City of Mercer Island
New Water Supply Pipeline

City of Mercer Island Pre-Application Meeting
Project Narrative and Questions
September 2025

PROJECT NARRATIVE

The City of Mercer Island (City) intends to install water supply improvements in the northeast corner of Mercer Island to effectively replace existing Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) pipelines that have reached the end of their useful life. The project was spurred by a recent break in an SPU water transmission line near the 95th Court SE neighborhood in April of 2024, causing soil erosion and the evacuation of 20 homes. This situation prompted a costly emergency repair, reducing the incoming water supply to much of Mercer Island until its completion. The proposed water supply improvements will allow the City to assume service of the SPU pipeline within the City limits, ensuring water system distribution reliability and delivery. Water supply improvements involve the following specific improvements and locations, which are depicted on the attached **Selected Predesign Plans** and the **Overall Site Plan**.

- Installation of approximately 5,250 linear feet (lf) of 24-inch ductile iron (DI) water transmission main in the rights-of-way (ROW) of SE 40th Street, Gallagher Hill Road, SE 36th Street, East Mercer Way, and Frontage Road from the intersection of 92nd Avenue SE and SE 40th Street north and east to Frontage Road. This includes two associated vaults for transmission main maintenance/servicing. Approximately 750 lf of the distribution main will be installed in Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) ROW; however, only 40 feet of this alignment will involve roadway work in SE 36th Street (see Sheets 32 through 34).
- Installation of approximately 2,000 lf of 10-inch DI water distribution main in the ROW of Gallagher Hill Road from the intersection of 90th Avenue SE and SE 40th Street to the intersection of 92nd Avenue SE and SE 36th Street. This includes one (1) approximately 100 square foot (sf) pressure reducing valve (PRV) vault. The distribution main is intended to replace existing 8-inch asbestos cement (AC) water main owned by the City that is currently undersized.
- Addition of 2 City meter vaults (approximately 25 sf each) and associated 8-inch DI water main (approximately 400 lf total) in 90th Avenue SE and 88th Avenue SE. These improvements will allow the City to serve and meter water usage for the Shorewood Heights Apartments, which is currently served by SPU.
- Replacement of approximately 50 lf of 12-inch water main with 24-inch water main within SE 43rd Street and 89th Avenue SE, near the City's existing reservoirs in Rotary Park.
- Rehabilitation of an existing 6-inch AC water main from Greenbrier Lane to Gallagher Hill Road utilizing a non-invasive, trenchless construction technique.
- Construction of pedestrian improvements in SE 40th Street and Gallagher Hill Road, including concrete sidewalks, Americans with Disabilities Act ramps, driveway approach, curb and gutter,

and striping and signage. *Pedestrian improvements may be included; the design is ongoing, and improvements are contingent on several factors.*

- The proposed improvements are anticipated to require replacement in-kind of stormwater pipe and structures along the roadway alignment. Replacements are necessitated by the proposed transmission and distribution main work.

EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Critical Areas

According to the City's Interactive Web Map, desktop review of other mapping resources, and a critical areas reconnaissance completed by RH2 Engineering, Inc., for this project in June 2025, critical areas in the vicinity of the project improvements include the following:

- The transmission, distribution, and pedestrian improvement project locations, generally in the vicinity of Gallagher Hill Road, are mapped by the City as erosion, landslide, seismic, and steep slope hazard areas and denoted as protected slope areas.
- Two main watercourses are mapped across the transmission and distribution main alignments, which are depicted on the **Critical Areas Overview Map**:
    - A Type Np watercourse with two main branches converging at SE 36th Street near City Hall and flowing under Interstate-90 (I-90) and into Lake Washington. At the confluence with Lake Washington, the drainage is considered a Type F stream.
    - A Type Ns/Np watercourse associated with the 11-acre Gallagher Hill Open Space area, which crosses Gallagher Hill Road, flows north within the Open Space corridor, and then crosses under I-90 and into Lake Washington. At the confluence with Lake Washington, the drainage is considered a Type F stream.
    - Both streams contain numerous total fish passage blockages per the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).
- The Gallagher Hill Open Space is listed as a Biodiversity Area and Corridor by WDFW. The Statewide Integrated Fish Distribution mapper shows no fish use in the two stream locations. Fish use in Lake Washington includes fall Chinook and coho salmon, kokanee, and winter steelhead trout.

Tree Removal

Improvements are being designed specifically to remain in the existing ROW and improved surfaces (i.e., paved, graveled surfaces). While not planned presently, the removal of some trees may be needed to accommodate project improvements. Presently, removal and replacement of trees in WSDOT ROW along the trail adjacent to SE 36th Street and East Mercer Way is a possibility. The City has discussed this tree removal with WSDOT and is obtaining a WSDOT ROW permit for the project; however, determination of the number and type of tree removal and further coordination is needed.

QUESTIONS FOR THE CITY

The following local permits are anticipated for project approvals (questions are provided specific to the permits, as needed):

- State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)
    - Please explain how SEPA will be processed in relation to other permits through the City.
    - Will a cultural resource survey be required for City SEPA review?
- Critical Areas compliance
    - Design is being completed to constrain project improvements to the developed ROW of Gallagher Hill Road and SE 36th Street. Consequently, no project activities are proposed in the Gallagher Hill Open Space or in aquatic critical areas. Project activities are anticipated to be exempt from the City's Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) through Mercer Island City Code 19.07.120.D. Please confirm.
    - Please clarify what level of aquatic critical areas identification, delineation, and reporting is required.
- Tree Permit
    - Does the City have jurisdiction in WSDOT ROW for trees that may need to be removed at SE 36th Street and East Mercer Way? If so, please discuss tree removal and replacement requirements in the City.
- ROW Use Permit
    - Is this needed for City Capital Improvement Program projects?

Please confirm local permits required for this project. Discuss application requirements, process, etc.

State permits expected for this project include:

- Construction Stormwater General Permit – Washington State Department of Ecology
- ROW Utility Accommodation – WSDOT

Does the City have other input for this project and/or the project team to consider during project design and permitting efforts?

Selected Predesign Plans

Overall Site Plan

E SHOREWOOD DR
SE 36TH ST
SE 37TH ST
SE 39TH ST
SE 40TH ST
88TH AVE SE
90TH AVE SE
N MERCER WAY
I-90
E MERCER WAY
E MERCER WAY
PROPOSED PRV VAULT ON DISTRIBUTION MAIN
PROPOSED RELOCATION OF 15" STORM AND SANITARY EASEMENT
10' PROPOSED EASEMENT FOR ACCESS
50' ROAD AND UTILITY EASEMENT
10' PRIVATE SANITARY SEWER EASEMENT
50' ROAD AND UTILITY EASEMENT
10' PUBLIC WATER EASEMENT
FRONTAGE RD
WSDOT RIGHT OF WAY
THRUST BLOCK
PROPOSED SPU METERING VAULT
PROPOSED MERCER ISLAND METERING VAULT
SE 43RD ST
89TH AVE SE

OVERALL SITE
1" = 50'

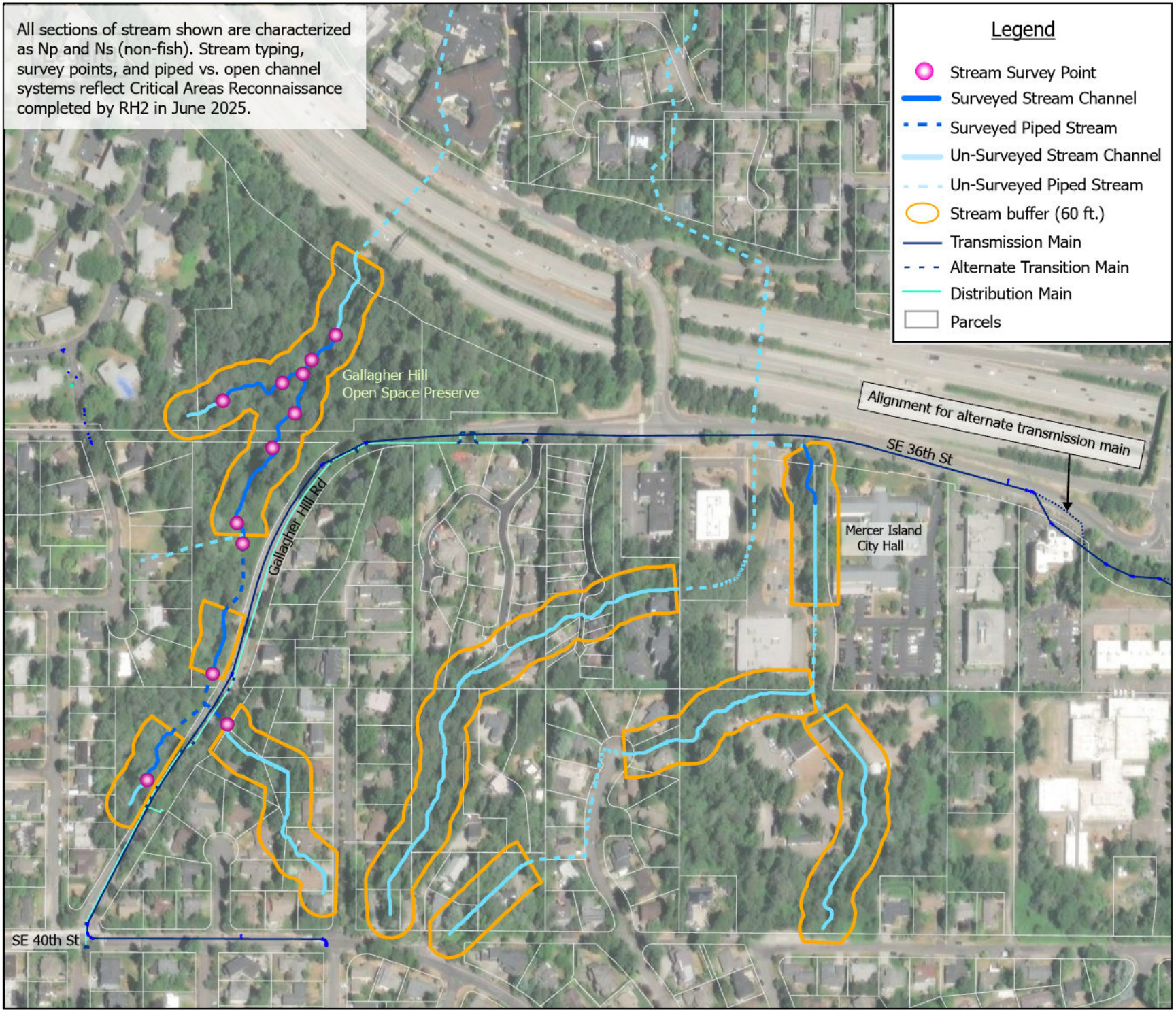
PROPOSED LEGEND

- 24" DI TRANSMISSION WATER MAIN
- 24" DI TRANSMISSION WATER MAIN, ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENT
- 16" DI DISTRIBUTION WATER MAIN
- LINED PORTION OF EXISTING AC WATER MAIN

NOTE: CURRENTLY SHOWN IS THE MOST RECENT SURVEY RECEIVED FROM DHA. SURVEY CLEANUP ON THIS FILE HAS NOT BEEN PERFORMED AT THIS TIME.

SE 43RD ST AND 89TH AVE SE
1" = 50'

Critical Areas Overview Map



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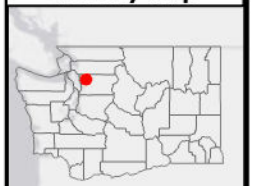
Vicinity Map



Critical Areas Overview Map

City of Mercer Island

New Water Supply Pipeline

1:20,000

0 250 500

feet

NORTH

J:\DATA\M-I\25-0034\GIS\PLOTS\M-I (25-0034) CRITICAL AREAS RECON.APRX BY: ATERSHY PLOT DATE: JUL 22, 2025 COORDINATE SYSTEM: WGS 1984 WEB MERCATOR AUXILIARY SPHERE