

# Focus on: Healthy Housing Remediation Program

CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVE VIEW FROM WEST



Figure 1 Conceptual sketch of planned Mount Baker affordable housing development (photo courtesy of Mount Baker Housing).

## Contact information

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## Special accommodations

To request ADA accommodation including materials in a format for the visually impaired, call Ecology at 360-407-7668 or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. People with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. People with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.

For more information or to request a summary of [our report](#) on affordable housing cleanups translated into Spanish, please contact [preguntas@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:preguntas@ecy.wa.gov).

## Affordable Housing and Cleanup

Ecology’s Toxics Cleanup Program oversees the cleanup of contaminated sites that pose risks to human health and the environment. Development of the Healthy Housing Remediation program aims to connect cleanup of contaminated sites to the redevelopment of those sites into affordable housing projects.

Ecology and Department of Commerce are collaborating to review and select potential cleanup projects for funding that will lead to the creation of affordable housing units. The 2018 Supplemental Capital Budget provided Ecology with funding for Integrated Planning Grants to support housing-related cleanup projects with local governments, including public housing authorities, cities, counties, ports or other special purpose districts.

In addition, the Washington State Legislature has requested a report that lists potential cleanup projects from both local governments and private or nonprofit entities that will lead to the creation of affordable housing units. [The report](#), which was published in the fall of 2018, will be used to help develop Ecology’s 2019–21 cleanup budget plan and demonstrate funding needs during the 2019 Legislative session for the “Healthy Housing Remediation Program.”

## Supporting and Restoring Healthy Communities

Connecting cleanup of contaminated sites to the redevelopment of those sites into affordable housing projects invests in a greater social good beyond the economic and environmental benefits of cleanup. By addressing blight and providing affordable housing, a community’s character is preserved and its residences are less likely to be displaced. This program aims to help communities that have lived with contamination enjoy the benefits of its removal and share in the benefits of the wave of redevelopment already impacting their lives.

## Mount Baker Housing

As the former location of a gas station and dry cleaner, development of The Maddux is made possible by a partnership between the Mt. Baker Housing Association and Ecology. In its 2018 session, the Legislature continued to support this work by financing the more than \$6 million needed for cleanup.

This innovative partnership will achieve multiple goals, including urban environmental cleanup, community redevelopment, and transit-oriented affordable housing, and will serve as a catalyst for transforming the Mt. Baker neighborhood.



Figure 2 Map of Seattle area showing location of Mount Baker Housing development (photo from Esri maps).

## Background

Many areas of Washington State are experiencing a housing crisis. The economic boom and population growth bring many benefits to the state, but together they are driving up rents, home prices, and property taxes with devastating effects on some communities. Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Program is uniquely situated to contribute to a solution by helping to address one of the main drivers of cost—land availability.

## Land Availability

As Washington's cities continue to rapidly grow, easily developable land is being built into residences and commercial centers. Known contaminated properties and suspected contaminated properties have often been small islands in the center of many of these new developments.

Ecology manages a portfolio that includes more than 13,000 cleanup sites, nearly 6,000 of which still require cleanup activities. Many of these sites—often in the middle of urban areas—represent opportunities to provide residents with safe, affordable housing without displacing them from the communities they call home.

## Cost of Cleanup and Housing

The cost of cleaning up contaminated properties is often embedded in the price of redevelopment. This can create undue financial barriers to the redevelopment of properties into affordable housing. This program takes the cost of cleanup out of the equation, easing the way for the building of affordable housing units.

CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN

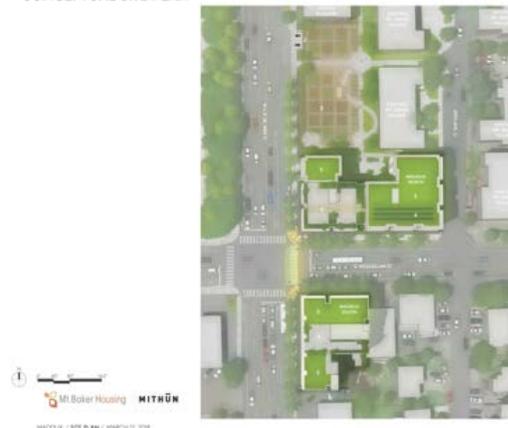


Figure 3 Conceptual site plan showing locations of Mount Baker development (photo courtesy of Mount Baker Housing Association).