

Frequently Asked Questions

Water Meter Infrastructure Project

City of Mercer Island



What is the Water Meter Infrastructure Project?

The City of Mercer Island is investing in new tools to serve water customers better. In 2024, the City will replace all residential and commercial water meters with an advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) system and create an online portal where customers can track water use, leak alerts, and other notifications. In order to collect the meter readings, the City must install data collection equipment at key locations on Mercer Island. The equipment will communicate with the AMI system and the new meters to transmit water usage data to the City.

Where is the City proposing to install the data collection stations? How was this decided?

Seven data collection equipment stations will be installed at various locations across the city. These proposed locations were identified based on their ability to effectively transmit data from the water meters across Mercer Island.

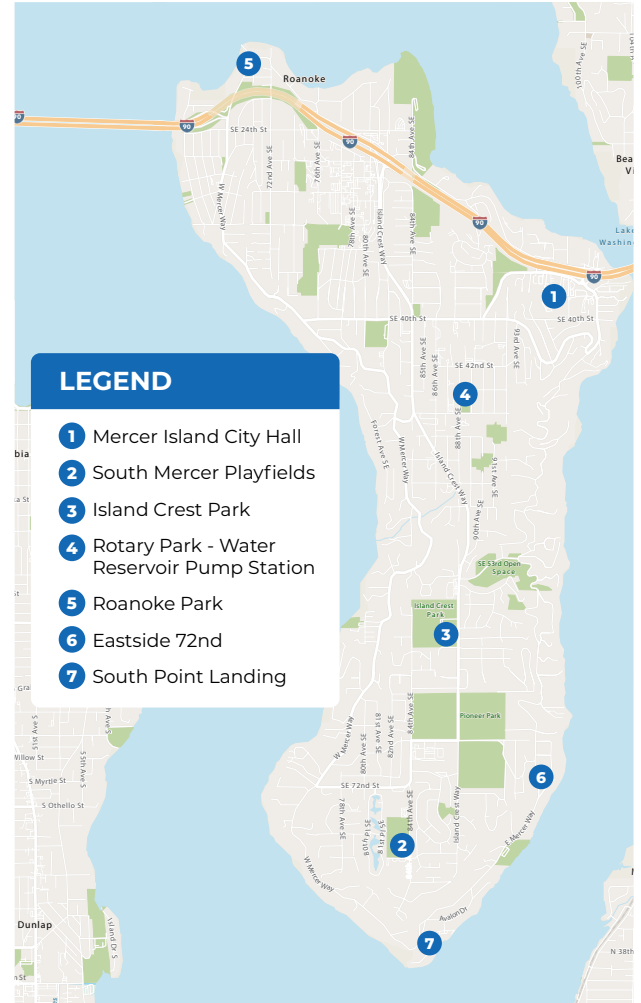
Once constructed, what will the equipment look like?

The equipment includes a 22" by 22" by 10.5" aluminum box, known as a base station, and antennas ranging from 7' to 9' in height. Most installations will be located on existing utility poles and infrastructure. Taller poles may be installed in some locations to meet safety guidelines for clearances between power lines and other equipment. A rendering is shown on the backside of this handout.

Is a City permit required for data collection installations on poles?

Yes, each installation will require the approval of a Conditional Use Permit, which will authorize the use of this equipment as an essential public facility.

The City is required to send a Notice of Application to residents within 300 feet of each data collection site. The notification will detail the proposed permit application and opportunities for public comment. Ultimately, a Hearing Examiner will decide on the issuance of each Conditional Use Permit application, and a Notice of Decision will be issued.



Example base station and antenna equipment



Can I comment on a particular data collection site?

The City will share additional details about opportunities to comment or provide feedback on a particular data collection site via the Conditional Use Permit Notice of Application. The City will notify residents within 300 feet of each data collection site with information about the permit application,

public comment period, and the public hearing date and time. Anyone may comment on the application, receive notice, and request a copy of the decision once it has been made.



Rendering of proposed data collection equipment on a new 80-foot pole near South Mercer Playfields.

What are the community benefits of this project?

The new data collection equipment will connect with the AMI system to securely communicate water usage data to the City and reduce the need for manual meter reads.

Customers will also be able to manage their water use in real-time through the new online customer portal.

Is the data collection equipment safe?

The data collection technology complies with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) standards and guidelines for environmental exposure to radio frequency (RF), which have been in place since 1985. RF energy produced by smart meter technology is not harmful and is comparable to cellular phone devices, wireless baby monitors, television broadcasts, garage door openers, microwave ovens, cordless home phones, and Wi-Fi networks.

Who can I contact for more information about this project?

For questions, please contact the City's Customer Service Team at **(206) 275-7600** or **customerservice@mercerisland.gov**.

For details about the Water Meter Infrastructure Project, please visit: **<https://letstalk.mercergov.org/meterproject>**.

