



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Public Participation Plan

Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels Site 800 Mercer St, Seattle, WA

Facility Site ID: 27913
Cleanup Site ID: 14784

December 2021

Publication and Contact Information

This plan is available on the Department of Ecology's website at:
[Ecology's Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels Webpage](#)

For more information contact:

Northwest Regional Office
15700 Dayton Ave N
Shoreline, WA 98133

Washington State Department of Ecology – [Department of Ecology Homepage](#)

- Headquarters, Olympia 360-407-6000
- Northwest Regional Office, Shoreline 206-594-0000
- Southwest Regional Office, Olympia 360-407-6300
- Central Regional Office, Union Gap 509-575-2490
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Public Participation Plan

Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels Site

Toxics Cleanup Program
Northwest Region
Washington State Department of Ecology
Shoreline, Washington

December 2021

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Public Involvement in Contamination Cleanup

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) developed this Public Participation Plan (Plan) in cooperation with 800 Mercer, LLC, a prospective purchaser seeking an ownership interest in the Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels Site (Site). 800 Mercer, LLC intends to purchase, clean up, and redevelop two parcels that contain the Site. The purpose of the Plan is to promote meaningful community involvement during cleanup.

This Plan describes ways Ecology will inform the public about contamination investigations and cleanup options throughout the cleanup process. Ecology encourages the public to learn about and get involved in decision-making opportunities. It identifies how and when the public can get involved during different stages of the investigation and cleanup of contamination.

This Plan was developed for the Prospective Purchaser Consent Decree (PPCD) and associated documents for the Site.

Site contacts

To be included in the site record, comments about the cleanup process must be submitted during comment periods. Questions and informal comments or information about the site's history are welcome anytime.

Ecology

Northwest Regional Office
15700 Dayton Ave N
Shoreline WA 98133

Tena Seeds, Project Manager
tena.seeds@ecy.wa.gov
425-457-3143

Kelsey Ketcheson, Outreach Specialist
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Prospective Purchaser

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Seattle, WA 98109

Christian Gunter, Senior Vice President
cgunter@are.com
206-408-1550

Gina Plantz, Consultant
GPlantz@haleyaldrich.com
603-391-3319

Public Participation Grants

Grants may be available to neighborhood committees, non-profits, and other groups interested in the site. For contaminated sites, these funds can be used to:

- Hire an expert to help interpret technical information¹
- Conduct activities that enhance the public's understanding of, and participation in, the cleanup process

For more information about public participation grants, please contact Faith Wimberley at 425-257-7285 or faith.wimberley@ecy.wa.gov, or visit the [Public Participation Grant website](#).²

Washington's Cleanup Laws

Ecology uses the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) and accompanying regulations for cleanup activities. This plan is required under MTCA, a law that passed in 1989. MTCA provides guidelines for contaminated site cleanup in Washington State and sets standards to ensure the cleanup protects human health and the environment.

Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA)

MTCA began as a grassroots citizen's initiative in 1988, and started the process of systematically cleaning up contaminated sites in Washington. Under MTCA, a current or past property owner or operator may be held responsible for cleaning up contamination on, or coming from, their property to standards that are safe for human health and the environment.

Ecology enacts MTCA and oversees cleanups in the state and issues regulations and guidance governing those cleanups. The regulations are found in [Chapter 173-340 Washington Administrative Code \(WAC\)](#).³ Ecology investigates reports of property contamination, and if the contamination is seen as a significant threat to human health or the environment, the contaminated property is placed on the Hazardous Sites List, and the cleanup process begins.

A public participation is an important part of cleanup under the MTCA process. Participation needs are assessed at each cleanup site according to the level of public interest and the degree of

¹ Ecology currently does not have a citizen technical advisor for providing technical assistance to citizens on issues related to the investigation and cleanup of the site.

² ecology.wa.gov/About-us/How-we-operate/Grants-loans/Find-a-grant-or-loan/Public-participation-grants

³ <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/publications/9406.pdf>

risk posed by the contamination. Individuals who live near the site, community groups, businesses, government, other organizations, and interested parties have the opportunity to get involved by commenting on the cleanup process. Under MTCA, the cleanup process generally includes five phases. Each phase includes an opportunity for the public to review and comment.

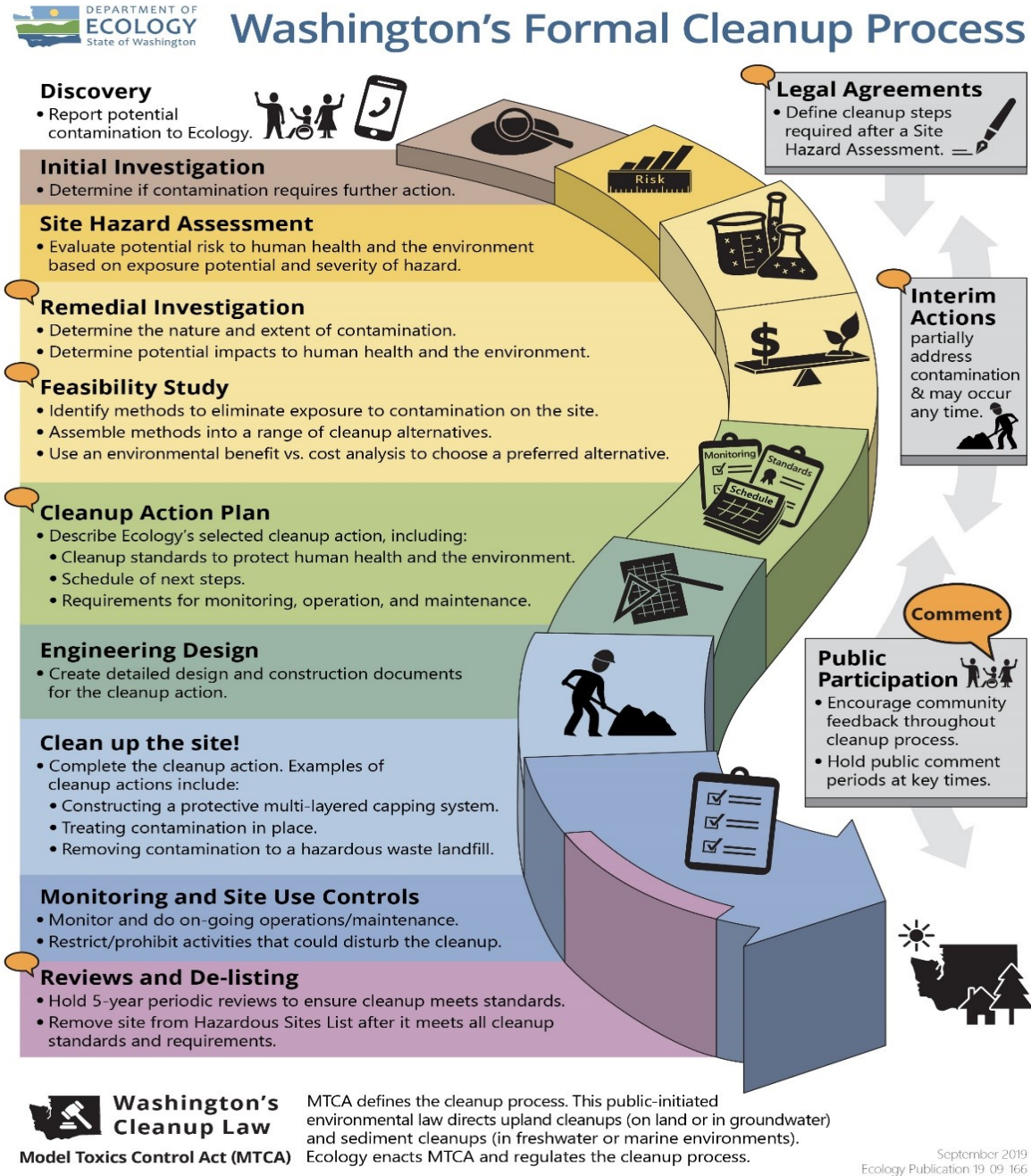


Figure 1. Steps in Washington's Cleanup Process

State Environmental Policy Act

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) is followed during review and development of the cleanup action plan.

Site History and Information

The Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels Site is located in the South Lake Union neighborhood of Seattle. The property where the Site is located (Property) consists of two land parcels totaling 2.35 acres in size and is bounded to the north by Roy St, to the south by Mercer St, to the east by 9th Ave N, and to the west by Dexter Ave N (Figure 2). The Property contains the Site.

Past uses of the Property included auto repair and wrecking shops, fueling and service stations, a sign painting and retail painting business, a soap and chemical works, and private residences.



Figure 2. Aerial view of the Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels Site in the South Lake Union neighborhood of Seattle. The black dashed lines are Property boundary.

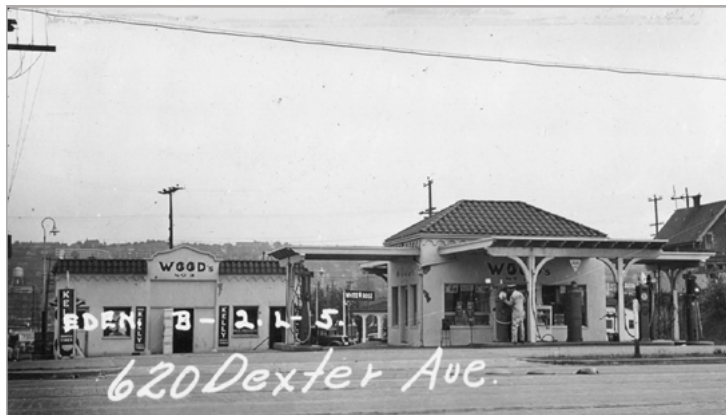


Figure 3. Service station on northwest portion of current Property, constructed 1929. Photo credit: Puget Sound Archives

During the 2010s, construction occurred to reroute the Broad Street underpass and facilitate Mercer Corridor improvements. In 2017, an investigation conducted as part of this project discovered contamination in soil and groundwater beneath the Property.

More recently, the Property was a construction staging area. It is now vacant.

Future Property Use

Future development plans include constructing two 13-story towers separated by a right-of-way. The two separate towers will share a below-grade parking garage. The buildings will be occupied by biotech and life science companies, with commercial space and public amenities on the ground level. Redevelopment is expected to begin in 2022 and is expected to be completed by late 2024.

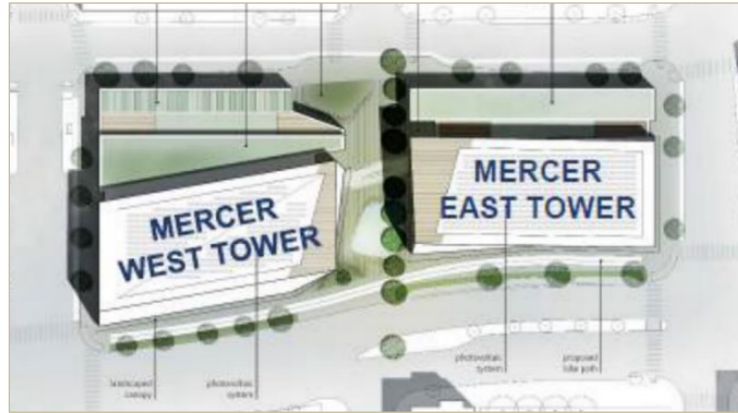


Figure 4. Image of proposed redevelopment. Credit: Alexandria Real Estate Equities, Inc.

Investigation & Contamination

Investigations at the Site found the following contaminants in soil and/or groundwater:

- Gasoline-range petroleum hydrocarbons
- Diesel-range petroleum hydrocarbons
- Benzene
- Lead

These contaminants are present at levels that exceed allowable standards under the state's cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act ([MTCA](#)), and will be addressed during the Cleanup Action.

Other hazardous substances are present on the Property at levels that exceed MTCA cleanup standards but are not considered constituents of concern for the Site. These substances include carcinogenic polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (cPAHs), arsenic, and chlorinated solvents, and are associated with separate contaminated sites in the vicinity of the Property. The proposed cleanup action for the Site and planned redevelopment of the Property will concurrently address portions of these other sites.

Proposed Cleanup actions

The selected cleanup action for the Site meets standards for permanence, protectiveness, implementability, public concerns, compliance with cleanup standards and state and federal laws, and ability to provide compliance monitoring. While nearby sites that may impact this redevelopment are being investigated and remediated, vapor mitigation measures beneath the new structures on the Property will be installed to protect human health and the environment.

The selected cleanup action for the Site consists of the following:

- Excavating all contaminated soil within the planned redevelopment excavation required for construction of the new buildings to an approximate elevation of at least 7.75 feet (approximately 26 to 51 feet below ground surface).
- Hauling the excavated contaminated soil to an off-site facility for treatment and/or disposal.
- Performing compliance monitoring.

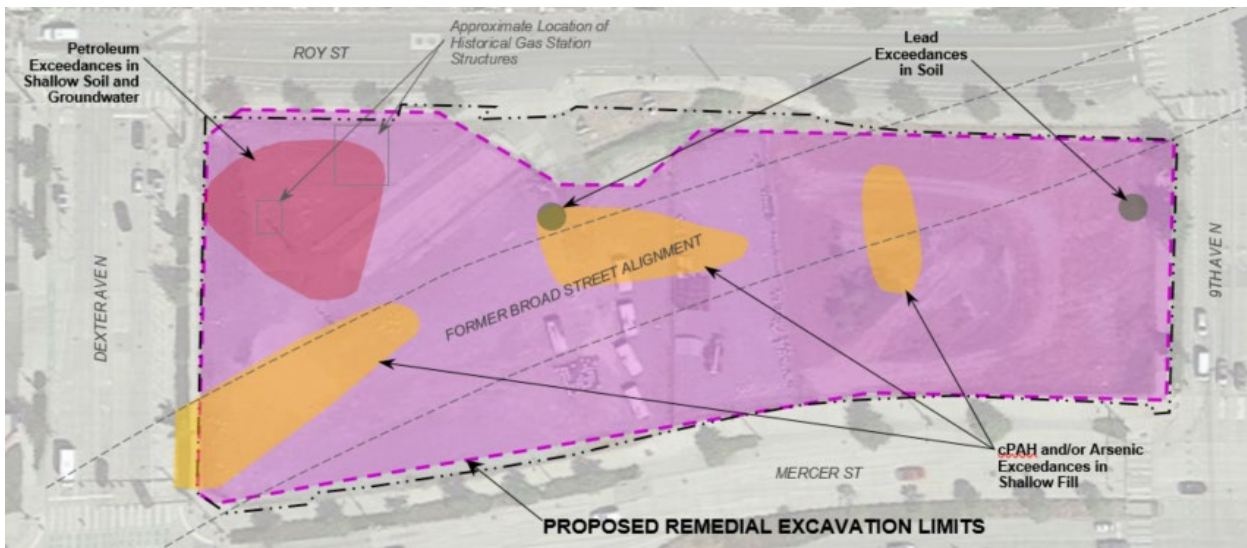


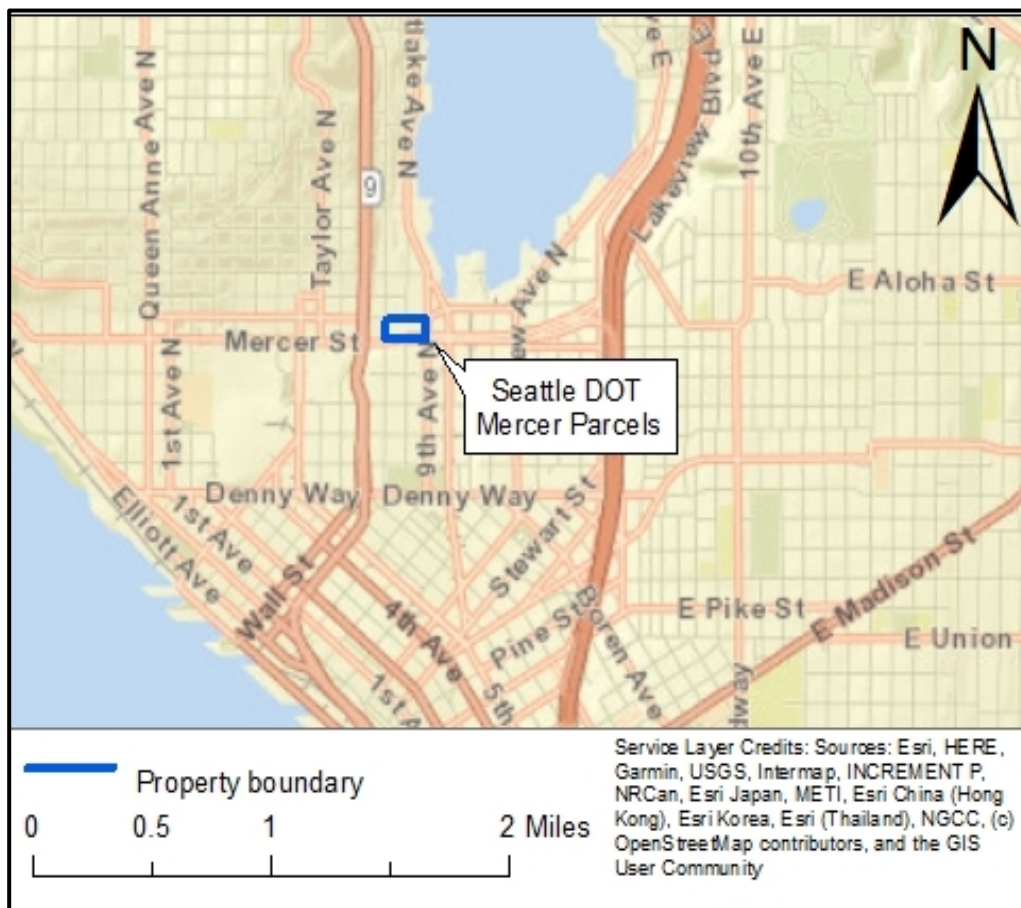
Figure 5. View of the Property showing historical locations of structures and streets, areas of contamination, and the proposed area of excavation. An area of petroleum contamination is in red. Areas of cPAHs and arsenic contamination are in orange. Areas of lead contamination are shown in gray.

Community Profile

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed a new environmental justice (EJ) mapping and screening tool called EJSCREEN. It is based on nationally consistent data and an approach that combines environmental and demographic indicators in maps and reports. Ecology uses this information to tailor its communications to the needs of particular communities, including: develop language translations, identify the need for interpreters, and generate other information for the community. Ecology translates materials like factsheets into languages that are spoken by 5 percent or more of the local community.

In the area of the Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels Site, the data indicate that Spanish is spoken by 3 percent of households, and Chinese by 4 percent. Therefore, Ecology will be providing factsheets and community information in those languages.

Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels Property & Seattle Vicinity





EJSCREEN Report (Version 2019)

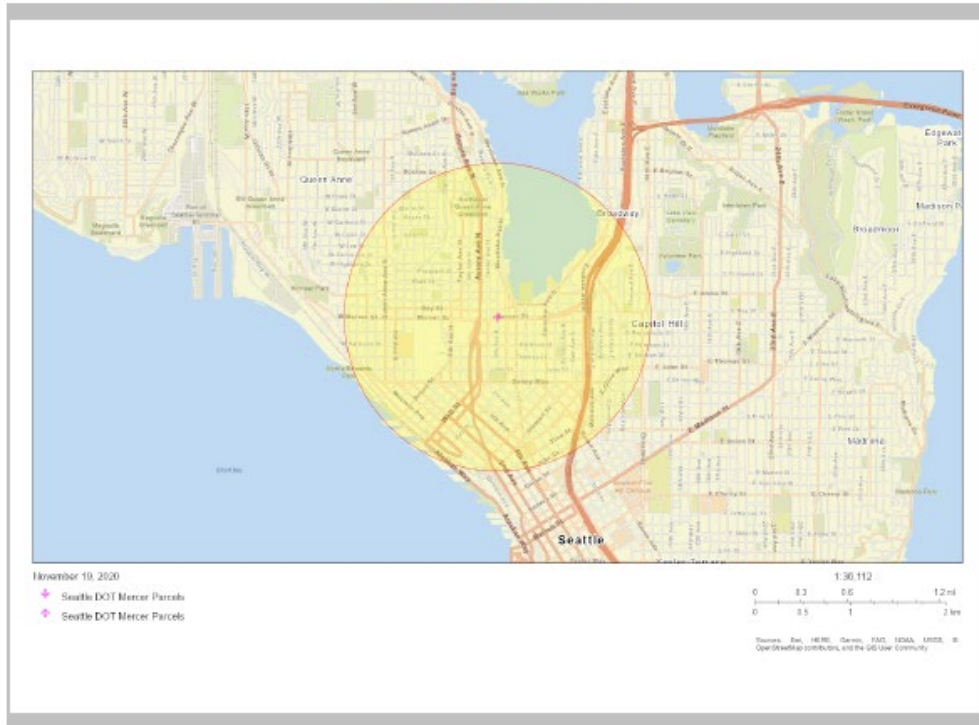


1 miles Ring Centered at 47.624680,-122.341082, WASHINGTON, EPA Region 10

Approximate Population: 62,120

Input Area (sq. miles): 3.14

Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels



EJSCREEN Report (Version 2019)



1 miles Ring Centered at 47.624680,-122.341082, WASHINGTON, EPA Region 10

Approximate Population: 62,120

Input Area (sq. miles): 3.14

Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels

Selected Variables	Value	State Avg.	%ile in State	EPA Region Avg.	%ile in EPA Region	USA Avg.	%ile in USA
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Demographic Indicators							
Demographic Index	26%	29%	53	29%	53	36%	44
Minority Population	34%	30%	64	27%	70	39%	54
Low Income Population	19%	28%	37	31%	30	33%	30
Linguistically Isolated Population	2%	4%	58	3%	63	4%	59
Population With Less Than High School Education	2%	9%	21	9%	18	13%	14
Population Under 5 years of age	2%	6%	12	6%	12	6%	13
Population over 64 years of age	8%	14%	24	15%	22	15%	23



EJSCREEN ACS Summary Report



Location: User-specified point center at 47.624680, -122.341082
 Ring (buffer): 1-miles radius
 Description: Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels

Summary of ACS Estimates		2013 - 2017	
Population		62,120	
Population Density (per sq. mile)		22,543	
Minority Population		21,035	
% Minority		34%	
Households		40,353	
Housing Units		43,991	
Housing Units Built Before 1950		10,743	
Per Capita Income		69,496	
Land Area (sq. miles) (Source: SF1)		2.76	
% Land Area		87%	
Water Area (sq. miles) (Source: SF1)		0.40	
% Water Area		13%	

	2013 - 2017 ACS Estimates	Percent	MOE (±)
Population by Race			
Total	62,120	100%	755
Population Reporting One Race	58,035	93%	1,795
White	43,473	70%	508
Black	2,848	5%	251
American Indian	300	0%	104
Asian	10,549	17%	611
Pacific Islander	149	0%	73
Some Other Race	716	1%	248
Population Reporting Two or More Races	4,086	7%	558
Total Hispanic Population	3,644	6%	262
Total Non-Hispanic Population	58,476		
White Alone	41,085	68%	507
Black Alone	2,735	4%	240
American Indian Alone	255	0%	104
Non-Hispanic Asian Alone	10,511	17%	611
Pacific Islander Alone	149	0%	73
Other Race Alone	178	0%	102
Two or More Races Alone	3,583	6%	547
Population by Sex			
Male	34,648	56%	614
Female	27,472	44%	348
Population by Age			
Age 0-4	1,402	2%	132
Age 0-17	3,002	5%	268
Age 18+	59,118	95%	729
Age 65+	5,222	8%	183

Data Note: Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding. Hispanic population can be of any race.
 N/A means not available. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2013 - 2017.



EJSCREEN ACS Summary Report



Location: User-specified point center at 47.624680, -122.341082
 Ring (buffer): 1-miles radius
 Description: Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels

	2013 - 2017 ACS Estimates	Percent	MOE (±)
Population 25+ by Educational Attainment			
Total	52,674	100%	577
Less than 9th Grade	468	1%	127
9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma	848	2%	160
High School Graduate	3,539	7%	134
Some College, No Degree	10,690	20%	246
Associate Degree	2,689	5%	155
Bachelor's Degree or more	37,129	70%	573
Population Age 5+ Years by Ability to Speak English			
Total	60,718	100%	745
Speak only English	47,895	79%	516
Non-English at Home ¹⁺²⁺³⁺⁴	12,823	21%	635
¹ Speak English "very well"	10,409	17%	518
² Speak English "well"	1,800	3%	183
³ Speak English "not well"	567	1%	302
⁴ Speak English "not at all"	47	0%	49
³⁺⁴ Speak English "less than well"	614	1%	302
²⁺³⁺⁴ Speak English "less than very well"	2,414	4%	353
Linguistically Isolated Households*			
Total	967	100%	106
Speak Spanish	103	11%	105
Speak Other Indo-European Languages	259	27%	66
Speak Asian-Pacific Island Languages	419	43%	78
Speak Other Languages	186	19%	78
Households by Household Income			
Household Income Base	40,353	100%	332
< \$15,000	3,898	10%	177
\$15,000 - \$25,000	2,455	6%	158
\$25,000 - \$50,000	6,346	16%	243
\$50,000 - \$75,000	5,394	13%	172
\$75,000 +	22,260	55%	440
Occupied Housing Units by Tenure			
Total	40,353	100%	332
Owner Occupied	8,851	22%	204
Renter Occupied	31,502	78%	321
Employed Population Age 16+ Years			
Total	59,236	100%	608
In Labor Force	48,036	81%	558
Civilian Unemployed in Labor Force	1,920	3%	161
Not In Labor Force	11,200	19%	316

Data Note: Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding. Hispanic population can be of anyrace.

N/A means not available. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS)

*Households in which no one 14 and over speaks English "very well" or speaks English only.



EJSCREEN ACS Summary Report



Location: User-specified point center at 47.624680, -122.341082
 Ring (buffer): 1-miles radius
 Description: Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels

	2013 - 2017 ACS Estimates	Percent	MOE (±)
Population by Language Spoken at Home*			
Total (persons age 5 and above)	61,193	100%	709
English	48,315	79%	649
Spanish	1,677	3%	208
French	827	1%	327
French Creole	N/A	N/A	N/A
Italian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Portuguese	N/A	N/A	N/A
German	676	1%	164
Yiddish	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other West Germanic	N/A	N/A	N/A
Scandinavian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Greek	N/A	N/A	N/A
Russian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Polish	N/A	N/A	N/A
Serbo-Croatian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other Slavic	N/A	N/A	N/A
Armenian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Persian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gujarathi	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hindi	N/A	N/A	N/A
Urdu	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other Indic	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other Indo-European	2,804	5%	310
Chinese	2,359	4%	491
Japanese	N/A	N/A	N/A
Korean	429	1%	266
Mon-Khmer, Cambodian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hmong	N/A	N/A	N/A
Thai	N/A	N/A	N/A
Laotian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vietnamese	197	0%	71
Other Asian	1,871	3%	403
Tagalog	234	0%	115
Other Pacific Island	N/A	N/A	N/A
Navajo	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other Native American	N/A	N/A	N/A
Hungarian	N/A	N/A	N/A
Arabic	416	1%	528
Hebrew	N/A	N/A	N/A
African	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other and non-specified	703	1%	184
Total Non-English	12,878	21%	961

Data Note: Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding. Hispanic population can be of any race.
 N/A means not available. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2013 - 2017.
 *Population by Language Spoken at Home is available at the census tract summary level and up.

Public Participation Activities

Members of the public may ask questions, submit informal comments, or share site information at any time. Interested parties do not need to wait for a formal public comment period to contact Ecology.

However, to be included in the formal site record, comments about the site investigation, cleanup alternatives, or cleanups must be submitted during formal comment periods. In addition, the public is invited to review site documents before they become final. This is the most direct and influential way to learn more about the site and be involved in the cleanup's decision-making.

How we share information with the community

During specific stages of the cleanup, Ecology will mail notices about public comment periods to addresses surrounding the site. The mailing list area will vary depending on the type of contamination and where it is located, but the list will at least include addresses within a 1/4-mile radius of the site and other interested organizations and individuals. These notices will provide general information about the site, contact information for submitting comments, and times and locations of public meetings or hearings or how to request one if not yet scheduled.

Ecology may also develop documents outside of comment periods to keep the community updated on the site's status. These informational documents will be available online and at document repositories. Print copies may be mailed to the nearby community if we feel the message warrants the associated cost and resources.

Comment period notices and other site announcements may also be posted in various locations throughout the community (for example, local businesses, schools, libraries).

Postal mailing list

Ecology maintains a mailing list that includes addresses within the neighborhoods of Seattle, relevant local, state, and federal government contacts, and other interested parties.

These people receive public comment notices when draft documents are available.

We will add additional individuals, organizations, and other interested parties to the mailing list as requested. If you would like to be added to the mailing list for this site, please contact Kelsey Ketcheson at 425-240-4353 or kelsey.ketcheson@ecy.wa.gov.

Site Register

Public comment periods, events, and other cleanup notices are published in Ecology's [Site Register](#).⁴ To receive the *Site Register* by email, please contact Sarah Kellington at 360-407-7466 or sarah.kellington@ecy.wa.gov, or [subscribe online](#).⁵

Newspaper display ads or legal notices

We announce public comment periods and events in ads or notices published in *The Seattle Times*. We will also publish notice on our [Public Input & Events Listing](#).⁶

Email lists

Ecology maintains an email list to update interested persons about this site. If you would like to be added to the email list for this site, please email Kelsey Ketcheson at kelsey.ketcheson@ecy.wa.gov.

Ecology's website and social media platforms

We maintain a website for the [Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels Site](#).⁷ The website provides site information, and you may download cleanup documents.

We may also share information about cleanup sites through [news releases, our ECOconnect blog, and social media](#).⁸

⁴ ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Site-Register-lists-and-data

⁵ <http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=siteregister&A=1>

⁶ ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing

⁷ <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=14784>

⁸ ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Get-to-know-us/News

Document repositories

During public comment periods, documents will be made available at the Ecology Northwest Regional Office by upon request. Please contact NWRO Central Records at 206-594-0016 or nwro_public_request@ecy.wa.gov to schedule an appointment.

Documents are available on the Seattle DOT Mercer Parcels Cleanup Site website: <http://bit.ly/Ecology-MercerParcels>

Signs around the cleanup site

We may also install signs displaying information about project status, traffic impacts, and health risks around the cleanup site.

How to share information with us

At minimum, MTCA requires 30-day public comment periods for certain draft cleanup documents and 14-day comment periods for SEPA documents. SEPA documents are often made available for review with other cleanup documents. We may hold comment periods longer than 30 days.

We may also identify public concerns and cleanup goals by meeting with and soliciting information from interested community members and organizations. To collaborate with us about this site, contact Tena Seeds at 425-451-3143 or tena.seeds@ecy.wa.gov.

Public comment periods

Formal 30-day comment periods allow interested members of the public to comment on draft documents, legal agreements, and proposed cleanup actions. If there is significant interest, Ecology may extend the public comment period. When Ecology oversees SEPA determinations, we hold comment periods for at least two weeks.

Following a comment period, we publish all the input we received and respond to significant comments and questions. If the comments result in significant changes to the cleanup documents, then the documents will be revised and re-issued for public review. If the comments do not result in significant changes, then they become final.

Public events

We hold public meetings, workshops, open houses, and public hearings based on community interest. If we have not scheduled a meeting during a public comment period, we will hold one if 10 people request it, and this may cause us to extend a public comment period so the meeting occurs during it.

Events are held at locations close to the Site that meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards or, in consideration of public health and safety, online. Public meetings, workshops, open houses, and hearings are always announced in advance using a variety of methods.

Plan Amendments

Ecology developed this plan following MTCA regulations (WAC 173-340-600). We review it as the cleanup progresses and amend it as necessary. You may suggest amendments to Kelsey Ketcheson at 425-240-4353 or kelsey.ketcheson@ecy.wa.gov.

This plan includes information for the public regarding opportunities for public involvement and comment. The outreach activities discussed in this section reflect Ecology's current plans for keeping the public informed and providing ways for those interested in the Site to communicate their concerns and questions to us.

If you feel the planned outreach activities and mechanisms described in this plan are insufficient, or should otherwise be modified, we will work to find solutions. New outreach activities or outreach tools established as a result can be implemented right away, with or without amending this plan.