Frequently Asked Questions: About the Project Site

181 Mercer Street Project

What kind of protection will be installed around the project site?

In advance of the start of construction, a sound blanketed, sound attenuating construction fence was installed around the perimeter of the 181 Mercer Street construction site. The fence ranges in height from 8 feet to 15 feet, and acts as a sound barrier, minimizing construction noise emanating from the site. The location of the fence and its engineering was approved by the NYC Department of Buildings and the NYC Department of Transportation. A site map with fence location can be found on the 181 Mercer Street construction webpage.

Will parking spaces be lost during the project?

Some parking on the periphery of the construction site will be rendered inaccessible by the construction fence and construction activity at the site. These areas include: spaces on the north and south side of Bleecker Street, the north side of Houston Street, the east side of Mercer Street, and all parking spaces on the west side of Mercer Street from Bleecker Street to Houston Street. These spaces are required to accommodate the construction fence, to ensure safe turning radius for trucks and emergency vehicles, and to provide safe pedestrian and vehicular conditions on the periphery of the site.

Will pedestrian traffic be affected?

Both the north and south sides of Bleecker Street will remain open for pedestrian traffic for the duration of the project. Pedestrian traffic will be accommodated along Bleecker Street by a lane closure, jersey barriers, and sidewalk bridging on the southern side of the street. Pedestrian traffic will be accommodated along the north side of W. Houston Street by a lane closure, jersey barriers, and sidewalk bridging. The west side of Mercer Street along the project site will be inaccessible to pedestrians, but the east side of Mercer Street is scheduled to remain open for pedestrian traffic throughout the duration of construction. Flaggers will be stationed at points where vehicles enter the site.

Will vehicular traffic be affected during the project?

During construction of 181 Mercer Street, there will be some lane closures on the perimeter of the project site. Part of the northernmost travel lane of West Houston Street adjacent to the project site will be closed to accommodate a pedestrian walkway. Along West Houston Street adjacent to the project site, there will be two moving lanes available to westbound traffic. Per the MTA and DOT, a lane divider will be installed at the approach to the intersection of West Houston and Mercer Streets to address pedestrian and bus safety concerns. The divider will limit traffic to bus stop pick-ups and drop-offs in the northernmost lane of West Houston Street (approaching the intersection of Mercer Street). As is customary on NYU construction projects, the local community will receive advance notice of additional street closures required during the project.

What will happen to the M21 bus stop located on the north side of Houston Street west of the project site?

- For questions, contact the Client Services Center: contactcsc@nyu.edu or 212-998-1001
- For more information, visit: nyu.edu/construction
The M21 MTA bus stop that was previously located on the northside Houston Street west of Mercer Street will be permanently relocated to the adjacent existing bus stop serving the X7, X9, and X10B lines, on the northside of Houston Street just east of Mercer Street. Note that an existing M21 bus stop is located on the northside of Houston Street between Wooster Street and LaGuardia Place, one block west.

**What will happen to the trees around the project site?**

Many of the trees located around the perimeter of the 181 Mercer Street site have been removed. Four smaller cherry trees located in planting beds on the west side of the Coles gym were successfully transplanted across Bleecker Street, opposite 181 Mercer Street in 2016; three new Kwanzan cherry trees were planted along with them. Accordingly, NYU also looked into whether it was possible to relocate the seven large Kwanzan cherry trees on the north side of the Coles gym, to a site in the surrounding neighborhood.

As part of this research, the University hired an independent arborist to assess the trees viability for transplant. The arborist determined that only three of the seven trees *might* survive a transplant under the right conditions: a relocation site with irrigation, plenty of sunlight, and - given the “rootball” requirements - a receiving hole measuring at least 8 feet in diameter. The University consulted with NYC Parks Department regarding potential relocation sites, but in the end, these requirements precluded relocating the trees in the local community as no suitable site was found.

Without a viable relocation site, NYU decided to donate the usable wood of the trees to a not-for-profit organization, Big Reuse, which reclaims building supplies, fixtures and furniture, as well as urban wood and re-purposes it into useful green building products. The organization also trains disadvantaged New Yorkers in the skills necessary for a career in sustainable building industries.

As is customary with construction projects in New York that involve tree removal, NYU is paying restitution to the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation for all the trees removed from the site, and those funds will be used to plant new trees in New York City. In addition, at the completion of the project, NYU will be responsible for planting new trees around the perimeter of 181 Mercer Street.

**Will access to the Mercer Houston Dog Run be affected during the project?**

Both the Houston Street and Silver Towers entrances to the Mercer Houston Dog Run are expected to remain open for the duration of the project. The Association will be given advance notice of work that may impede the use of either entrance.