

DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR
LIVABLE SOUTH DOWNTOWN PLANNING

November 2007

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 15th, 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 EIS ORGANIZATION

This Draft EIS 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 alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIS; **Chapter 3** analyzes the environmental impacts of the recommendations; the **Appendices** contain technical reports from City staff and consultants that support the analyses presented in Chapter 3.

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

Project Title	Livable South Downtown planning recommendations
Nature and Location of Proposal	<p>Livable South Downtown planning recommendations have been prepared in draft form, with further work underway by DPD staff to prepare final recommendations. 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 four alternatives that cover a range of possible rezone actions for the City Council’s consideration. Three of the alternatives (Alternatives 1, 2 and 3) 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 “No Action” Alternative (Alternative 4) 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, and a western edge of the Central District known as the Jackson Place neighborhood.</p>
Proponent	City of Seattle
Lead Agency	City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development 700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000 PO Box 34019 Seattle, WA 98124-4019
Responsible Official	Diane Sugimura
Date of Implementation	The proposal will be forwarded to the City Council in 2008.
Contact Person	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
Required Approvals	Actions on the proposal will require approval by the City Council.
Comment Period	Comments on this Draft EIS must be submitted by December 17th, 2007.

Date of Public Meeting	The public meeting to accept verbal comments on the Draft EIS will be held on Wednesday, December 5 th , 2007 at City Hall, 6:30 PM, in the Bertha Landes Room. City Hall address: 600 4 th Avenue (enter from 5 th Avenue between James and Cherry Streets).
EIS Authors and Principal Contributors	<p>Primary author, EIS coordination City of Seattle Dept. of Planning and Development staff: Gordon Clowers, Susan McLain, Dennis Meier, John Skelton</p> <p>Real Estate/Economic consultants BHC Consultants, Property Counselors Strategic Economics, Trang D. Tu Consulting</p> <p>Transportation consultant The Transpo Group</p> <p>Noise Analysis consultant ESA Adolfson</p> <p>Urban Design consultant Nakano and Associates</p> <p>Historic Resources consultant Beth Dodrill Consulting</p> <p>Sustainability consultant International Sustainable Solutions</p>
Location of Background Data	City of Seattle Dept. of Planning and Development 700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000 PO Box 34019 Seattle, WA 98124-4019
DEIS Date of Issuance	November 1, 2007
Nature and Date of Final Action	The City Council is expected to take action in 2008 on the recommendations.
Availability of Draft EIS	<p>Copies of the Draft 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, 20th floor Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue. The Draft EIS also may be viewed at DPD's website, at www.seattle.gov/dpd.</p> <p>A postage fee of \$4.60 must be paid if documents are to be mailed. Please send a check payable to the City of Seattle 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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- B. Land Use—Height, Bulk, Scale and Compatibility (Seattle DPD)**
- C. Land Use—Business and Economic Impacts. “Little Saigon & Chinatown/ International District, Impacts on Local Businesses from Proposed Land Use/Zoning Changes and Dearborn Street Mixed-Use Shopping Center (Strategic Economics, Trang D. Tu Consulting)**
 - C-1 Phase I: Assessment of Existing Business and Retail Real Estate Conditions**
 - C-2 Phase II: Evaluation of Likely Impacts of Zoning Changes and Dearborn Street Project**
 - C-3 Phase III: Economic Development Strategies**
- D. Land Use. “An Assessment of Real Estate and Economic Conditions in South Downtown Neighborhoods” (BHC Consultants, Property Counselors)**
- E. “Housing Resources Evaluation and Impact Analysis” (Seattle DPD)**
- F. Noise. “Seattle South Downtown Noise Study (ESA Adolfson)**
- G. Transportation and Parking. “Livable South Downtown Transportation Discipline Report” (The Transpo Group)**
- H. Historic Resources. “Historic & Cultural Resources Report for the Livable South Downtown Draft EIS” (Beth Dodrill Consulting)**
- I. Pioneer Square – Skid Road National Historic District Map and Property Information**

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ELEMENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT¹

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 ²
Height/Bulk/Scale	Reviewed
Housing	Reviewed
Population and Employment	Reviewed ³
Historic and Cultural Preservation	Reviewed ⁴
Light and Glare (see Land Use section)	Reviewed
Public View Protection.....	Reviewed
Transportation	Reviewed
Parking	Reviewed
Fire/Emergency Protection.....	Reviewed
Police Protection.....	Reviewed
Schools	Not Reviewed
Parks and Recreation	Reviewed
Water Supply	Reviewed
Stormwater Utilities	Reviewed
Sewer	Reviewed

¹ 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.

^{2,3,4} 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.

Solid Waste.....	Not Reviewed
Maintenance	Not Reviewed
Communications	Not Reviewed
Other Governmental Services/utilities	Not Reviewed
Shadows on Open Spaces.....	Not Reviewed