

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<sup>1</sup> National Highway Transportation Administration cited in Safe Routes to School: Pledging Safe Communities for our Children. 2003.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Barriers to Children Walking to or from School United States 2004, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report September 30, 2005.

danger surrounding the school and actually increase hazards associated with pedestrian/bicycle and vehicle conflicts.

The decline in percentage of children walking or bicycling to school has led to national, formalized programs directed at promoting safe routes to school and encouraging walking and bicycling.<sup>3</sup> One of the basic tenets of these programs is that to be effective, they must be comprehensive – involving engineering, education, enforcement and evaluation, including motivating students to walk and bicycle to school.

A city's role in these programs is typically focused on engineering to create safer settings for walking and bicycling while recognizing that a roadway needs to safely accommodate all modes of transportation. The physical environment often determines whether many children walk or bicycle to school. To safely walk or bicycle to school along a street or separate path, or to cross a street along the way, children need well-designed, well-built and well-maintained facilities. Such improvements include maintenance and operational measures as well as construction projects. When such programs are implemented, they not only improve safety for children, but they also may encourage more walking and bicycling by the general public.

A key element in appropriately engineering a “safe routes to school” system is to ensure that there is effective connectivity between residential neighborhoods and schools of all types (elementary, middle school, high school and private). The design of the routes should also reflect the different characteristics of each type of school, since, for example, the island-wide high school populations of non-drivers and potential drivers have different needs and motivations than students attending their neighborhood elementary school.

The City of Mercer Island has recently worked with the Mercer Island School District and parents to support safe routes to school. In 2005, \$100,000 was programmed in the TIP for a related traffic safety project that was completed for Island Park Elementary in conjunction with a parking lot expansion project. Significant parent and teacher-led efforts are currently under way at Lakeridge Elementary School and beginning at Island Park Elementary. The proposed 2009-2014 Transportation Improvement Program would formalize the City's role and support for a Safe Routes to School program. This program, funded at \$100,000 per biennium, would focus on safety improvements to sidewalks, walking paths, bicycle areas, and other enhancements to support safe, non-motorized alternative ways to get to school.

*What should the city role be in “safe routes to school” programs?  
What additional links are needed in the pedestrian/bicycle system to better  
link schools and neighborhoods?*

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<sup>3</sup> See the National Center for Safe Routes to School Resource Center, a centralized location of resources developed by the Center and the U.S. Department of Transportation, <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>.

(Since parents will drive students to and from school if they perceive that it is unsafe to walk, improving safe routes to school is a significant step in improving sustainability as described below.)

- **Sustainability**

There are many ways that developing pedestrian/bicycle facilities as a transportation mode and for recreation can improve the sustainability of a community:

- Bicycling and walking are a non-polluting, efficient, inexpensive mode of travel for work, shopping, and recreational trips;
- Bicycling and walking help reduce the number of motorized vehicles on the road;
- Bicycling and walking can be used as transportation by all, including the young, old, disabled, and poor, as well as others who may not drive;
- Bicycling and walking are environmentally friendly; and
- Bicycling and walking break down barriers between people and their environment.

However, increasing sustainability through pedestrian bicycle facilities depends on having safe, convenient and direct routes between trip origins and destinations; preferably in a full range of weather conditions. Wayfinding and safety awareness signage can be important elements in promoting the use of non-motorized transportation modes.

A sustainable pedestrian/bicycle network is a network of routes supported by and integrated with local transportation routes. Such a network incorporates multi-modal transfer and interchange facilities (e.g., transit stops and transit centers) and provides bicycle parking and storage facilities and pedestrian amenities at origins and destinations, such as schools, commercial areas, bus stops, and employment centers. The network should include on-street routes and route segments (as well as multiple-use trails that exclude motor vehicles) because such on-street routes already exist and serve these destinations.

Although paved, multi-use paths or trails that exclude motor vehicles are an important part of the system (and in Mercer Island provides essential links between neighborhoods and various destinations), the future success of pedestrian/bicycling as contributor to a sustainable community also relies on improving the on-street bicycle network because in the majority of cases, it readily connects to employment, retail centers, neighborhoods, schools, and other primary destinations. Where pedestrian/bicycle facilities share the right-of-way with motorized vehicles, the design of the combined facility needs to address the needs of all modes and ensure that the non-motorized users feel safe and comfortable using the shared facilities. If prospective users do not feel safe and comfortable using pedestrian/bicycle facilities, and if routes are not convenient, people will continue to use their cars.

In many cases the non-motorized mode of transportation may be combined with transit routes so that the destination of a walking or bicycle commute trip may be to a bus stop. As such, related considerations may be involved such as whether transit schedules support commuting, ensuring that bicycles can be accommodated on the buses, or that there are shelters to protect the riders from adverse weather conditions.

*Are there additional improvements that can be made to improve the functionality of the pedestrian/bicycle system as a transportation facility to reduce reliance on motor vehicles?*

- **“Centerline” vs. “Routine Accommodation” approach to transportation improvements**

The so-called “centerline” approach to street improvement planning and design refers to the practice of designing street improvements from the “centerline” out. Under this traditional approach, priority goes to accommodating motor vehicles first. Pedestrian and bicycle needs tend to be secondary considerations, subject to compromise if right-of-way width or funding become problematic.

Under a “routine accommodation”<sup>4</sup> approach, street improvements are designed by first identifying the full range of mobility needs to be met by the facility, and then balancing or adjusting these needs with space, financial and other considerations to achieve the best result.

Applying routine accommodation design principles include designing roadway projects to address existing challenges that impede pedestrian bicycle movement on one hand and avoiding designing facilities that hinder movement on the other hand

It should be noted that routine accommodation principles can be applied to private development as well as public construction. Just as private development is routinely expected to provide adequate driveways and parking to support motorized transportation, development could also be expected to provide pedestrian paths and bicycle racks.

*Is routine accommodation an appropriate design principle for Mercer Island?*

*If so, should it be incorporated into the policies of the pedestrians/bicycle facilities plan?*

- **Relationship to Parks and Recreation Plan**

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<sup>4</sup> The concept of “routine accommodation” is now used by the U.S. Department of Transportation in evaluating grant applications for street and traffic projects. The Federal Highway Administration recommends including up to 20 percent of the project cost to address non-motorized access improvements.

Different plans sometimes address the same topic from somewhat different perspectives. For example the Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities Plan addresses trails as does the Park and Recreation Plan.

The two plans in Mercer Island are coordinated into a system of Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities. The Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan considers all aspects of the system, identifying improvements and standards for the entire system. The PBF Plan in particular identifies needed projects to the facilities that are part of the City transportation system. The City's Park and Recreation Plan, adopted in 2007, itself focuses primarily on the trail system within City parks and Trails that are not part of the street system. The Parks and Recreation Plan incorporates three types of trail facilities as part of the "parks system:"

- **NEIGHBORHOOD LINKS**  
Neighborhood linkage trails are multi-use pedestrian scale hiking, biking and equestrian connections that link neighborhoods with each other and with other open space areas, parks, neighborhoods, schools, religious centers and businesses. They provide the functional network of the trail system and consist of right-of-way and facilities designed for use by a variety of non-motorized users. They consist of both soft-surface and hard-surface materials and vary in width.
- **WATER TRAILS**  
Water trails are recreational water routes for non-motorized boats and watercraft.
- **PARK TRAILS**  
Numerous City parks include pathways, sidewalks and hiking trails, etc., that circle and connect within the boundaries of the park. They provide access to the park, allow circulation within the park and are considered a park amenity. Network trails that connect or pass through parks contribute to the park as an amenity.

The Parks and Recreation Plan sets several policies to guide the development of the Parks Trail System:

- e) Provide trails that are safe and attractive for pedestrians, bicycles and equestrians and
  - a. complete and expand the pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle circulation system by acquiring rights-of-way as necessary and appropriate for trails;
  - b. Increase the visibility and accessibility of the bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian circulation system;
  - c. Develop trail systems within existing open space properties to provide maintenance and recreational access;

- d. enable continuous linkages between employment, transit, schools, parks, neighborhoods, churches/synagogues and community facilities;

In coordinating parks and transportation purposes, the different roles, impacts and functions of trails in the parks environment need to be carefully considered. Trail design in or immediately adjacent to parks and open space areas need to reflect the needs of various park users. For example, hard surface (i.e. asphalt or concrete) trail facilities may not be suitable for many park and recreation applications and should only be considered after thoughtful planning and analysis. Pervious surfaces may be more suitable in balancing vegetation and tree health issues. In addition, some south end trails facilitate equestrian use and thus require alternative surfacing.

*Are the relationships between the two plans appropriately coordinated and balanced?*

## **NEXT STEPS**

As described by the PBF Plan Update Scope of Work, staff and consultants will use the discussion of issues and any council direction coming from this discussion as we prepare technical analyses and proposals for further review by the City Council and community.

# **Scope of Work**

## **Mercer Island Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan Update**

### **Project Description**

The City of Mercer Island wishes to update its 1996 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan. Through this update, the City will:

- identify and resolve key policy issues relating to pedestrian and bicycle facilities and use;
- review and modify, if necessary, the existing Plan's goals, policies, project selection criteria and other recommendations;
- evaluate and update facility design criteria;
- evaluate demand (assess traffic generators) and identify facility improvement opportunities;
- update the Plan's project list, cost estimates and priorities;
- prepare an implementation strategy and procedures;
- identify ways the Plan can help achieve sustainability goals;
- coordinate Plan implementation with the TIP update process

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan is an element of the City's Comprehensive Plan, and therefore the Update will be prepared and adopted under the requirements of the Growth Management Act.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

**City Council** – The Mercer Island City Council will provide overall policy guidance and be responsible for final decisions regarding the plan development process and adoption.

**Parks and Recreation Subcommittee** – The Parks and Recreation Subcommittee of the City Council will serve as the Plan Update Steering Committee, providing policy direction to staff and consultant(s).

**Mercer Island Planning Commission** – The Planning Commission will review the Draft Plan Update for consistency with the Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan and the requirements of the Growth Management Act, and will advise the City Council regarding adoption of the Plan Update.

**Public and interested parties** – The City will seek input from the public and interested parties through broad dissemination of information regarding the Plan Update, public workshops, opportunities for written comment, and through formal public hearings.

**Staff** – Mercer Island Staff will be responsible for providing the City Council, Steering Committee, Planning Commission, public and interested parties with the data, information and analysis needed to formulate recommendations and make decisions regarding the Plan Update. Staff will be assisted by and will oversee and provide day-to-day direction to consultants, ensure good communication with the public and decision-makers, and manage completion of the Work Program (below).

**Consultant** – The Project Consultant will supplement staff resources and expertise; assist Staff in reviewing the 1996 Plan and identifying update needs and options; evaluate current Facility Design Criteria, identify and describe "industry standards," identify facility design options and recommend standards appropriate to Mercer Island; assess traffic generators, destination service areas and existing corridors; the Consultant will manage sub-consultants, if any.

## **Work Program (Summary)**

### **City Council Study Session – Key Policy Issues**

The purpose of this Council Study Session is to identify, frame and, where possible (tentatively) resolve key policy issues. Staff will prepare and distribute a draft “Key Issues Memo” prior to the Study Session identifying issues and options (based upon discussions with the Parks and Recreation Subcommittee and Council member input). At the study session staff will seek Council direction regarding resolution of key issues and identification of any additional key policy issues.

Key Issues identified to date include:

- Pedestrian/bicycle/vehicle conflicts
- East and West Mercer Way shoulder use options
- Town Center connectivity
- Safe Routes to Schools
- Sustainability
- “Centerline” vs. “Routine Accommodation” approach to transportation improvements
- Relationship to Parks and Recreation Plan

Deliverable: Key Issues Memo. Staff will finalize and distribute the “Key Issues Memo” based upon Council direction. The final Key Issues Memo may not resolve all such issues, but will memorialize Council consensus regarding what the key issues are and provide staff with direction for resolving them (options, Council information needs, etc.).

### **Review 1996 PBF Plan**

Staff, with consultant assistance will conduct a thorough review of the 1996 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan. The Key Issues Memo will provide focus for this effort. Staff and consultants will produce a series of draft “Technical Memoranda” on the following topics:

- Planning Context: GMA, Destination 2030, PSRC Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Strategy
- Status of 1996 Plan projects
- Goals and policies
- Performance criteria (project selection criteria)
- Facility design criteria
- Traffic generators, destination service areas and existing corridors
- Remaining 1996 Plan projects and new opportunities
- Status of “Other Recommendations” from 1996 Plan

Draft Technical Memoranda will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Subcommittee (3 to 4 meetings) for review and comment. Staff will finalize the Technical Memoranda based on Subcommittee direction, and brief the City Council.

Deliverables: Series of Technical Memoranda

### **Conduct Public Workshop #1**

Staff will conduct a public workshop to describe the Plan Update process, present the findings of the

Technical Memoranda and seek input from citizens and other interested parties. Information regarding the planning process, workshop format and availability of the Technical Memoranda will be widely distributed prior to the Workshop. Staff will prepare a memo summarizing the Workshop and brief the City Council on Workshop outcomes.

Deliverable: Memo summarizing Workshop outcomes.

### **Prepare Draft PBF Plan Update**

Staff and Consultant will prepare Preliminary Draft PBF Plan including the following elements:

- Goals and policies
- Project performance criteria
- Facility design criteria
- Project list and ratings
- Project descriptions and planning-level cost estimates
- Implementation strategy (priorities and procedures)

The Preliminary Draft will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Subcommittee for review and feedback. Staff will then prepare a "Public Review Draft" PBF Plan, SEPA Environmental Checklist, and required DCTED Notification.

Deliverables: Preliminary Draft PBF Plan  
Public Review Draft PBF Plan  
SEPA Environmental Checklist and Threshold Determination  
DCTED GMA Notification

### **Public Workshop No. 2**

Staff will conduct a Public Workshop to present the Public Review Draft PBF Plan and seek comment. Information regarding the planning process, workshop format, availability of the Public Review Draft PBF Plan and SEPA environmental review will be widely distributed prior to the Workshop. Staff will prepare a memo summarizing the Workshop and brief the City Council on Workshop outcomes.

Deliverable: Memo summarizing Workshop outcomes

### **Planning Commission Review and Recommendation**

Staff will present the Draft PBF Plan to the Planning Commission and schedule/publicize a Planning Commission public hearing. Following the public hearing, staff will provide support to the Commission in formulating its recommendations to the City Council regarding Plan adoption.

Deliverable: Planning Commission recommended PBF Plan

### **City Council Action**

Staff will present the Planning Commission recommendations to the City Council for Council action.