



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

**University of Washington Tacoma
Tacoma, Washington**

DRAFT

Prepared by
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February 2016

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INTRODUCTION

Public participation plans promote meaningful involvement during cleanups. This plan describes the tools the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) will use to inform the public about and gather input on the University of Washington (UW) Tacoma cleanup site.

SITE LOCATION

The UW Tacoma cleanup site is located in downtown Tacoma between S 17th Street, S 21st Street, Pacific Avenue, and Tacoma Avenue S. It consists of about 46 acres and includes a mix of old and current building development.

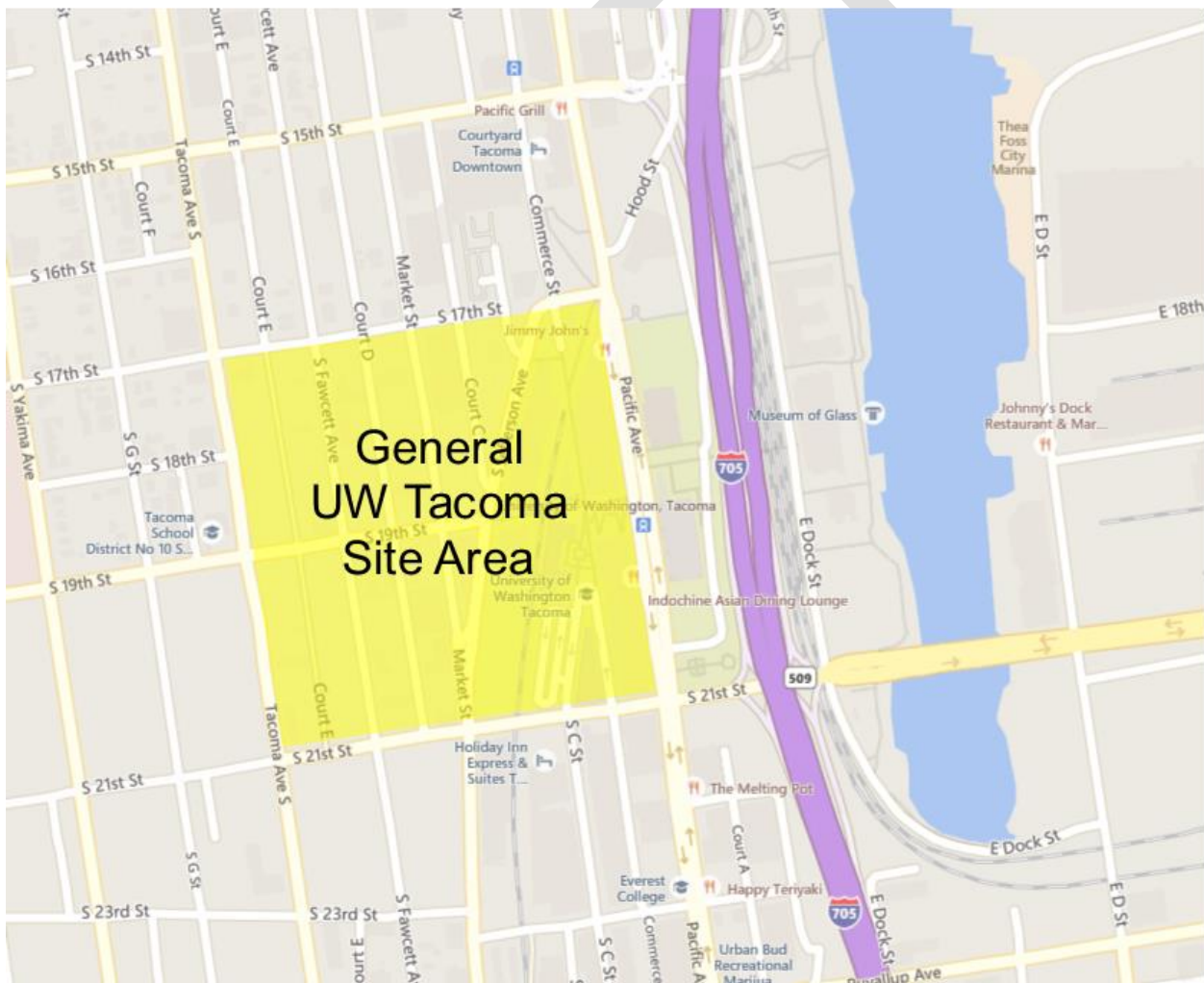


Figure 1. Site location

SITE BACKGROUND

In the 1980s, a waste management facility, Arrcom Inc., operated at the site. In 1981, Arrcom identified itself as a dangerous waste management facility. When they closed in the 1990s, Washington State took over the site along with the property next door.

In 1996, the US Environmental Protection Agency did a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Facility Assessment at the Arrcom facility. It identified areas where releases of hazardous substances may have occurred. As a result, Ecology identified areas of concern.

In 1997, UW Tacoma and Ecology signed an agreed order to start the site cleanup. Under the agreement, UW Tacoma agrees to clean up the site.

Ecology is now entering into a new agreed order, replacing the previous one. It includes an expanded site footprint and focuses on area-wide groundwater pollution.

Contamination

The site area has a long industrial legacy that caused groundwater to be contaminated with:

- Petroleum hydrocarbons and benzene
- Trichloroethene (TCE)
- Perchloroethelene (PCE)

As the UW campus expanded, more contamination was found on parcels within the campus footprint.

Groundwater studies from 2007 to 2009 found two TCE plumes above state cleanup levels beneath the site. More studies showed PCE and petroleum hydrocarbon plumes in the groundwater.

The site studies to date have indentified, but not fully characterized the extent of site contamination. The investigation work called for under the new agreed order will help define site contamination.

CURRENT ACTIVITY

Ecology and the University of Washington are entering into a new agreed order for the cleanup of the UW Tacoma site in downtown Tacoma.

Ecology is holding a public comment period on the proposed agreed order in 2016. The new agreed order requires UW to do:

- A **remedial investigation report/feasibility study (RI/FS)**, which describes the nature and extent of contamination and evaluates cleanup options.
- A **draft cleanup action plan**, which selects cleanup methods.

At the end of the comment period, Ecology will respond to comments. We will then finalize the agreed order. UW Tacoma will begin site investigations. You will be invited to review and comment on documents as the investigation and cleanup moves forward.

SITE CLEANUP PROCESS

Cleanup activities at the UW Tacoma site fall under Washington's Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) and accompanying regulations (Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 70.105D and Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 173-340). MTCA has procedures for cleaning up contaminated sites to standards that are safe for both human health and the environment.

Toxic sites are cleaned up in stages, described below. Each stage has a related report or plan that the public is welcome to review and comment on.

Remedial Investigation & Feasibility Study (RI/FS)

The RI looks at the extent and type of pollution on the site. It also looks at possible human health and environmental impacts. The FS identifies and evaluates different cleanup options.

Interim Actions

Ecology may allow Interim Actions to partly clean up a site before the final cleanup plan is complete.

Cleanup Action Plan (CAP)

The CAP describes the cleanup methods and how they will meet Ecology's cleanup standards.

Cleanup

Cleanup removes contaminants from the site, contains them on the site, or treats them to make them less toxic. Based on the information in the RI/FS, Ecology selects a cleanup action and develops a new legal agreement for cleanup. CAPs require a public comment period.

Delisting

Ecology keeps track of toxic cleanup sites on the Hazardous Sites List. Once cleanup is complete, the public will have a chance to comment before Ecology takes a site off the list.

You can find more information about toxic cleanups on Ecology's website:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/cu_support/cu_process_steps_defns.htm.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of this Public Participation Plan is to promote public understanding and participation in the cleanup. This section of the plan describes how Ecology will share information and receive public comments on cleanup activities. Ecology will use the following public involvement activities during the UW Tacoma site cleanup:

Formal Public Comment Periods

Comment periods are the primary method Ecology uses to get feedback from the public on

proposed cleanup decisions. Comment periods usually last 30 days. WAC 173-340-600 requires them at key points during the investigation and cleanup process, before final decisions are made. During a comment period, the public can comment in writing. Ecology can only take verbal comments during a public hearing.

After comment periods, Ecology reviews all comments and may respond in a document called a responsiveness summary. Ecology considers whether a document or decision needs to be changed or revised based on public input. If there are major changes, Ecology may hold a second comment period. If there are no major changes, Ecology finalizes the draft document(s).

Public Meetings and Hearings

Ecology may hold public meetings at key points during the investigation and cleanup. Ecology also may offer public meetings for actions expected to be of particular interest to the community. Ecology will also hold a public meeting if ten or more people request one. These meetings will be at places and times convenient to the public.

Information Repositories

These are places where the public can read and review site information, including public comment period documents. Ecology has three repositories for this site:

- UW Tacoma Library, Tioga Library Building Circulation Desk – 1907 Jefferson Avenue, Box 358460, Tacoma, WA 98402. (253) 692-2429
- Citizens for a Healthy Bay – 535 Dock Street, Suite 213 Tacoma, WA 98402. (253) 383-2429
- Washington State Department of Ecology – 300 Desmond Drive, Lacey 98503. Please call (360) 407-6365 for an appointment.

See also Ecology's website: <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=141>.

Site Register

Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Program uses its bimonthly Site Register to announce public meetings and comment periods, and many other activities. To receive the Site Register by email, contact Seth Preston at (360) 407-6848 or Seth.Preston@ecy.wa.gov. You can also read it on Ecology's website at http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/pub_inv/pub_inv2.html.

Mailing List

Ecology's mailing list for this site includes neighboring landowners and businesses, public agencies, and other known interested parties. Ecology's Southwest Regional Office maintains the list and will update it as needed. Please contact Megan MacClellan at (360) 407-0067 or Megan.MacClellan@ecy.wa.gov if you would like to have your address added to or deleted from this mailing list.

Fact Sheets

Ecology will mail fact sheets to people and groups interested in this cleanup. Fact sheets will announce comment periods and public meetings. Ecology also may mail fact sheets with updates on cleanup progress.

Newspaper Display Ads

Ecology will place ads in the *Tacoma News Tribune* to announce public comment periods and public meetings for the site.

Press & Media

Ecology will submit a press release to the Tacoma News Tribune, and will create blog and social media posts.

Plan Update

Ecology may update this Public Participation Plan as the project moves forward. The public will have a chance to comment on any major changes to the plan.

Contacts

If you have questions or need more information about this plan or the UW Tacoma cleanup site, please contact:

Marv Coleman, Project Manager
WA Department of Ecology
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Olympia, WA 98504-7775
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Personnel roles and responsibilities

Name	Role	Responsibilities
Megan MacClellan	Primary public involvement contact	Public participation planning Public meeting co-facilitation Document, graphics development Presentation co-development
Stacy Galleher	Public involvement support	Public meeting co-facilitation Strategic support Document, graphics review
Marv Coleman	Site manager	Response to public comment, questions Delivers primary presentation for public meeting
Rebecca Lawson	Section manager	Present during public meeting
UWT	Potentially Liable Party	Carries out their needed communication strategy beyond that outlined here.

Operational details (venues, catering, A/V support)

Public meeting:

Venue: _____

A/V: Ecology can provide projector

Number of chairs

Contingency plan

Setup

Breakdown

Catering: Light refreshments

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GLOSSARY

Agreed Order: A legal agreement between Ecology and a Potentially Liable Person (see below) to conduct work toward a cleanup.

Cleanup: Actions that deal with a release or threatened release of hazardous substances that could affect public health or the environment. Ecology often uses the term "cleanup" broadly to describe response actions or phases of cleanup, such as the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study.

Cleanup Action Plan (CAP): A plan that explains which cleanup option(s) will be used at a site. The Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study provide the data and analysis to write a CAP. It also takes into account public comments and public concerns.

Comment Period: A time period during which the public can review and comment on various documents and proposed actions. For example, a comment period may be provided to allow community members to review and comment on proposed cleanup action alternatives and proposed plans.

Contaminant: Any hazardous substance that does not occur naturally or occurs at greater than natural background levels

Feasibility Study: This study develops and evaluates cleanup options for a given site.

Groundwater: Water found beneath the earth's surface that fills spaces between materials such as sand, soil, or gravel. In some aquifers, ground water occurs in large enough amounts to be used for drinking water, irrigation and other purposes.

Information Repository: A file containing site information and reports for public review. It is usually located in a public building convenient for local residents, such as a public school, city hall, or library.

Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA): A law passed by Washington voter initiative in 1988. Its purpose is to find, investigate, and clean up places where hazardous substances have been released. It defines Ecology's role and encourages public involvement in cleanup decisions.

Potentially Liable Person: Any individual(s) or company(s) potentially responsible for, or contributing to, the contamination problems at a site. Whenever possible, Ecology requires PLPs to clean up sites.

Public Notice: At a minimum, adequate notice mailed to all persons who have made a timely request of Ecology and to persons residing in the potentially affected vicinity of the proposed action; mailed to appropriate news media; published in the local (city and county) newspaper of largest circulation; and the opportunity for the interested persons to comment.

Public Participation Plan: A plan prepared to encourage coordinated and effective public involvement designed to the public's needs at a particular site.

Remedial Investigation: This study characterizes the site and defines the extent of contamination.

Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study: Two distinct but related studies. They are usually performed at the same time, and together referred to as the "RI/FS." They are intended to:

- Gather the data necessary to determine the type and extent of contamination;
- Establish criteria for cleaning up the site;
- Identify and screen cleanup alternatives for remedial action; and
- Analyze in detail the technology and costs of the alternatives.

Responsiveness Summary: A summary of oral and/or written public comments received by Ecology during a comment period on key documents, and Ecology's responses to those comments. The responsiveness summary is especially valuable during the Cleanup Action Plan phase at a site when it highlights community concerns.

Risk: The probability that a hazardous substance, when released into the environment, will cause an adverse effect in the exposed humans or living organisms.

Sediments: Settled particles located at the bottom of a lake, river or in wetlands. Sediment(s) also includes settled particulate matter exposed by human activity (e.g., dredging) to the biologically active aquatic zone or to the water column.

Site: Any area where a hazardous substance, other than a consumer product in consumer use, has come to be located.

Toxicity: How much harm a substance causes to living organisms, including people, plants and animals, at a certain concentration.