

**SCOPE FOR LIVABLE SOUTH DOWNTOWN
PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
November 2006**

INTRODUCTION

The Livable South Downtown planning process is designed to identify land use and zoning recommendations that will guide future development in a large study area that encompasses the Pioneer Square and Chinatown/International District neighborhoods in the Downtown Urban Center as well as the nearby industrial-zoned vicinity at the northern edge of the Greater Duwamish Manufacturing and Industrial Center (MIC).

This document is a scope for an environmental impact statement (EIS) that will provide programmatic environmental review required by the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The Livable South Downtown planning effort published several preliminary recommendations, addressing a variety of possible changes to land use regulations, zoning, and comprehensive plan designation changes. The preliminary recommendations, made by DPD staff, followed an extensive process that included ten meetings of an advisory group, additional meetings with numerous citizen and stakeholder groups, two public open houses, coordination with City departments, and various analyses by DPD staff and consultants. For this programmatic review, the possible range of changes to be studied includes three action alternatives and one no-action alternative. These represent a range of possible land use and zoning choices that could be made within all portions of the study area. None of the alternatives represents a preferred alternative at this time.

SCOPING INITIATED FOR PROGRAMMATIC EIS REVIEW

On May 15th, 2006 the City issued a Determination of Significance and request for comments on the scope of an EIS to be prepared on the proposal. The scoping period concluded on June 15th, 2006, reflecting an expanded scoping period longer than the minimum three-week requirement.

This is a “non-project” proposal, meaning it addresses actions such as adoption of plans or policies that are broader than a single site-specific development project. The EIS will analyze the environmental impact implications of a range of possible land use and zoning changes, with respect to the potential differences in future development patterns by the year 2030. The EIS will be prepared at a “programmatic” level of detail appropriate to its non-project nature. The SEPA rules afford great flexibility in the format and content of programmatic EISs.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL AND ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives studied in this EIS consist of different combinations of zoning and land use regulatory changes. The range of alternatives is meant to provide environmental review covering a spectrum within which decisionmakers may make choices. The range of alternatives studied will consist of the following:

- **Infill Residential and Growth Emphasis Toward West Alternative;**
- **Infill Residential and Growth Emphasis Toward East Alternative;**
- **Distributed Growth Alternative;** and
- a **No Action Alternative** (measuring the impacts of future growth if no zoning and regulatory changes are made);

These are described in accompanying documents as Alternatives 1 through 4, respectively.

EIS SCOPE

The lead agency determines the scope of the EIS, by defining reasonable alternatives and narrowing the scope to study probable significant adverse impacts. Minimizing discussion of non-significant issues makes the EIS more readable and more useful to decisionmakers.

The Determination of Significance for this proposal indicates the elements of the environment to be included in the EIS as: Earth, Land Use, Height/Bulk/Scale, Housing, Population, Employment, Historic and Cultural Preservation, Public View Protection, Environmental Health, Transportation, Parking, Parks and Recreation, Police and Fire Protection, Energy, Water Utilities and Sewers/Storm Drain Utilities.

This scoping document provides more details regarding the topics to be studied for these elements of the environment, to aid in organizing the contents of the EIS. The EIS will address the following topics:

EARTH

1. Evaluate the potential risks and damages that could result from a major seismic event affecting the study area. Refer to available information on potential property damage, utility damage and related types of potential losses that could result.
2. Summarize the current land use and building code requirements that relate to prevention of seismic event damage.
3. Describe possible impacts associated with alternative land use/zoning scenarios, and summarize a list of strategies that can be employed to avoid or minimize risk and damage.

LAND USE (including Compatibility, Height/Bulk/Scale, Urban Design and Relationship to Plans and Policies)

1. Evaluate how the alternatives relate to probable future land use and development patterns within the study area in the year 2030. Describe relationship to current comprehensive planning growth targets.
2. Assess the overall land use compatibility of future development patterns under the alternatives, within the neighborhoods and with other uses in the immediate vicinity of the study area boundaries. Qualitatively describe the adverse impact implications of potential noise, odor, light/glare and shadowing factors to the extent they relate to overall judgments of land use compatibility between types of uses prescribed in the alternatives.
3. Evaluate the potential for adverse height, bulk and scale impacts related to future development, including probable relationships of building envelopes and/or building massing to the existing land use patterns. Include discussion related to potential height, bulk and scale impacts of zone changes in areas adjacent to landmark districts. Include discussion of the relationship of future development to the public realm.
4. Evaluate the positive and negative impact implications of urban design recommendations of Livable South Downtown planning, and their relationship to establishing a future urban environment that avoids or minimizes adverse land use impacts.
5. Evaluate the relationship to relevant plans and policies, including at a minimum the City's applicable comprehensive plan goals and policies, neighborhood plans and other relevant plans and policies.

POPULATION, HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT

Population and Employment

1. Evaluate the probable additional amounts of population and employment growth that could occur with future development by the year 2030, as influenced by the range of land use and zoning recommendations described by the alternatives.

2. Describe the probable impacts on demographic aspects of population and employment in the study area. Reference demographic and employment information that is reasonably available and reliable.
3. At a programmatic level of detail, describe the potential for direct, indirect and/or cumulative impacts of projected population and employment growth on the study area. Describe the extent to which direct or indirect displacement of current residents and businesses may be possible.
4. Discuss the potential for social and/or cultural impacts that might arise as a result of the direct or indirect displacement of residents and businesses.

Housing

5. Summarize characteristics of the existing housing supply in each sub-area, as well as the relationship to City housing policies, including Comprehensive Plan and neighborhood plan housing-related policies.
6. Evaluate the potential for significant adverse impacts of future development on housing resources within the study area. Specifically, at a programmatic level of detail examine how the land use and zoning recommendations may affect existing housing resources, the potential for future development of housing resources, and the regulatory and policy environment relevant to housing.
7. Describe and evaluate the potential effects of using regulatory, policy and/or financial strategies that would address the retention and expansion of affordable housing resources within the study area. To the extent possible, characterize how preferred strategies may help provide for a balanced approach to housing that will assist in the realization of a range of housing types, a goal expressed by relevant plans and policies.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION

1. Evaluate the potential for proposed land use, zoning and regulatory changes to result in significant adverse impacts on the character of historic districts and historic resources present within the study area.
2. Discuss the implications of employing regulatory tools such as transfer of development rights, bulk/setback requirements, and other types of recommended changes, on historic districts and historic resources.
3. Indicate whether there are existing buildings or resources in the study area that are not currently designated but would possibly qualify as landmark buildings or resources.

PUBLIC VIEW PROTECTION

1. Evaluate the potential for significant adverse impacts on protection of public views to and from locations designated in the City's SEPA policies.

2. Discuss relationship of the land use and zoning recommendations to pertinent City view protection policies.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

1. At a programmatic level, review the potential adverse environmental health implications of additional future development associated with land use and zoning recommendations. Limit the discussion predominantly to areas where toxic/hazardous materials are most likely to be present, e.g. areas in current or past industrial use, with a generalized assessment of the potential for risk of exposure with future development. Similarly, based on existing available data and other agency input, discuss environmental health implications of residential exposure to air pollutant emissions from industrial activities, freight transportation and other vehicle traffic.
2. Discuss the potentially positive public health and environmental health impacts related to increasing density in urban centers and recommendations related to promoting environmentally sustainable development and infrastructure. As possible, indicate the relationship of future development to positive and negative implications for greenhouse gas emissions.

TRANSPORTATION

1. Evaluate the travel characteristics and the alternatives' potential for significant adverse impacts on the transportation network in the year 2030. Discuss traffic circulation impacts at a level of detail congruent with the programmatic nature of this non-project proposal.
2. Discuss the alternatives' potential for significant adverse impacts on transit services and non-motorized transportation modes including bicycle and pedestrian modes.
3. Discuss the alternatives' potential for significant adverse impacts on freight and goods movement, in terms of the relationship to known freight routes and how they could potentially be affected by future nearby development and/or street improvements.
4. Evaluate the proposal's relationship to pertinent City transportation plans and policies and known major improvement projects, in terms of 2030 conditions and the proposal's impacts, if any, during the intervening years.

PARKING

1. Provide a brief overview of existing parking conditions in affected neighborhoods, referencing past studies and other materials as available.
2. At a programmatic level of detail, evaluate the alternatives' potential for significant adverse impacts on parking supply and demand, disclosing the broad implications of future growth for on-street and off-street parking resources.

3. Evaluate the extent to which near-term and long-term major infrastructure improvement projects may affect parking conditions in the study area.
4. Evaluate the alternatives' relationship to pertinent City parking policies.

PARKS AND RECREATION

1. At a programmatic level, evaluate the alternatives' potential for significant adverse impacts on parks and recreation in the study area, in terms of the additional demands that could occur with future development to year 2030, and the capacity of existing and planned resources to accommodate those demands. As possible, describe the potential benefits of incorporating environmentally sustainable strategies.

FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION

Fire/Emergency Services

1. At a programmatic level, summarize existing conditions and evaluate the alternatives' potential for adverse impacts on fire and emergency protection services. Evaluate the net additional service demands that could occur with future growth related to the alternatives through year 2030, and the capability to accommodate those demands with fire/emergency equipment, staffing, and facilities.

Police

2. At a programmatic level, summarize existing conditions and evaluate the alternatives' potential for adverse impacts on police services. Evaluate the net additional service demands that could occur with future growth related to the alternatives through year 2030, and the capability to accommodate those demands with staffing.

ENERGY

1. At a programmatic level, summarize existing conditions and evaluate the alternatives' potential for significant adverse impacts on electrical energy utility systems, in terms of the additional energy demands that could occur with future development through year 2030, and the capacity of existing and planned systems to accommodate those demands. As possible, describe the potential benefits of incorporating environmentally sustainable strategies.

WATER UTILITIES

1. At a programmatic level, summarize existing conditions and evaluate the alternatives' potential for significant adverse impacts on water utility systems, in terms of the additional volume demands and effects on fire flow that might occur with future development through year 2030, and the capacity of existing and/or

planned systems to accommodate those demands. As possible, describe the potential benefits of incorporating environmentally sustainable strategies.

SEWER/STORM DRAIN UTILITIES

1. At a programmatic level, summarize existing conditions and evaluate the alternatives' potential for significant adverse impacts on sewer utility systems, in terms of the additional sewage volume demands that could occur with future development through year 2030, and the capacity of existing and/or planned systems to accommodate those demands. As possible, describe the potential benefits of incorporating environmentally sustainable strategies.
2. At a programmatic level, summarize existing conditions and evaluate the alternatives' potential for significant adverse impacts on stormwater drainage systems, in terms of the capacity of existing and/or planned systems to accommodate projected needs. As possible, describe the potential benefits of incorporating environmentally sustainable strategies.

MITIGATION MEASURES

In each section, include discussion of mitigation measures that would or could be taken to avoid or reduce identified significant adverse impacts.

SUMMARY

Include a summary table (or chapter) at the beginning of the EIS that summarizes and compares the adverse impacts of the proposal and alternatives.