

LAND USE—ZONING, LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

SUMMARY OF EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING

The study area includes land south of the Downtown office core and east of Alaskan Way, including the entire Pioneer Square and Chinatown/International District neighborhoods, the northern periphery of the Greater Duwamish Manufacturing and Industrial Center (MIC), and the western periphery of the Jackson Place neighborhood at Rainier Avenue S. This diverse area is many things to many people, including: a center of historic and cultural heritage, art and tourism; a place to live and work and conduct business; an entertainment center; a transportation hub; and a corridor for commerce and industry.

Land Use Patterns

An overview of South Downtown's land use patterns begins with its neighborhoods and districts.

Pioneer Square

Pioneer Square adjoins the Downtown office core and government core, extending as far north as Columbia Street and as far south as S. Royal Brougham Way. This historic district is characterized by an extensive and varied assemblage of century-old buildings, most with brick and stone facades and distinctive architectural qualities (see the Historic and Cultural Preservation section of this chapter for additional discussion). Typical buildings range from 20 feet up to 100 feet in height. Several taller buildings are located along the 1st Avenue corridor and along S. Jackson and S. King Streets. In the Occidental Park vicinity and eastward to around 3rd Avenue S., lower-height buildings are most common, in the range of approximately 10 to 50 feet. Interspersed throughout the district are approximately 30 properties used as parking lots, garages or with other structures that are considered non-contributing to the historic district. This creates a land use pattern with numerous buildings developed to the property line, but also occasional gaps in the continuity of streetfront uses created by vacant lots.

Complementing this pattern and creating localized open space nodes are Pioneer Place Park, Occidental Park, the Occidental pedestrian mall, Fortson Square and City Hall Park. The combination of a change in street grid orientation and a continuation of 2nd Avenue Extension at an angle from the dominant Pioneer Square street grid creates several triangular blocks and triangular spaces along 2nd Avenue Extension until it intersects with 4th Avenue S. at S. Jackson Street. South of S. King Street, the northern parking lot of Qwest Field creates a large open space, bordered by Qwest Field to the south, railroad tracks and King Street Station to the east, and buildings along Occidental Avenue S. and S. King Street. Along 1st Avenue S. south of S. King Street, an architectural style and building pattern compatible with Pioneer Square extends to uses on both sides of the street for approximately two blocks and then only on the east side of 1st Avenue S. to S. Royal Brougham Way. The west side is part of the Greater Duwamish MIC.

The mix of street-level uses in Pioneer Square includes many retail businesses devoted to tourism and specialty goods, art galleries, restaurants, bars and nightclubs, and social service agencies. Upper-story uses include a variety of offices, artist live-work spaces, social services, housing and assorted commercial uses. Some upper-story floors in historic buildings may be under-utilized or vacant. Residential uses are not very visible in the mix of uses, except the Florentine Condominiums south of S. King Street and subsidized housing structures such as the Morrison and Frye Hotels on Third Avenue near the King County Courthouse. However, recent renovation or new construction is bringing an increased inventory of residential uses in some vicinities, including the Lowman Building apartments (near 1st and Cherry), the Tashiro Kaplan Building (at Prefontaine Place), and the Quintessa Apartments near 2nd and Yesler

Way. The Smith Tower is also in design and permitting for conversion of its upper tower to residential uses.

King Street Station provides a hub for regional commuter trains, Amtrak and other train traffic. The bus tunnel stations accessed in Pioneer Square via 3rd Avenue entrances and near Union Station at 5th Avenue S., and various surface bus stops nearby King Street Station complement this hub by providing bus and eventual light rail transit service that generates daily commuting activity in the vicinity.

Chinatown/International District

This neighborhood and historic district adjoins the Downtown office core and government center, east of Pioneer Square between approximately Yesler Way to the north and S. Charles Street to the south. Its boundaries extend from 4th Avenue S. east to Rainier Avenue S., also encompassing the Little Saigon neighborhood described later. The Chinatown and Japantown vicinities west of I-5 are characterized by a varied assemblage of buildings, many with brick and stone facades and historic architectural character, located within a north-south-east-west gridiron street system. Most of the buildings range from 10 feet to approximately 60 feet in height; in Japantown a few residential buildings range up to approximately 150 feet. The architecture and use patterns in these areas reflect the cultural heritage of the Asian American communities of Seattle, and have historically served as a business and activity center for those communities. Street-level uses include a wide variety of restaurants, customer service offices, specialty goods stores, grocers, banks, a post office, private associations and social service providers. Upper-level uses include several buildings with residential uses, others with office or service uses, private associations, and a number of buildings with vacant or under-utilized upper floors.

Physically, the land use patterns include the densest core of historic buildings within a National Register Historic District that extends approximately between S. Main Street, S. Weller Street, 5th Avenue S. and I-5. This encompasses the active east-west corridors of S. King Street and S. Jackson Street. The vicinity centered at 6th Avenue S. and S. Main Street is known as Japantown or Nihonmachi, with a collection of buildings identified as a center of Japanese-American architectural and cultural heritage. Between approximately S. Main Street and Yesler Way to the north along 6th Avenue S., the pattern of use is primarily in apartment buildings of varying ages and heights, interspersed with parking lots, and other uses such as the Nippon Kan Theater commercial building. In this same vicinity between 4th and 5th Avenue S. is a lightly developed vicinity including surface parking lots that is a transitional area between Pioneer Square, Downtown and this neighborhood. A new Emergency Operations Center and fire station, under construction, will occupy one of the blocks in this vicinity.

At the west perimeter of the Chinatown neighborhood south of S. Jackson Street, a series of large office buildings and Union Station form an employment center and a physical “edge” that is penetrated by a few pedestrian walkways most notably at S. Weller Street, connecting to the Weller Street Bridge west of 4th Avenue S.

South of S. Weller Street in the Chinatown neighborhood, the character of development includes a mix of newer residential/mixed-use buildings, parking lots and utilitarian single-use buildings, as well as the Uwajimaya mixed-use grocery/retail and apartment complex. Compared to Pioneer Square, the Chinatown/Japantown neighborhood as a whole is less densely developed, and includes more parking lots and vacant or lightly developed properties in its land use mix.

Little Saigon and Jackson Place

This neighborhood, east of I-5, is the easternmost extension of the Chinatown/International District neighborhood and the Downtown Urban Center. It is characterized by a varied mixture of predominantly

commercial buildings, ranging from warehouses and poultry processing, to grocery stores, small businesses, social service agencies, small office buildings, churches, and the mixed-use Pacific Rim Center. Most of the buildings range from approximately 10 to 30 feet in height. Physically, this vicinity is characterized by its long east-west blocks, the intersecting S. Jackson Street and 12th Avenue S. corridors, and a terraced topography bounded by upslopes north of S. Jackson Street and downslopes south of S. Lane Street.

Little Saigon is identified as a key center of Vietnamese-American community business and cultural activity in Seattle. Many households take advantage of the clustering of businesses, restaurants, and nearby religious facilities to make this neighborhood a multi-stop destination, especially on weekends. In addition, this area is considered a point of entry where immigrants can find an economic foothold in the workforce and business world.

The most active business center is located at 12th Avenue S. and S. Jackson Street, with several small-scale commercial buildings providing space for numerous businesses, service providers and restaurants. Several of these uses include parking for automobiles between the street and the building. Along S. King Street is a diverse mixture of retail, warehouse, wholesale, goods and services uses, along with the historic Victorian Row Apartments. Along S. Weller Street, uses include the Leschi Center that provides services to Native Americans, and a variety of light industrial, commercial, and office uses east of 12th Avenue S. In the southeast corner of this vicinity is the Goodwill property south of S. Weller Street and west of Rainier Avenue S.

To the east of this vicinity across Rainier Avenue S. are the Jackson Place residential neighborhood and S. Jackson Street commercial corridor, to the north is the Yesler Terrace residential community and to the southeast is the continuation of the Rainier Avenue S. commercial/industrial corridor. The southeast-northwest angle of Boren Avenue S. provides an approximate northern edge to Little Saigon, connecting with Rainier Avenue S. and S. Jackson Street to form a five-way intersection. Commercial uses are located along both sides of Rainier Avenue S., and within a narrow transitional area immediately to the east of Rainier Avenue S. that is part of the Jackson Place vicinity. In this vicinity, the topography toward the east defines a transition in land use to low-density residential uses and provides territorial views for occupants. The Seattle Housing Authority is beginning to evaluate future development actions in the Yesler Terrace vicinity north of Main Street and east of I-5.

Stadium Area and “south-of-Dearborn”

These portions of the study areas lie at the northern bounds of the Greater Duwamish MIC, extending as far south as S. Holgate Street in the 1st Avenue S. vicinity and S. Royal Brougham Way elsewhere. Functionally, these vicinities serve as a transitional area between Downtown neighborhoods to the north and the industrial area to the south, accommodating a variety of industrial and commercial uses. (See the “Zoning Patterns” discussion below for description of the “Stadium Transition Area Overlay District”.)

In addition to the Qwest Field Event Center and Safeco Field complexes, the mix of industrial and commercial uses includes restaurants, warehouse/distribution, home products retail stores, wholesale, parking lots and offices. The “WOSCA property” (recently narrowed in east-west width by acquisition of the western half for SR 99 right-of-way purposes) extends north of S. Royal Brougham Way on the west side of 1st Avenue S. in this vicinity, representing the northernmost extension of the MIC. The 1st Avenue S., 4th Avenue S., S. Royal Brougham Way and Occidental Avenue S. corridors are intermittently affected by traffic from stadium and event center activities, such as 80+ baseball games a year, 10 football games a year, and numerous other regularly scheduled soccer, tradeshow and concert activities. These events

bring large volumes of pedestrians and related festival-style street vending that intermittently affect traffic congestion and the efficiency of business activities.

South of S. Dearborn Street in the Airport Way S. vicinity, uses include warehouses, printing, automobile repair, City operations yard, food preparation and distribution, as well as the William Booth Center (transitional housing), the vacant former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) building, and parking lots. Typical buildings in these vicinities range from 10 to 20 feet in height.

The largest nearby uses west and southwest of this vicinity are the Port of Seattle Terminal 46 container terminal and Seattle International Gateway (SIG) Railyard. These facilities provide for movement of large volumes of goods into and out of the country via container traffic by ship, truck and rail, at all times of day. Truck movements to and from the terminal occur via all streets in the local network, including movements that transfer goods to and from trains. A “tail track” that extends north-south near Alaskan Way allows for connection of railcars and other train movements. East of the stadiums, a Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railyard and rail corridor serves Sound Transit, Amtrak and other rail service to/from King Street Station; at-grade rail crossings intermittently affect traffic on Royal Brougham Way and S. Holgate Street. Also adjacent to the study area at S. Atlantic Street, the Bemis Building provides live/work space for more than 30 tenants. East of 4th Avenue S. and south of S. Royal Brougham Way, the dominant uses near the study area are transportation-oriented, primarily related to the King County Metro bus base.

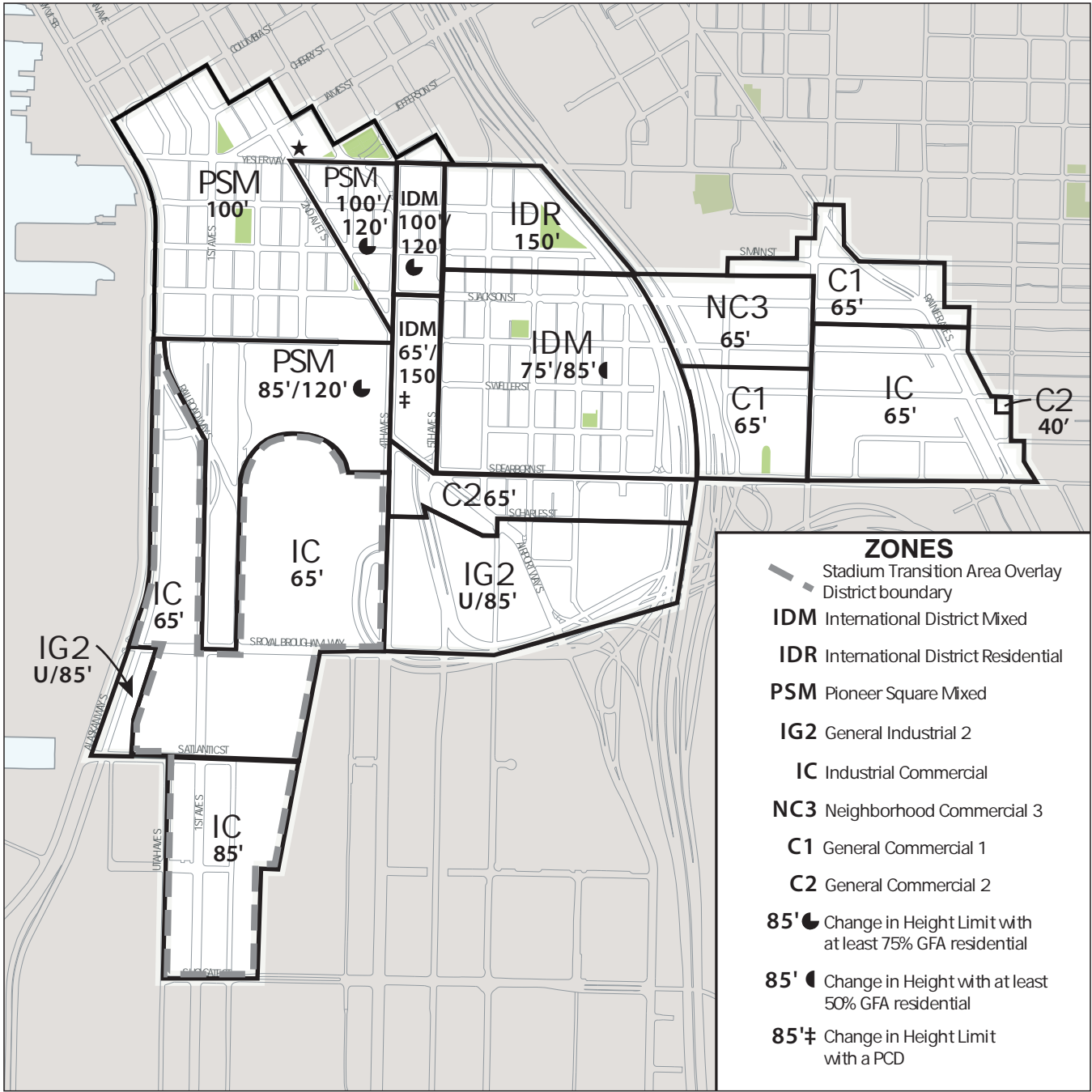
Zoning Patterns

Pioneer Square

The Pioneer Square neighborhood is uniformly zoned “Pioneer Square Mixed” (PSM), denoting a Special Review District and neighborhood-specific zone regulations. The PSM zone accommodates a wide variety of uses, but prohibits several types of heavy commercial and light industrial uses. Four different height districts are present in Pioneer Square: a 100-foot district, an 85/120-foot district, a 100/120-foot district, and a 245-foot district (the latter primarily at the Smith Tower property). The 100-foot district is the most prevalent, covering most of the area between Columbia Street and S. King Street. The 100/120-foot district lies predominantly east of Second Avenue Extension south of Yesler Way. The 85/120-foot district lies south of S. King Street in the stadium vicinity, including the North Lot of Qwest Field and properties along the east side of 1st Avenue S. south to Royal Brougham Way (see Figure 3-1). The maximum 120-foot height may be achieved in these areas only if 75% of the floor area of a building is in residential use.

Chinatown/L.D. West of I-5

This area is zoned “International District Mixed” (IDM) or “International District Residential” (IDR), denoting a Special Review District and neighborhood-specific zone regulations. The IDM and IDR zones accommodate a wide variety of uses, but prohibit several types of heavy commercial and light industrial uses. The IDR zone encourages residential uses. Three different height districts are present in the IDM zone: a 75/85-foot district, a 100/120-foot district, and a 150-foot district. The 75/85-foot district is the most prevalent, covering the central area between the north side of S. Jackson Street to S. Dearborn Street, and from 5th Avenue S. east to I-5. The 100/120-foot district lies north of S. Jackson Street in the 4th and 5th Avenue vicinity, adjacent to the similar height Pioneer Square zone. In both the aforementioned zones, the maximum heights may be achieved in these areas if at least 50% of the floor area of a building is in residential use. The 150-foot district defines the Union Station office development vicinity between 4th and 5th Avenues S., between S. Jackson Street and Airport Way S. (see Figure 3-1).



Note: PSM zone with a 245 foot height limit at the Smith Tower shown with a ★

Livable South Downtown

Figure 3-1
Existing Zones

Little Saigon

This area east of I-5 includes two commercial zones and one industrial zone that are unusual in their application to areas within the Downtown Urban Center. The “General Commercial 1” (C1) zone is present along S. Jackson Street east of 12th Avenue S., and also west of 12th Avenue S. on properties accessed by S. Weller Street south to S. Dearborn Street. The “Neighborhood Commercial 3” (NC3) zone is present on properties accessed by S. Jackson Street and S. King Street west of 12th Avenue S. An area-specific rule for this vicinity allows for maximized building bulk to the height envelope. The Industrial Commercial (IC) zone is present east of 12th Avenue S., on properties accessed by S. King Street south to S. Dearborn Street and beyond, and is also present on the east side of Rainier Avenue S. (refer to Figure 3-1).

South-of-Dearborn

This vicinity includes two zones: a “General Commercial 2” (C2) zone with an 85-foot height limit in the first block south of S. Dearborn Street (including the former INS building), and a General Industrial 2 (IG2) zone with an U/85-foot height limit, meaning industrial uses have no height limit and other non-industrial uses can reach 85 feet (refer to Figure 3-1).

Stadium Area

This portion of the study area is zoned “Industrial Commercial” (IC) with a “Stadium Transition Area Overlay District” overlay zone. This overlay zone includes area on the west side of 1st Avenue S. south of Railroad Way S., and also property as far north as the northern edge of Qwest Field east to 4th Avenue S. It also includes all of the EIS study area south of Royal Brougham Way except for an IG2 zone in the western portion of the “Pyramid Brewery block” near S. Atlantic Street. The Stadium Transition Area Overlay District’s purpose is described in SMC 23.74.002 as allowing uses complementary to the athletic facilities that will contribute to a safer pedestrian environment in the District while minimizing conflicts with industrial uses (see the Relationship to Plans and Policies for the full text of the purpose and intent of this overlay zone). In effect, the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District recognizes the nature of the land use pattern that transitions between Downtown neighborhoods and industrial uses south and west of this vicinity.

The IC zone category accommodates a wider variety of commercial uses than the other Industrial zones. The area north of S. Atlantic Street, including the WOSCA property, most of the “Pyramid Brewery block,” Safeco Field and Qwest Field event center uses, is zoned IC with a 65-foot height limit. South of S. Atlantic Street to S. Holgate Street along 1st Avenue S. and Occidental Avenue S., there is an IC zone with a 85-foot height limit (refer to Figure 3-1). This 85-foot height limit is comparable to other limits for non-industrial uses in the IG1 and IG2 zones located further south in the MIC. Within the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District, the spectator sports facilities are accommodated by other regulations that allow for heights for stadiums to be higher than 65 feet.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The objectives of Livable South Downtown planning are multi-layered—favoring a high-quality livable urban environment, increased housing opportunities complementary to these neighborhoods, respecting and enhancing neighborhood character and functions, encouraging appropriate economic growth, and ensuring efficient and sustainable transportation and utility systems. Urban design objectives encourage several kinds of streetscape, recreational and other improvements with amenities and aesthetic value. Not all of these potentially positive effects are included in this impact analysis, due to an emphasis in SEPA on identifying and disclosing adverse impacts.

The historic nature of the study area neighborhoods is an important aspect of the land use context. The alternatives have been defined in light of the historic values, with an intention to encourage land uses that will maintain compatibility with the existing historic neighborhood character.

The studied alternatives include zoning choices that would affect *where* infill development should occur, and *how much* growth should occur in terms of building height and density. These alternatives have been tailored to the characteristics of each subarea, with the intent of defining future development patterns that are plausible and would be compatible within the context of South Downtown. This should limit the potential for significant adverse land use and zoning impacts.

The impact discussion below discusses changes that would affect comprehensive plan designations, and land use and development pattern impacts. Further discussion about the height/bulk/scale implications of the alternatives is included in the Chapter 3 section “Land Use—Height, Bulk, Scale and Compatibility” and Appendix B to this Draft EIS. Development capacity implications of the alternatives are discussed in the Population and Employment section of Chapter 3 of this Draft EIS.

POTENTIAL CHANGES AFFECTING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATIONS

The alternatives include proposals for amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. Such changes occur through the annual amendment process for the Comprehensive Plan. In this process, decisionmakers make choices about amendments relating to land use plans, policies and preferred future land use patterns. The following paragraphs summarize and comment on the proposed changes that would affect the Comprehensive Plan. Figure 3-2 illustrates the areas addressed by these alternative proposals.

Stadium Area – West side of 1st Avenue S. – Alternatives 1 and 3

Under Alternatives 1 and 3, the west side of 1st Avenue S. south to Royal Brougham Way, consisting primarily of the WOSCA property, would be included in the Downtown Urban Center and removed from the Greater Duwamish Manufacturing and Industrial Center (MIC). Under both alternatives, the proposed zoning is a new “South Downtown Mixed” (SDM) zone that would accommodate commercial development in the southern two-thirds of the WOSCA property, and accommodate residential, commercial or mixed-use development in the northern third of the WOSCA property. This would represent a change in the current Comprehensive Plan’s preferred future land use pattern, moving away from industrial uses and toward denser commercial and possible residential uses. Residential land use would be newly allowed on the west side of 1st Avenue S. south of Railroad Way S. (it is already permitted on the east side of 1st Avenue S. that is zoned Pioneer Square Mixed). Development density would be increased with adoption of SDM zones.

South-of-Dearborn vicinity – Alternative 3

Under Alternative 3 the south-of-Dearborn vicinity would be moved into the Downtown Urban Center and removed from the Greater Duwamish MIC. Proposed zoning under Alternative 3 would be to the new SDM zone, encouraging a mix of commercial and residential development. The residential land use would be a type of use newly permitted in this vicinity, and development density would be increased through these changes.

Stadium Area, Pioneer Square – southern portion of Qwest Field north parking lot – Alternative 2

Alternative 2 includes a proposed rezone of the southern half of the Qwest Field north parking lot to Industrial Commercial, which would require a change in the comprehensive plan designation from a Downtown designation to an Industrial designation. This would also represent a change in future land use in an area currently zoned and designated within the Pioneer Square Preservation District. Such a change would alter the range of possible land uses that could occur within the Preservation District, including prohibiting residential land uses. It would also reduce density limits, given the difference between Pioneer Square and IC zones, of which the latter has a density limit of 3 FAR. Due to the extent of change in land use designation and potential future development patterns and the corresponding effects on a part of the Pioneer Square Preservation District, this proposal is interpreted as generating significant adverse land use impacts. For this reason, it is an action not likely to be included in Livable South Downtown final zoning recommendations.

Little Saigon – Vicinity east of 12th Avenue S. – all Alternatives

In 2006, the City Council approved an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan for the Goodwill property vicinity from Industrial to Commercial/Mixed Use. This leaves the balance of an area from one-half block south of S. King Street and west of 12th Avenue S., including property east of Rainier Avenue S., still within an Industrial use designation. All of the alternatives in this EIS assume a proposed change in this area from the Industrial use designation to Commercial/Mixed Use in the Comprehensive Plan. Such a change would newly accommodate residential uses and may increase the overall development density depending upon zoning choices. As of September 2007, a Comprehensive Plan amendment was proposed to reverse the 2006 changes and re-designate the Goodwill property vicinity back to an Industrial designation, but no decision had been made. However, that proposed amendment was not supported by the City Council.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

This impact analysis discusses whether proposed land use and zoning under the alternatives would create conflicts due to the adjacency of zones and/or the future use and development patterns that could result from the zoning. This encompasses zoning principles such as impacts of more intensive zones on less intensive zones and similar concepts like transitions between zones. It also overlaps with the topic of compatibility, for which additional discussion is provided in the next section entitled “Land Use – Height, Bulk, Scale and Compatibility.”

In general, the range of changes proposed in Alternatives 1, 2, ~~and 3~~ and the Preferred Alternative would in most cases increase overall development capabilities within and near the historic cores of Pioneer Square and Chinatown/I.D., including a swath of property east and west of the Qwest Field vicinity extending eastward to I-5. The range of changes in Alternatives 1, 2, ~~and 3~~ and the Preferred Alternative would also increase the capacity to grow in Little Saigon, which functions as a second core of the Chinatown/I.D. neighborhood, east of Interstate 5. The following interprets potential adverse land use impacts of future development under the alternatives’ zone proposals.

Pioneer Square

The analysis reviews four primary sub-areas in this neighborhood: the “core” area currently in a PSM 100’ zone; the north half of the Qwest Field north parking lot; the “over-tracks” properties south of S. Jackson Street; and the “railroad gap” properties on the west side of 4th Avenue S. that are north of S. Jackson Street. In each of these areas, the analysis concludes that the alternative zoning proposals would be able to occur without significant adverse impacts to land use and zoning patterns. This conclusion is independent of the height, bulk and scale impact analysis discussed in the next section of Chapter 3. The conclusions indicate that future uses within these zones would fit into the existing land use and zoning pattern without significant impacts related to transitions, development intensities or conflicts between zones. The conclusions are summarized briefly below for the neighborhood sub-areas, for the Alternatives.

“Core” area

Protections afforded by the existing PSM zone and Special Review District oversight, the limited extent of change, and the targeting of height increases (in Alternatives 1, ~~and 2~~ and the Preferred Alternative) to vacant and non-historic-contributing properties would help avoid significant adverse land use impacts. Alternative 3’s height limit at 100 feet would generate the least potential for significant impacts. These alternatives would accommodate infill development within the Pioneer Square core area that would fit into the historic district and could have positive impacts through increased numbers of residents, expanded business activity and a better-activated street environment with fewer gaps. All of the action alternatives would provide for complementary arrangements of land uses within the “core” area, including active non-residential uses at street-level and residential or non-residential uses in floors above street-level.

Qwest Field north parking lot

Future infill development in the north half of the north parking lot would likely consist of multifamily residential uses, retail commercial uses at ground floor, and other possible commercial uses such as hotel or office. Under the Preferred Alternative, a larger amount of commercial uses could occur primarily in the eastern portion of the subject property. This larger concentration of commercial uses would increase the intensity of use in this immediate vicinity and generate higher activity levels and traffic than identified for the other alternatives. However, under any of these alternatives, these kinds of uses would fit into and extend the land use pattern of the Pioneer Square neighborhood without generating significant adverse

land use or development pattern impacts or conflicts. Even though the intensity of use would increase under the Preferred Alternative and consequently vary to some degree from the historic land use pattern of Pioneer Square, the probable intensity and mix of uses would be compatible with the immediate environment that includes a transit hub, a concentration of office uses nearby, and adjacent Downtown Urban Center neighborhoods. These conclusions are inferred in part due to expected conformance with Pioneer Square regulations and guidelines, review of future development by the Pioneer Square Preservation Board, and a scarcity lack of incompatible uses and activities. Stadium and event center activities- Future development would not generate significant adverse land use conflicts or incompatibilities in relation to stadium and event center activities, in part because event staging activity could continue to occur, even if off-street area available for staging is reduced by future development in the north half of the north parking lot. An agreement between the City and First & Goal, entitled "Event Traffic Management Plan, Plan Years 2008-2010," assists in defining arrangements for event staging activities. Transitions between existing buildings surrounding this vicinity and future development would vary, but controls on building bulk and density that lead to good transitions would be possible. Of the alternatives, Alternative 2 and the Preferred Alternative, with up to a 240-foot maximum height limit would represent the greatest transitions in height from the existing building pattern, Alternative 1 would accommodate up to 180 feet, and Alternative 3 would accommodate up to 150 feet. The Preferred Alternative would include a maximum height limit of up to 240 feet applicable to the entire north half of the north parking lot, but also includes height and bulk controls that would help shape and constrain the total amount of building bulk of future development on the north parking lot. See the height, bulk, and scale analysis in the next section of Chapter 3 and Appendix B for further discussion.

"Over-tracks" property

Under Alternatives 1, 2, ~~and 3~~ and the Preferred Alternative, future infill development over the railroad tracks south of King Street Station would increase overall density of land uses and could provide enhanced pedestrian connectivity between the Pioneer Square and Chinatown/I.D. neighborhoods. It would be consistent with a zoning and growth planning approach that locates dense employment centers and mixed uses near a primary transit hub in Downtown. Under Alternative 3, a new "South Downtown Mixed" (SDM) zone would result in increased potential to achieve overall compatibility of future development with its immediate surroundings. Under the Preferred Alternative, proposed PSM zoning would achieve similar purposes as identified for the SDM zone for Alternative 3, and recommended height and bulk controls would influence the arrangement of building bulk in future development. No significant adverse land use-related impacts are identified. This conclusion is independent of the height, bulk and scale impact analysis, which is discussed in the next section of Chapter 3.

"Railroad gap" properties north of S. Jackson Street

In this area at the edge of the Pioneer Square historic core along 4th Avenue S., Alternatives 1 and 2 identify increased height limits to 180 feet and 150 feet, respectively. No changes in this area are proposed under Alternatives 3 and 4. Under the Preferred Alternative, a 150-foot height limit would be applicable to vacant and non-historic properties. Alternatives 1, ~~and 2~~ and the Preferred Alternative would encourage denser development than possible today in an area where infill development would increase continuity of land uses and provide a transition to the Chinatown/I.D. neighborhood vicinity immediately to the east that could have denser and taller development. These changes would not generate significant adverse impacts on land use or development patterns, except that the inclusion of historic-contributing properties abutting 3rd Avenue S. under Alternative 2 could subject those properties to increased pressure for future development. If those properties are omitted from the rezone, or the height limit is not applicable to properties with historic-contributing structures (as under the Preferred Alternative), significant adverse impacts would be avoided. Also, see the height, bulk and scale analysis in the next

section of Chapter 3 and Appendix B, which identifies significant adverse height-related impacts related to Alternative 1.

Chinatown/Japantown, West of I-5

Japantown

Changes accommodating predominantly residential development up to 240 feet in Alternative 1 and the Preferred Alternative, and 180 feet in Alternatives 2 and 3, would encourage infill development in vacant or lightly-developed properties that would increase residential density in this area. No significant adverse land use or development pattern impacts are identified under these alternatives. Rather, net positive impacts of increased residential occupation and streets activated with street-level commercial uses could occur. Height and bulk controls incorporated into the alternatives (or as part of mitigation strategies) would help avoid significant height, bulk and scale impacts, as discussed in the next section of Chapter 3 and Appendix B.

Chinatown

Changes accommodating predominantly residential development up to 125 feet in Alternatives 1 and 2 (and up to 150 feet under the Preferred Alternative) would encourage infill development in vacant or lightly-developed properties that are mostly located south of S. Weller Street in the core of Chinatown. The optional concept to allow for “townhouse-style” residential units at street level is also included in Alternative 1 for selected street-faces south of S. Weller Street. Regardless of street-level use type, Alternatives 1 and 2 are not expected to result in significant adverse land use impacts south of S. Weller Street because future development patterns would not negatively affect land use patterns or create significant incompatibilities with the rest of the historic core. Net positive land use impacts could occur through increased numbers of residents, a more-activated street environment, and expanded business activity. See the other sections in Chapter 3 on height, bulk, scale, economic and business impacts, historic and cultural preservation, population, employment and housing for additional impact discussion.

Alternative 2 also includes the possibility of extending the 125-foot height limit to the block bounded by 5th and 6th Avenues S., S. Weller Street to the south and S. King Street to the north. This would overlap with the National Register Historic District only at the Publix Hotel property. Due to the combination of increased development scale and a sensitivity to maintaining compatibility of development character within and adjacent to the National Register Historic District, the extension of a 125-foot height limit to this particular block adjacent to S. King Street could result in significant adverse land use impacts. There is similar worst-case potential for significant impacts due to the 150-foot height limit under the Preferred Alternative (which would exclude changes to the Publix Hotel property). This does not mean that height limits to 125 feet or 150 feet cannot be adopted for this block. However, mitigation strategies or height and bulk controls, which are defined as part of the Preferred Alternative, should be implemented to further influence the height, bulk and scale of future development. ~~should be implemented.~~ See the next section in Chapter 3 and Appendix B for further discussion of height/bulk/scale impacts.

No changes to the Chinatown vicinity south of S. Weller Street are proposed under Alternative 3 or Alternative 4, meaning no potential for adverse impacts.

Little Saigon

Under Alternatives 1 and 3, different combinations of zones in Little Saigon (a majority of which would be Neighborhood Commercial zones) would include increased height limits up to 85 feet. For both of these alternatives, future development could contribute to the evolution of Little Saigon away from its current use mix that includes heavier commercial and industrial uses. While these trends can be

interpreted as having net positive impacts on the livability of the Little Saigon vicinity, they can also be interpreted as adversely affecting the long-term availability of the existing commercial retail structures for small businesses that have emerged along the Jackson Street retail corridor. However, these are not considered to be significant adverse land use impacts. Please see the Land Use—Economic and Business Impacts section of Chapter 3 and Appendices A, B and C for further discussion of impacts.

Under Alternative 2, proposed zones include Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC) zones with a 65-foot or 85-foot height limit along commercial-use corridors, and a Downtown Mixed Residential (DMR/R) zone with a 125-foot height limit for residential use through the central portion of Little Saigon. As noted in the Chapter 3 Land Use—Height, Bulk, Scale and Compatibility section and Appendix B to the DEIS, the proposed DMR/R zoning, with the moderating effects of recommended bulk controls, would avoid significant adverse height/bulk/scale impacts. Alternative 2 may also adversely affect the long-term availability of the existing commercial retail structures and properties for small businesses. Please see the Land Use—Economic and Business Impacts section of Chapter 3 and Appendices A, B and C for further discussion of impacts.

Under the Preferred Alternative, proposed zoning is relatively similar to Alternative 2, but also includes the possibility of mixed-use development up to 125 or 150 feet along the S. Jackson Street corridor, and mixed-use development up to 160 feet in the Dearborn Street corridor. Conclusions about potential impacts are similar to those identified for Alternative 2, but with somewhat greater potential than Alternative 2 for “adverse” impacts such as those related to small business presence. Also, it should be noted that recommended bulk controls and amenity-related recommendations such as for through-block connections could result in greater potential for net positive land use impacts on the neighborhood over time, as infill development could help provide a land use pattern that has better pedestrian connections and better knits together Little Saigon with adjoining areas.

Under ~~all~~ Alternatives 1, 2 and 3, the vicinity east of Rainier Avenue S. is proposed for a Neighborhood Commercial 3 zone with a 65-foot height limit, the same maximum height limits as currently accommodated. Under the Preferred Alternative, the recommended zone is the slightly less-intensive Neighborhood Commercial 2 zone with a 65-foot height limit. Compared to existing Industrial Commercial and other incidental zones, ~~this changes under any of these alternatives~~ would be a favorable change for the sake of transition and compatibility of uses in this well-defined commercial corridor that quickly transitions to low-density residential uses uphill to the east.

South-of-Dearborn

Under Alternatives 1 and 2, an IC zone with a height limit of 125 feet or 160 feet, respectively, would alter the probable future use pattern toward a more intensive mix of structures more likely to be taller and intended for primarily commercial/office uses. Similar conclusions are reached with respect to the Preferred Alternative which has a similar IC zone with a 160-foot height limit. Under Alternative 1, ~~or~~ 2, or the Preferred Alternative, properties within the first block south of S. Dearborn Street (per International District Mixed or Downtown Mixed Commercial zone options) could develop either as commercial or as mixed-use structures including housing. None of these outcomes are identified as generating significant adverse land use or development pattern impacts, due to the retention of Industrial zoning south of S. Charles Street, the relatively low potential for conflicting land uses in this vicinity due to natural and manmade “edge” conditions, and the prevailing land use patterns in the surrounding area. See the height, bulk, and scale analysis in the next section of Chapter 3 and Appendices A and B for further discussion of impacts.

Under Alternative 3, proposed “South Downtown Mixed” (SDM) zoning could result in future development up to 160 feet in height that would likely include residential and commercial office uses concentrated along 6th Avenue S. This could achieve the greatest overall density of development and activity levels among the EIS alternatives. Due to the emphasis of SDM zoning on achieving enhanced public spaces and amenities, the overall urban design quality of sidewalks and outdoor areas could be higher than under other alternatives, potentially helping to establish a more pedestrian-friendly identity for this vicinity and improved connections to the Chinatown core to the north.

Under Alternative 3, a choice by City decisionmakers to move this vicinity into the Downtown Urban Center and out of the Manufacturing and Industrial Center would represent a significant shift in the preferred land use pattern expressed in the Comprehensive Plan. However, the predicted land use and development patterns identified in this EIS are not likely to generate significant adverse impacts. Several of the trends described in the paragraph above have the potential for net positive effects on land use and development patterns, through evolution of an enhanced multi-use district adjacent to Chinatown/I.D. Adverse impacts would include increased proximity of residents to the Charles Street Yards and potential increase in noise complaints due to that facility’s operations, and increased density of non-industrial uses along freight routes in that immediate vicinity. With respect to their relationship to industrial uses, these are interpreted as adverse but not significant adverse land use impacts. Other potential for land use conflicts with industrial areas to the south is already mitigated by existing manmade features (e.g., Interstate 90 ramps) and topographical edge conditions and the predominant presence of low-density transit base uses nearby to the south—meaning a low potential for industrial land use-related conflicts. See the height, bulk, and scale and compatibility analysis in the next section of Chapter 3 and Appendices A and B for further discussion of impacts.

Under the No Action Alternative, no zoning-related impacts would occur. In the absence of zoning changes, this vicinity could continue to experience a trend away from small-scale commercial and industrial uses, toward denser commercial uses. A ~~planned~~ automobile dealership under construction on two blocks is assumed, as is re-use of the former INS Building. This could encourage additional gradual infill of commercial uses over time, but likely at densities lower than other alternatives. Beyond 2030, this vicinity could still have properties available for additional future development.

Stadium Area

The Stadium Area’s current zoning and land use patterns establish it as a transitional area where both industrial and commercial uses are accommodated. For example, the Downtown Urban Center includes property on the east side of 1st Avenue S., while the Greater Duwamish MIC includes property on the west side of 1st Avenue S. north of S. Royal Brougham Way, and also includes the Port of Seattle’s Terminal 46 facility west of the study area. The zoning pattern is similarly defined, with a further flexibility in the Industrial Commercial zone and Stadium Transition Area Overlay District that accommodates both industrial and commercial uses in locations within the MIC. In this context, a choice to shift the Comprehensive Plan’s preferred land use pattern from “Manufacturing & Industrial Center” to “Downtown Urban Center” would represent a significant shift in the City’s land use policy. However, the actual effect on future land use and development patterns would depend on the differences in what may be built within the possible zones.

Under Alternatives 1, 2, ~~or~~ 3, or the Preferred Alternative, the future development pattern would continue to represent a transitional environment, with a higher height and possibly higher density of development in locations farthest to the north, stepping down in a graduated fashion in locations further to the south. Under Alternatives 1 and 3, the relative incompatibility of residential uses with nearby Port property operations and railroad uses due to activity levels and possible light and noise impacts, results in the identification of probable significant adverse compatibility-related impacts for Alternative 1 and 3 zoning

in the northern WOSCA property vicinity. The primary strategies for avoiding such impacts would be to either prohibit residential uses in the relevant zone, or constrain their location and orientation to shield them from adverse exposure to Port facilities.

The Alternative 3 concept to define hotel (lodging) as a permissible use in the 1st Avenue S. vicinity south of S. Royal Brougham Way is identified as generating a probable significant adverse impact. This is due to the relative incompatibilities of hotels with industrial uses in this vicinity, the area's function as a transportation crossroads for freight, event and commuter traffic, and relatively high noise levels generated by rail systems and other activities. ~~However, no other significant adverse land use and development pattern impacts are identified for either the 1st Avenue S. corridor or the 4th Avenue S. corridors in the Stadium Area.~~

It should be noted as part of the context for this impact analysis that the probable use of the WOSCA property in the near-term will be for construction staging purposes for SR99 construction work, while the western half of that property was acquired by the State of Washington for probable right-of-way purposes. Additional supporting discussion for the impact conclusions in paragraphs above is provided below for the 1st Avenue S. and 4th Avenue S. corridors.

1st Avenue S. Corridor

Under Alternatives 1 and 3, the expected future land use and development patterns could be altered. Alternative 1 and 3 zoning in a new "South Downtown Mixed" zone would accommodate residential and commercial uses in taller, denser buildings in the approximate northern third portion of the WOSCA property west of 1st Avenue S. and south of Railroad Way S., north of approximately S. Dearborn Street if extended, where ~~they~~ residential uses are not currently allowed. Alternative 1 defines a maximum height limit of 160 feet, and Alternative 3 ~~2~~ defines a maximum height limit of 120 feet in that vicinity. Both alternatives would allow taller, denser commercial buildings (to 100 feet in height) in the approximate southern two-thirds balance of the WOSCA property. This zoning would likely encourage future infill development along the west side of 1st Avenue S. The SDM zone would include a special review process that would positively influence characteristics such as the layout of buildings, public spaces and access to/from large properties. This process would encourage land use patterns compatible with adjacent streets and properties. compared to other zoning options. Most commercial uses, as also contemplated by the existing IC zone, would not experience or generate a potential for significant land use incompatibilities or other land use/development pattern impacts. However, residential uses west of 1st Avenue S. in this subarea, in the worst-case, would generate probable significant adverse land use incompatibility impacts due to their sensitivities and conflicts with activity levels, noise and light generated by nearby railroad and Port operations. Such operations could increase in future years. Despite the identified worst-case impact, there would remain some potential for housing to be developed without significant adverse compatibility impacts, if the residential use was sufficiently shielded from the effects of railroad and Port operations. For example, housing might be oriented only toward 1st Avenue S., possibly incorporated into a single building with other non-residential uses, and/or constructed using materials and construction techniques that will ensure adequate attenuation of exterior noise.

With respect to zoning patterns under Alternatives 1 and 3, the SDM zone could be defined as the zone that underlies the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District overlay zone, or as a zone that could incorporate the purpose, intent and relevant details of the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District and thereby replace it. If the latter option was preferred, removal of the Overlay District from the area north of S. Royal Brougham Way and west of 1st Avenue S. under Alternatives 1 and 3 could be considered. Because in either case the purpose, intent and all relevant details of the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District can continue to be fulfilled by future zoning choices, no significant adverse land use impacts related to zoning patterns are identified in this subarea.

Under Alternative 2 and the Preferred Alternative, IC zoning in all locations south of Pioneer Square would be compatible with existing zoning patterns at the northern edge of the MIC, and no change in Comprehensive Plan designation would be needed. Along the west side of 1st Avenue S. in the northern two-thirds of the WOSCA property, height limits under Alternative 2 would be raised to 85 and 100 feet (refer to Figure 2-5), but the IC zone and the Stadium Transition Area Overlay District overlay zone would be retained with no increase in the permissible density of development. No significant adverse land use impacts would be associated with these changes. Under the Preferred Alternative, an increased height and density of probable commercial uses would accommodate larger buildings and denser uses along the west side of 1st Avenue S. However, due to the constraining effects of recommended height, bulk and density controls, and the nature of the zones and permissible uses and their compatibility with surroundings, future land uses under the Preferred Alternative could occur without incurring significant land use development pattern impacts. This conclusion is independent of conclusions made with respect to height, bulk and scale impacts. See the Land Use—Height, Bulk, Scale and Compatibility section in Chapter 3 and Appendices A and B for further discussion.

On the “Pyramid Brewery block” (located between S. Royal Brougham Way, 1st Avenue S., S. Atlantic Street and railroad right-of-way), the proposal under Alternatives 1 and 3 to increase the height limit from 65 feet to 85 feet would accommodate taller forms of future development, but would not increase the permissible density of development. For the portion of this block currently zoned IG2 U/85’, the proposal under Alternatives 1 and 3 would change the zone designation to Industrial Commercial, would not increase the height limit from what is already allowed for non-industrial uses, and would increase permissible density of development by 0.5 FAR. No significant adverse land use impacts would be associated with these changes. See the Land Use—Height, Bulk, Scale and Compatibility section in Chapter 3 and Appendices A and B for further discussion.

In portions of the study area south of S. Atlantic Street under all alternatives, retention of IC zoning and Stadium Area Overlay at the current height limit of 85 feet means there would be no change in the expected land use and development pattern and no associated potential for significant adverse land use impacts. However, please note the conclusion earlier in this discussion about probable significant compatibility-related impacts of lodging uses under Alternative 3.

4th Avenue S. Corridor

On the east side of 4th Avenue S. between approximately S. Royal Brougham Way and S. Charles Street, a rezone from IG2 to IC under Alternatives 1, ~~and 2~~, and the Preferred Alternative, would increase the probability of office uses and the probable commercial density of use just outside the Downtown Urban Center. The same is true for proposed height increases within the IC zone on the west side of 4th Avenue S. under Alternatives 1 and 2. These changes can be categorized as “adverse” land use impacts but not “significant adverse” impacts, because they would diminish the probability of future industrial uses, even though the industrial zone would be retained.

Similarly, under Alternative 3, a rezone to SDM east of 4th Avenue S. (which includes the entire south-of-Dearborn vicinity) would increase the probable density of future commercial use of this vicinity and would also introduce the possibility of new residential development as well. This type of change would be the result of a conscious choice by decision-makers to alter the future land use designations in this vicinity away from industrial uses and toward a mix of uses. This would represent a significant change from the land use patterns advocated by the Greater Duwamish MIC Plan. It can be categorized as an “adverse” land use impact. However, it would not likely represent a “significant adverse” land use impact under Alternative 3 because this is an “edge” area of the MIC, there is a scarcity of substantive conflicts

with surrounding land uses, and there is an ability to accommodate development in this vicinity without significant impairments to freight and general traffic in the 4th Avenue S. corridor.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no zone changes would occur and no zoning-related impacts would occur. In the absence of zoning changes, this vicinity could experience a gradual trend toward increased commercial development and reduced presence of industrial uses. This might include development on larger parcels such as the WOSCA property (although it would appear that this property will be used for SR 99 construction staging purposes for several years), but existing low-density use patterns might otherwise continue on such parcels indefinitely. Construction staging demands for SR 99 highway construction could mean an occupation of some parcels for several years.

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Alternatives 1 and 3

Stadium Area

- Significant adverse land use impacts generated by the potential location of residential uses west of 1st Avenue S. could be mitigated by strictly limiting the location and orientation of residential uses such that they are effectively screened from exposure to significant light/noise impacts from Port facilities to the west, and/or constructed using materials and construction techniques that will ensure adequate attenuation of noise.

Alternative 2 and the Preferred Alternative

Pioneer Square

- Confining a proposed 150-foot zoned height limit only to the “railroad gap” properties on the west side of 4th Avenue S. north of S. Jackson Street, or making the maximum height limit applicable only to properties without historic-contributing structures (as under the Preferred Alternative), would avoid increasing development pressures on other historic-contributing properties just to the west in the 3rd Avenue corridor.

Chinatown/I.D.

- See the mitigation strategy proposed in the next section of this chapter, with respect to height, bulk and scale impacts at the block bounded by 5th and 6th Avenues S. and S. King and S. Weller Streets.

Alternative 3

Stadium Area

- If lodging uses are allowed in locations south of S. Royal Brougham Way in the study area, additional controls should be identified to maintain compatibility with existing industrial uses in the affected area, minimize impacts to on-street traffic flows and minimize exposure to significant noise sources including rail yards, railroad tracks, highways and port facilities.

SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

With implementation of mitigation strategies to address the identified significant adverse land use impacts for the alternatives, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts are expected to occur.