

## 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 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue corridor and along S. Jackson and S. King Streets. In the Occidental Park vicinity and eastward to around 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Extension at an angle from the dominant Pioneer Square street grid creates several triangular blocks and triangular spaces along 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Extension until it intersects with 4<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> and Cherry),

the Tashiro Kaplan Building (at Prefontaine Place), and the Quintessa Apartments near 2<sup>nd</sup> and Yesler Way. The Smith Tower is also in design and permitting for conversion 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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, 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. and I-5. This encompasses the active east-west corridors of S. King Street and S. Jackson Street. The vicinity centered at 6<sup>th</sup> 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 study areas lie at the northern bounds of the Greater Duwamish MIC, extending as far south as S. Holgate Street in the 1<sup>st</sup> 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. 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 extends north of S. Royal Brougham Way on the west side of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S. in this vicinity, representing the northernmost extension of the MIC. The 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S., 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S., S. Royal Brougham Way and Occidental Avenue S. corridors are intermittently affected by 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. 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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**

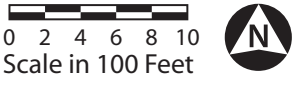
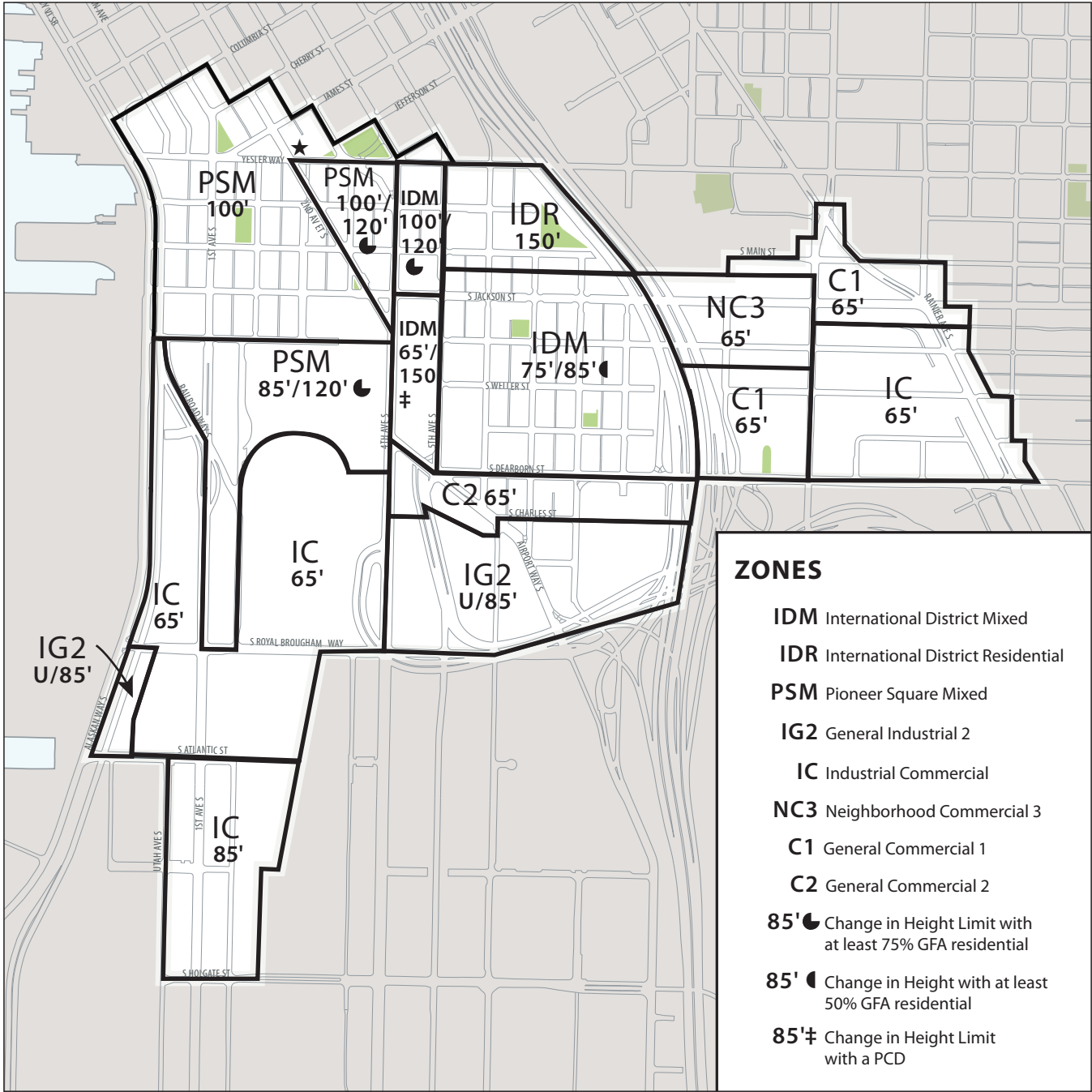
The Pioneer Square neighborhood is uniformly zoned “Pioneer Square Mixed” (PSM), denoting a Special Review District and neighborhood-specific zone regulations. The PSM zone accommodates a wide variety of uses, but prohibits several types of heavy commercial and light industrial uses. Four different height 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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/I.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 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. east to I-5. The 100/120-foot district lies north of S. Jackson Street in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> 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 50% of the floor area of a building is in residential use. The 150-foot district defines the Union Station office development vicinity between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues S., between S. Jackson Street and Airport Way S. (see Figure 3-1).

### **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



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

Livable South Downtown Figure 3-1  
Existing Zones

present along S. Jackson Street east of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue S., and also west of 12<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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” zone. 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, Pyramid brewery, 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 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S. and Occidental Avenue S., there is an 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 Overlay, 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 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S. – Alternatives 1 and 3**

Under Alternatives 1 and 3, the west side of 1<sup>st</sup> 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 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 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S. south of Railroad Way S. (it is already permitted on the east side of 1<sup>st</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

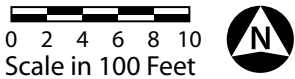
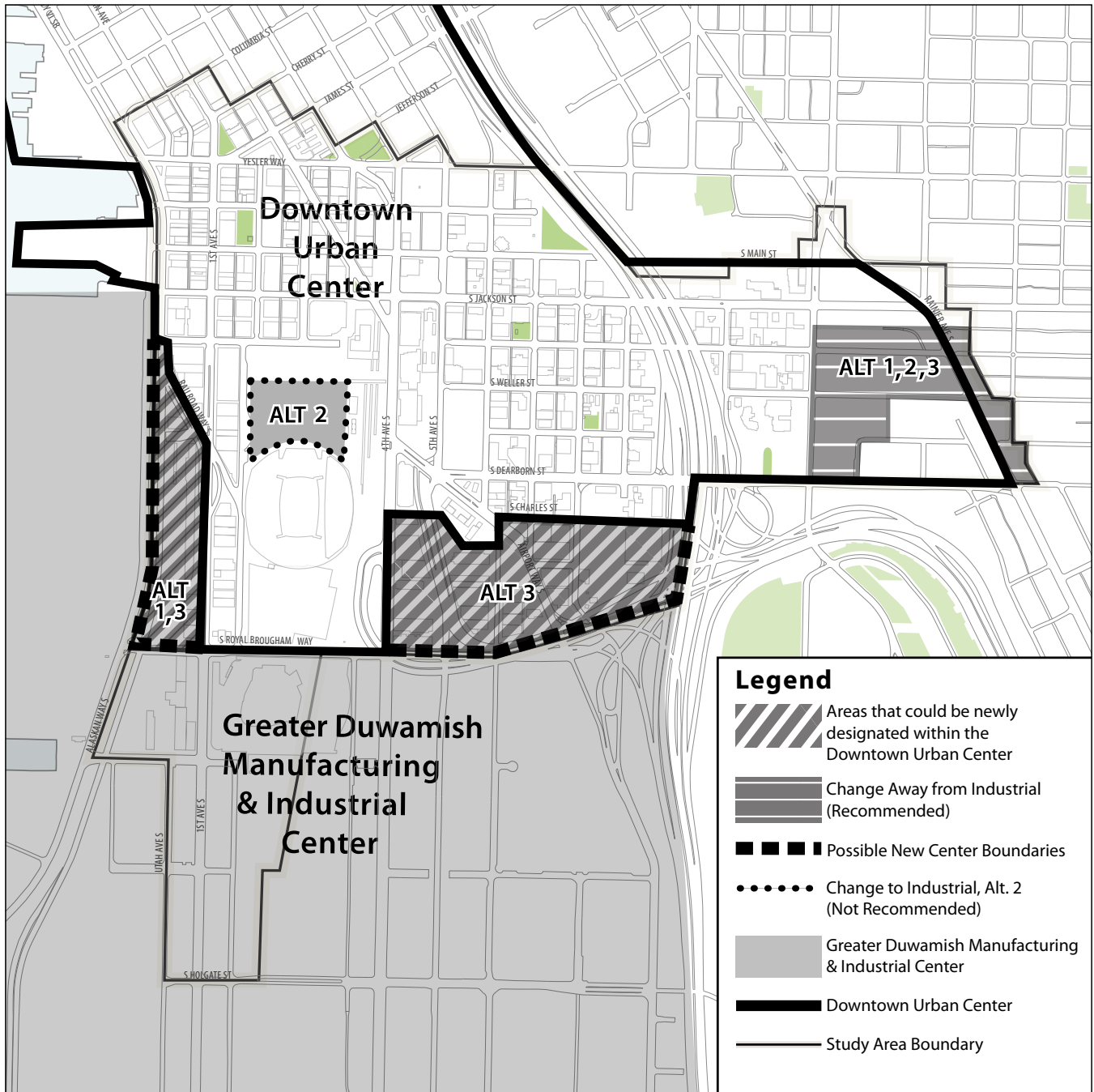


Figure 3-2  
Summary Map of Alternative  
Changes to Comprehensive  
Plan Designations

## **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 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 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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) 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.

#### **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. 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. This conclusion is inferred due to expected conformance with Pioneer Square regulations, and a scarcity of incompatible uses and activities. Stadium and event center activities would not generate significant adverse land use conflicts or incompatibilities. 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. 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 with up to a 240-foot maximum height would present the greatest transition

in height from the existing building pattern, Alternative 1 would accommodate up to 180 feet, and Alternative 3 would accommodate up to 150 feet. 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, 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 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. 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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. Alternatives 1 and 2 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue S. under Alternative 2 could subject those properties to increased pressure for future development. If those properties are omitted from the rezone, 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 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 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 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 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 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. This does not mean that height limits to 125 feet cannot be adopted for this block. However, mitigation strategies 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 all alternatives, 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. Compared to existing Industrial Commercial and other incidental zones, this 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. Under Alternative 1 or 2, properties within the first block south of S. Dearborn Street 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, 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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. 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 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 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S., while the Greater Duwamish MIC includes property on the west side of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S. north of S. Royal Brougham Way. The zoning pattern is similarly defined, with a further flexibility in the Industrial Commercial zone and Stadium Transition Area Overlay 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, 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. The relative incompatibility of residential uses with nearby Port property 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S. corridor or the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. corridors in the Stadium Area.

Additional supporting discussion for the conclusions above is provided below for the 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S. and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. corridors.

### **1<sup>st</sup> 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 uses in taller, denser buildings in the northern portion of the WOSCA property, north of approximately S. Dearborn Street if extended, where they are not currently allowed. Alternative 1 defines a maximum height limit of 160 feet, and Alternative 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 balance of the WOSCA property. This zoning would likely encourage future infill development along the west side of 1<sup>st</sup> 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 would encourage land use patterns compatible with adjacent streets and properties, compared to other zoning options.

Under Alternative 2, 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 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S. in the northern two-thirds of the WOSCA property, height limits would be raised to 85 and 100 feet (refer to Figure 2-5), but the IC 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. 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 Royal Brougham Way, 1<sup>st</sup> 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. 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.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. Corridor**

On the east side of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. between approximately S. Royal Brougham Way and S. Charles Street, a rezone from IG2 to IC under Alternatives 1 and 2 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 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. corridor.

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, 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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**

##### **Pioneer Square**

- Confining a proposed 150-foot zoned height limit only to the “railroad gap” properties on the west side of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. north of S. Jackson Street would avoid increasing development pressures on other historic-contributing properties just to the west in the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 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.