

# **Livable South Downtown Planning Study**

## **Final Environmental Impact Statement**

May 2008

City of Seattle  
Department of Planning and Development



**FINAL**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**  
**FOR**  
**LIVABLE SOUTH DOWNTOWN PLANNING**

**May 2008**

**City of Seattle**  
**Department of Planning and Development**

**Prepared in compliance with:**  
**State Environmental Policy Act**  
**Chapter 43.21, Revised Code of Washington**  
**Chapter 197-11, Washington Administrative Code**

## PREFACE

### INTRODUCTION

On May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD) issued a SEPA Determination of Significance (DS) for recommendations arising from the Livable South Downtown planning effort. The South Downtown planning process was inspired by a vision for future growth in South Downtown expressed by neighborhood plans, community organizations and property owners. The idea of encouraging more residents through infill development and through improvements to the physical environment was attractive to city leaders, and is an extension of neighborhood plan objectives for Pioneer Square and Chinatown/I.D. Numerous discussions between neighborhood stakeholders and City staff since 2004 have informed DPD's work in defining recommendations that are being advanced for further discussion and decisionmaking.

### **DRAFT FINAL EIS ORGANIZATION**

This ~~Draft~~ Final EIS (FEIS) is organized as follows: **Chapter 1** includes a summary of the topics addressed, major conclusions, and a summary of the alternatives' impacts in table form; **Chapter 2** provides background information on the Livable South Downtown planning effort, and a description of the ~~four~~ five alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIS (DEIS); **Chapter 3** analyzes the environmental impacts of the recommendations; **Chapter 4** includes the comment letters received during the Draft EIS comment period, and responses to those comments prepared by the lead agency. **Chapter 5** includes the transcript of the public comment meeting on the Draft EIS and responses to comments made during that meeting. The **FEIS Appendices** contain technical reports (those that have been updated since DEIS publication) from City staff and consultants that support the analyses presented in Chapter 3. Together, the EIS volumes include the FEIS, FEIS Appendices and DEIS Appendices.

### **SEPA NON-PROJECT REVIEW**

Pursuant to the State's SEPA requirements, this environmental impact statement has been prepared to examine the potential for environmental impacts from this proposal. This is a "non-project" proposal in that it involves decisions on land use and zoning regulations for a widespread area rather than a single site-specific project. In this case, the proposal is for changes to zoning, the Land Use Code and possible Comprehensive Plan amendments. The analysis is intended to describe how the proposed regulatory changes would affect future long-term development patterns, and whether those changes would result in significant adverse impacts. The intent of this EIS is to provide substantive analysis of impact implications (at a "programmatic" level of detail), to aid in making final decisions on the proposal.

The State's SEPA rules provide for flexibility in the content and formatting of programmatic environmental review for non-project proposals. Topics that should be addressed include: background, objectives, existing conditions, description of the proposal and alternatives, and environmental impact analysis. The level of analysis should be consistent with the specificity of the proposal and available information.

Programmatic SEPA analyses of non-project proposals can lead to "phased review" in which future development proposals may adopt all or part of a programmatic SEPA analysis and add further site-specific impact analysis as necessary. This can increase the efficiency of environmental review for development proposals in the study area.

## FACT SHEET

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Livable South Downtown planning recommendations</b>
<b>Nature and Location of Proposal</b>	<p>Livable South Downtown planning recommendations have been prepared in draft form, with further work <del>underway</del> by DPD staff to prepare final recommendations <u>and subsequent proposal documents</u>. These are expected to include several rezones in the study area, changes to the Land Use Code, and Comprehensive Plan amendments.</p> <p>This Draft EIS examines <del>four</del> <u>five</u> alternatives that cover a range of possible rezone actions for the City Council’s consideration. <del>Three</del> <u>Four</u> of the alternatives (<b><u>Alternatives 1, 2, and 3, and the Preferred Alternative</u></b>) consist of different combinations of possible zones, maximum heights and densities (volumes) of buildings. Some of the possible zones would also require amendments to the Comprehensive Plan’s preferred land use map. A <b>“No Action” Alternative (Alternative 4)</b> is included to assess what is likely to occur over time under the current Land Use Code and zoning. The impact analysis evaluates hypothetical growth patterns to the year 2030, based on assumptions consistent with Puget Sound Regional Council projections.</p> <p>The area affected by the proposal includes the entire Pioneer Square and Chinatown/International District neighborhoods, a portion of the Greater Duwamish Manufacturing and Industrial Center (MIC) immediately south of the Downtown Urban Center (<u>to 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. S./S. Holgate St.</u>), and a western edge of the Central District known as the Jackson Place neighborhood.</p>
<b>Proponent</b>	City of Seattle
<b>Lead Agency</b>	City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development 700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000 PO Box 34019 Seattle, WA 98124-4019
<b>Responsible Official</b>	Diane Sugimura
<b>Date of Implementation</b>	The proposal will be forwarded to the City Council in 2008.
<b>Contact Person</b>	Gordon Clowers City of Seattle Dept. of Planning and Development 700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000 PO Box 34019 Seattle, WA 98124-4019 206-684-8375
<b>Required Approvals</b>	Actions on the proposal will require approval by the City Council.
<b>Comment Period</b>	Comment period for the DEIS <u>was</u> through December 17th, 2007.

<b>Date of Public Meeting</b>	The public meeting to accept verbal comments on the Draft EIS <del>was</del> <b>will</b> be held on Wednesday, December 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2007 at City Hall, 6:30 PM, in the Bertha Landes Room. City Hall address: 600 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue (enter from 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue between James and Cherry Streets).
<b>EIS Authors and Principal Contributors</b>	<p><b>Primary author, EIS coordination</b> City of Seattle Dept. of Planning and Development staff: Gordon Clowers, Susan McLain, Dennis Meier, John Skelton</p> <p><b>Real Estate/Economic consultants</b> BHC Consultants, Property Counselors Strategic Economics, Trang D. Tu Consulting</p> <p><b>Transportation consultant</b> The Transpo Group</p> <p><b>Noise Analysis consultant</b> ESA Adolfson</p> <p><b>Urban Design consultant</b> Nakano and Associates <u>Makers</u> <u>Atelier Dreiseitl</u></p> <p><b>Historic Resources consultant</b> Beth Dodrill Consulting</p> <p><b>Sustainability consultant</b> International Sustainable Solutions</p>
<b>Location of Background Data</b>	City of Seattle Dept. of Planning and Development 700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000 PO Box 34019 Seattle, WA 98124-4019
<b>FEIS Date of Issuance</b>	May 29, 2008
<b>Nature and Date of Final Action</b>	The City Council is expected to take action in 2008 on the recommendations.
<b>Availability of Draft EIS</b>	<p>Copies of the Final EIS are available for public review at several branches of the Seattle Public Library. Interested parties may obtain copies of the Draft EIS free of charge (while supplies last) at DPD, 20<sup>th</sup> floor Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue. The Draft EIS also may be viewed at DPD's website, at <a href="http://www.seattle.gov/dpd">www.seattle.gov/dpd</a>. A postage fee of \$5.00 must be paid for each volume if documents (FEIS volume and appendix volume) are to be mailed. Please send a check payable to the <b>City of Seattle</b> to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">City of Seattle DPD Public Resource Center PO Box 34019 Seattle, WA 98124-4019</p>

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Earth – Earthquake Hazards .....	Reviewed
Air Quality (see Environmental Health section) .....	Reviewed
Water .....	Not Reviewed
Plants and Animals .....	Not Reviewed
Energy .....	Reviewed
Natural Resources.....	Not Reviewed
Environmental Health—Noise .....	Reviewed
Environmental Health—Toxic/hazardous materials .....	Reviewed
Environmental Health—Risk of Explosion.....	Not Reviewed
Land Use.....	Reviewed
Business/Economic Impacts .....	Reviewed <sup>2</sup>
Height/Bulk/Scale .....	Reviewed
Housing .....	Reviewed
Population and Employment .....	Reviewed <sup>3</sup>
Historic and Cultural Preservation .....	Reviewed <sup>4</sup>
Light and Glare (see Land Use— <u>Height, Bulk, Scale &amp; Compatibility</u> section).....	Reviewed
<u>Scenic Resources and Public View Protection</u> .....	Reviewed
Transportation .....	Reviewed
Parking .....	Reviewed
Fire/Emergency Protection.....	Reviewed
Police Protection.....	Reviewed

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<sup>1</sup> Other elements of the environment not shown in this list are excluded from the EIS scope. With regard to SMC 25.05.440 E 6 a, analysis of employment growth is included but the topics of public investment and taxation are excluded from the EIS scope.

<sup>2,3,4</sup> The topics of business/economic, cultural preservation, population- and employment-related impacts are included as “additional analysis” topics per SMC 25.05.440 G. The adequacy of such analyses shall not be used to determine whether the EIS meets the requirements of SEPA.

Schools .....	Not Reviewed
Parks and Recreation .....	Reviewed
Water Supply .....	Reviewed
Stormwater Utilities .....	Reviewed
Sewer .....	Reviewed
Solid Waste.....	Not Reviewed
Maintenance .....	Not Reviewed
Communications .....	Not Reviewed
Other Governmental Services/utilities .....	Not Reviewed
Shadows on Open Spaces ( <u>see Land Use—Height, Bulk, Scale &amp; Compatibility</u> ) .....	<del>Not Reviewed</del>