



Seattle

Executive Summary

Seattle Industrial & Maritime Strategy **Final Environmental Impact Statement**

September
2022



Industrial and Maritime Strategy Background

The City of Seattle’s Industrial and Maritime Strategy charts a blueprint to support strong and growing industrial and maritime sectors in the city, with a focus on promoting equitable access for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community members and women to the high quality, living-wage jobs and entrepreneurship opportunities available in the sectors. The strategy emphasizes the need to invest in workforce development, to commit to environmental justice and climate action, to improve the safe movement of people and goods, to build a public safety partnership, and to develop a proactive land use policy agenda that ensures innovation and industrial jobs are a robust part of our future economy. The land use policies focus on providing stronger land-use protections for core industrial and maritime areas; encouraging modern high-density industrial development in walkable areas near light rail stations; and creating affordable opportunities for small-scale light-industrial businesses, makers, and creative arts, all while improving the environmental health of communities in and near industrial areas.

Proposed Land Use Concepts

To meet land use goals, the City is studying changes to its Comprehensive Plan policies and zoning regulations, which are centered around three new industrial zones:

Maritime, Manufacturing, and Logistics (MML)	Industry and Innovation (II)	Urban Industrial (UI)
<p>This zone would focus on strengthening land use protections for core and legacy industrial and maritime areas to better prevent the encroachment of development that is incompatible with industrial and maritime uses. This zone is particularly applicable within Seattle’s Manufacturing/Industrial Centers (MICs), near the shoreline or deep-water port, rail and freight infrastructure, and around existing clusters of industrial or maritime suppliers and services.</p>	<p>This zone aims to encourage new development in multi-story buildings that accommodate industrial businesses mixed with other dense employment uses such as research, design, offices, and technology. By creating density bonuses for employment uses (i.e., office, R&D, etc.) if coupled with industrial uses in the same project, this type of modern industrial development would support high-density employment near transit stations and near existing industrial-commercial areas.</p>	<p>This zone is designed to foster increased employment and entrepreneurship opportunities with a vibrant mix of affordable, small-scale places for light industry, makers, and creative arts, as well as industry-supporting ancillary retail or housing spaces to create better, integrated, and healthier transitions at the edges between industrial areas and neighboring urban villages, residential, and mixed-use areas.</p>

The City would amend Comprehensive Plan policy to describe the land use concepts and would amend the Seattle Municipal Code to replace the existing industrial zones.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Washington’s State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requires environmental review when a city makes changes to land use policies or zoning. The EIS analyzes how the proposed changes could affect the built and natural environment in industrial areas and adjacent communities over a 22-year period. This process allows thoughtful implementation of strategies to mitigate any adverse impacts and provides information to the public and policy makers before any decisions are made. For more information on the EIS process see our [EIS 101 video](#).

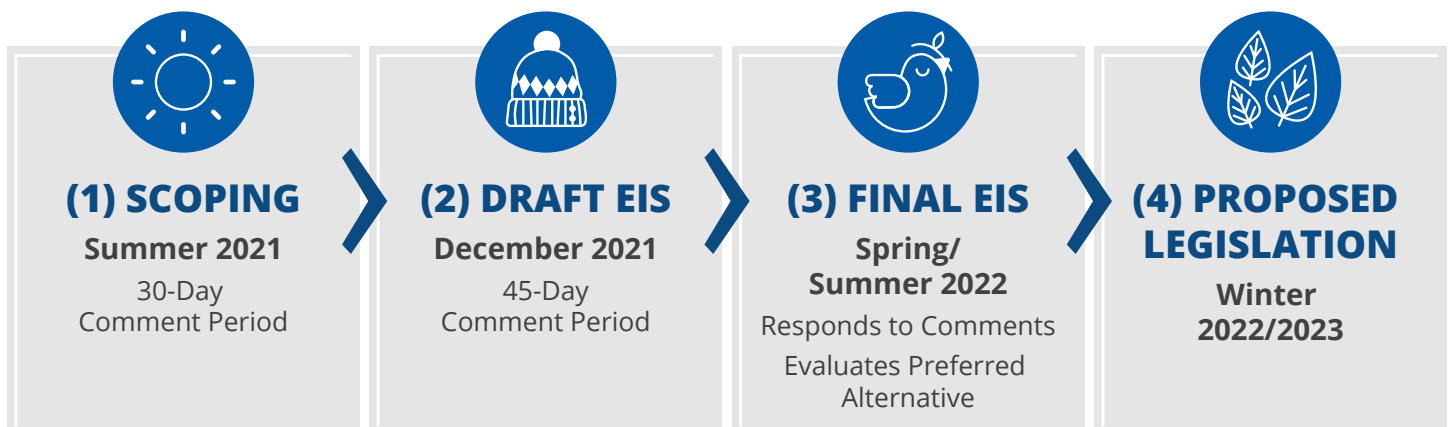
We issued a Final EIS on the proposed land use policy and zoning changes on September 29, 2022. The Final EIS carefully reviews potential adverse impacts of the proposed changes in the following topic areas:

Soils / Geology	Noise	Historic, Archaeological, & Cultural Resources
Air Quality & GHG	Light & Glare	Open Space & Recreation
Water Resources	Land & Shoreline Use	Public Services
Plants & Animals	Housing	Utilities
Contamination	Transportation	Equity & Environmental Justice Considerations

The EIS considers how the alternatives advance the City’s Equity and Environment Agenda and the City’s Duwamish Valley Program and Action Plan by screening whether alternatives would increase, exacerbate, or impede mitigation of environmental justice in four screening criteria: (1) residents’ and workers’ exposures to environmental hazards; (2) achieving a safe, connected, and accessible neighborhood; (3) displacement risk for Equity and Environment Initiative (EEI) populations; and (4) access to education or pathways out of poverty through jobs and careers.

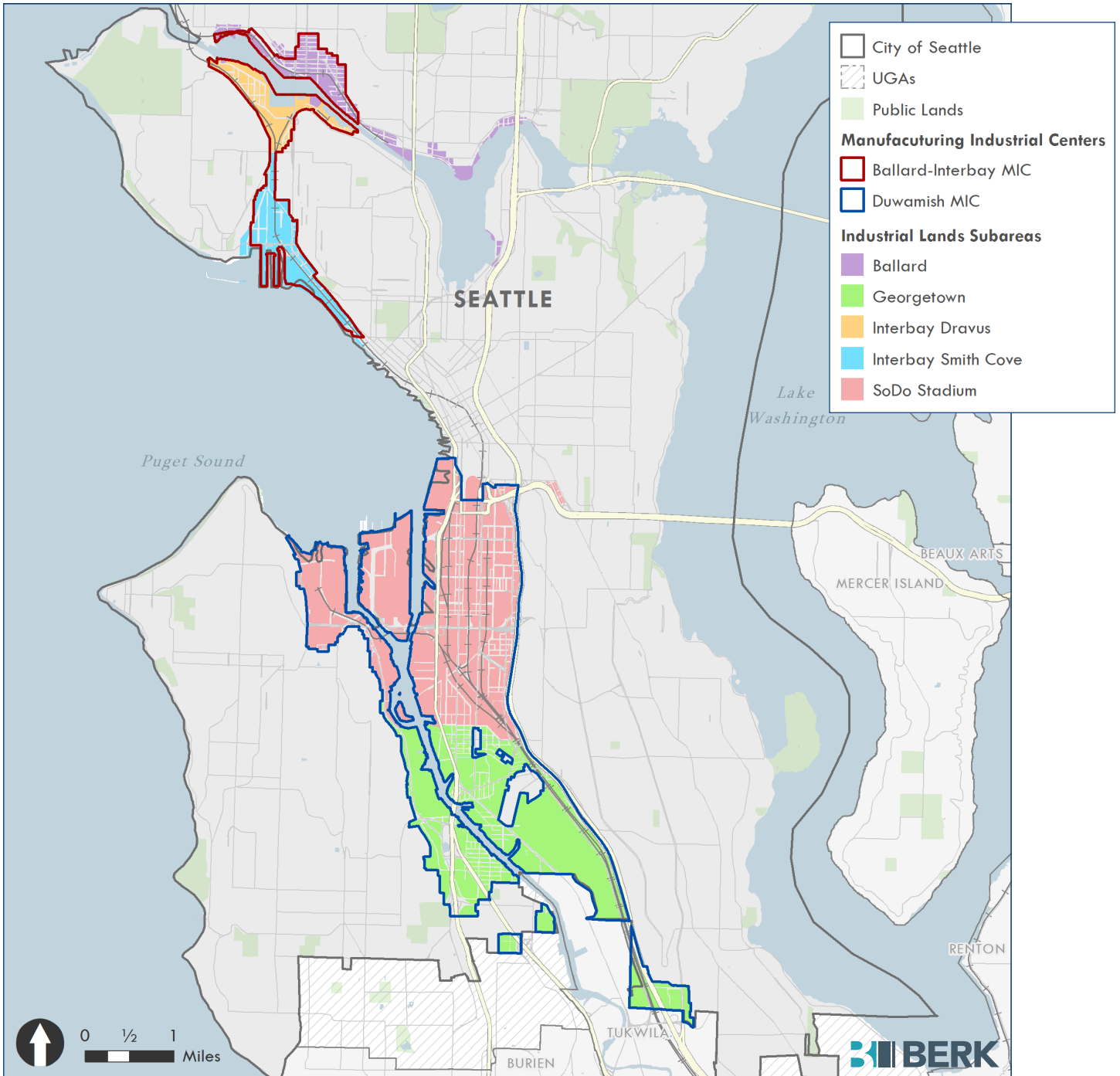
EIS Process

The EIS process includes several stages. With issuance of the Final EIS, the EIS process is in stage 3. See the project website for more information: [Industrial and Maritime Strategy—OPCD | seattle.gov](#).



Study Area

The study areas for the EIS are the MICs that are formally designated in the Comprehensive Plan, and other lands in the city that are in industrial zoning. The EIS identifies five subareas for analysis purposes and summarizes findings for individual study areas where appropriate.



Map Date: May 2021.
Source: BERK, 2021.

Draft EIS Alternatives

An EIS examines various alternative ways of implementing the proposed land use concepts to study the best ways to achieve the City's objectives. This includes a No Action Alternative to serve as the baseline for comparison for the potential impacts of the three Action Alternatives. Those Alternatives are summarized below, arranged with an increasing degree of land use change from 1 to 4, with Alternative 4 having the greatest degree of change. A Preferred Alternative was created after the Draft EIS studied these four alternatives (see the following page).

Alternative 1— No Action

- No changes to existing Comprehensive Plan land use policies.
- No change to existing Industrial General (IG) zones that cover 90% of industrially zoned areas.
- No change to existing Industrial Commercial (IC) zones that cover 5% of industrially zoned areas.
- No change to Industrial Buffer (IB) zones that cover 5% of industrially zoned areas.
- Residential uses are prohibited with the exception of one caretaker quarters per industrial business, artist studio housing in existing structures, and housing that predates industrial zoning.

Some Key Economic Findings with No Action:

- Projected employment growth of 23,500 and 75 more industry-supportive homes.
- Resulting share of total jobs in industrial purpose (54.4%).

Alternative 2— Future of Industry Limited

- Updates industrial land use policies to anticipate future innovations and trends.
- Strengthens protections for industrial uses in MML zone covering 90% of industrial lands.
- Applies a mix of II and UI zone concepts in 10% of current MIC areas, including an estimated 1/4 mile from light rail stations.
- No expansion of housing allowances.
- Does not remove any land from MICs.

Some Key Economic Findings with Action Alternative 2:

- Projected employment growth of 34,400 and 80 more industry-supportive homes.
- Resulting share of total jobs in industrial purpose (59.7%).

Alternative 3— Future of Industry Targeted

- Updates industrial land use policies to anticipate future innovations and trends.
- Strengthens protections for industrial uses in MML zones covering 86% of industrial lands.
- Applies a mix of II and UI zone concepts in 14% of current MIC areas, including an estimated 1/2 mile from light rail stations.
- Expansion of limited industry-supportive housing in UI zone concept.
- Removes focused land in Georgetown/South Park from MICs.

Some Key Economic Findings with Action Alternative 3:

- Projected employment growth of 57,400 and 610 more industry-supportive homes.
- Resulting share of total jobs in industrial purpose (53.6%).

Alternative 4— Future of Industry Expanded

- Updates industrial land use policies to anticipate future innovations and trends.
- Strengthens protections for industrial uses in MML zones covering 87% of industrial lands.
- Applies a mix of II and UI zone concepts in 13% of current MIC areas, including an estimated 1/2 mile from light rail stations.
- Greater expansion of limited industry-supportive housing in UI zone concept.
- Removes focused land in Georgetown/South Park from the MIC.
- Increases maximum size of use limit for indoor sports and recreation uses.

Some Key Economic Findings with Action Alternative 4:

- Projected employment growth of 59,200 and 2,195 more industry-supportive homes.
- Resulting share of total jobs in industrial purpose (52.8%).

Preferred Alternative—Future of Industry Balanced



The Preferred Alternative incorporates features of multiple Draft EIS alternatives. It includes modifications to address comments on the Draft EIS and reduce impacts identified for Draft EIS alternatives. The Preferred Alternative would implement the proposed land use concepts, and strengthen policy protections for industrial lands in MICs, while affording some greater flexibility for lands outside of MICs.

- The MML zone would cover approximately 85% of industrial lands, while proposed II and UI zones would be targeted in scope and cover approximately 14% of current industrial areas. Unlike alternatives 2, 3, and 4, the Preferred Alternative would retain existing IC zoning only in areas outside of MICs.
- The Preferred Alternative would allow limited industry-supportive housing in the UI zone as a conditional use subject to additional criteria to minimize potential conflicts. Overall, a lower amount of industry-supportive housing production would result compared to Draft EIS alternatives 3 and 4 within MICs in the UI zone (1,475 units). Concepts to remove focused land from the MIC in Georgetown and South Park are carried forward, and mixed use housing could occur as with alternatives 3 and 4. Housing in commercial zones could also occur outside the MIC in west Ballard, and Judkins Park. Though a greater amount of new unrestricted housing is projected outside of the MICs than any Draft EIS alternative (1,534 units), the combined growth of housing (3,009) would be less than alternative 4.
- The Preferred Alternative includes a more nuanced zoning approach for a proposed mixed use zone in central Georgetown, and greater application of UI zoning around Georgetown to create more neighborhood cohesion.
- The Preferred Alternative features a reduced total amount of job growth, most similar to Draft EIS Alternative 2. Projections are adjusted downward to reflect conditions in commercial/office occupancy post-COVID and timelines for new light rail construction.
- More information on mitigation measures is provided concurrent with the Preferred Alternative in response to suggestions and comments from community.

Environmental Impacts

Chapter 1 of the Final EIS summarizes the impacts and mitigation in each environmental topic area for all alternatives, with an abbreviated summary of impact for environmental topic areas provided below.

Abbreviated Summary of Impacts

See Final EIS Chapter 1 for a full summary. Not all the impacts and mitigation can be included in this abbreviated summary.

Soils/Geology



Types of Impacts

- Several subareas are susceptible to liquefaction in an earthquake.
- Five historical landfills and one active landfill are in the study area.
- Alternatives with more new development would upgrade more structures.

Key Mitigations

- Development would upgrade structures to modern codes resulting in less damage from seismic events.
- Development review would address vapor intrusion and methane mitigation in or near historical landfills.
- Tribal notification prior to subsurface investigations of soils should be required.

Outcomes

- Alternatives with more investment in new development (alternatives 3 and 4 and the Preferred Alternative) would upgrade more structures over time
- Impacts would be mitigated to a non-significant level.

Air Quality & GHG Emissions



Types of Impacts

- Ambient air quality concentrations of monitored pollutants in the study area meet air quality standards under existing conditions when excluding wildfire smoke.
- Pollutants would decrease in the future under all alternatives due to requirements in industrial operating permits and improvements in vehicle and vessel emissions control.
- GHG emissions would decrease under all alternatives due to changes in fleet fuel mix toward electrification.
- Action Alternatives with greater growth in the study area would have slightly higher GHG than No Action.
- Action Alternatives would support more efficient growth patterns consistent with planning goals.

Key Mitigations

- Apply Seattle Energy Code and actions of the 2013 Seattle Climate Action Plan and 2018 strategy to new building.
- Implement vehicle charging infrastructure for electric vehicles, including commercial and industrial vehicles and drayage trucks.
- Accelerate extension of shore power to terminals and docks throughout Seattle's waterfront.
- Separate residences and sensitive uses from freeways, railways and port facilities, and include enhanced air filtering and circulation in any new housing in industrial areas.
- The City and partner agencies could improve coordination and the user experience for registering complaints or requesting information about enforcement related to emissions from sites or businesses.

Outcomes

- With mitigation all alternatives would be consistent with air pollution and GHG reduction and climate change planning, and there would be no unavoidable significant adverse impacts.

Abbreviated Summary of Impacts

See Final EIS Chapter 1 for a full summary. Not all the impacts and mitigation can be included in this abbreviated summary.

Water Resources



Types of Impacts

- Higher levels of redevelopment under all alternatives would result in more stormwater control, stormwater management, flow control and water quality treatment compared to existing conditions.
- Areas adjacent to tidally-influenced water bodies will be vulnerable to sea level rise, and all alternatives may increase vulnerability by bringing more people to these areas.

Key Mitigations

- Alternatives with more investment in new development (alternatives 3 and 4 and the Preferred Alternative) would have greater improvements to stormwater compared to No Action.
- Adaptation strategies of the City of Seattle 2017 Preparing for Climate Change could reduce vulnerability to sea level rise.

Outcomes

- Redevelopment would improve stormwater management relative to existing conditions.
- If mitigation measures are implemented there would be no significant unavoidable adverse impacts to water resources.

Plants & Animals



Types of Impacts

- Short term impacts could result from construction, such as noise and disturbance.
- Stormwater runoff from developed land can degrade aquatic habitat.
- Minor amounts of landscaped or unpaved areas may be converted to developed areas.

Key Mitigations

- Implement Best Management Practices (BMP) during construction including erosion control.
- Incorporate green spaces in new development in the II and UI zones.

Outcomes

- With mitigation measures there would be no significant unavoidable adverse impacts under any alternative.

Contamination



Types of Impacts

- Numerous known hazardous materials sites are documented in the study area.
- Construction activities could release hazardous materials due to ground disturbance, dewatering, and demolition.

Key Mitigations

- All development projects would comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations that establish standards for site cleanup.
- The City and partner agencies could improve coordination and the user experience for registering complaints or requesting information about enforcement related to contamination from sites or businesses.

Outcomes

- Risk of releasing contaminants is significant under all alternatives, but avoidable with mitigation.

Abbreviated Summary of Impacts

See Final EIS Chapter 1 for a full summary. Not all the impacts and mitigation can be included in this abbreviated summary.

Noise



Types of Impacts

- Noise monitoring of existing conditions within two subarea locations (Georgetown and SODO/Lander) was found to exceed a 24-hour day night average of 65dba—a Department of Housing and Urban Development standard for acceptable exterior noise levels for residential areas.
- Traffic volumes on roads, including truck traffic, are expected to continue to be a primary source of noise in and near the study area and are expected to increase due to increased development and population under alternatives.
- Noise increases from roadways would be less than 3dba and insufficient to generate noticeable increases.

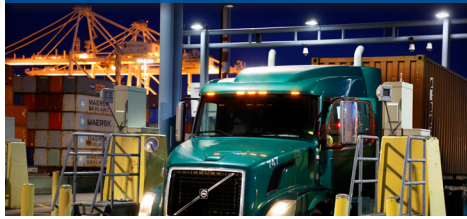
Key Mitigations

- Require project-specific noise impact assessments.
- Limit proximity of new residential development to known or anticipated sources of high noise levels.
- Require greater noise reduction standards under alternatives 3 and 4 and the Preferred Alternative in residential buildings.
- The City and partner agencies could improve coordination and improve the user experience for community members registering complaints or requesting information about enforcement related to noise from sites or businesses.

Outcomes

- Considering the level of noise change as well as mitigation, no significant, unavoidable adverse impacts are anticipated.

Light & Glare



Types of Impacts

- Increased light emissions from new development would have the greatest potential to affect areas north of the Ballard Interbay MIC, Beacon Hill, and South Park.

Key Mitigations

- Evaluate light and glare impacts on sensitive resources for site-specific development under project level SEPA review.
- Apply standards for landscaping, trees, and greenspace in the II and UI zones to help screen surrounding areas.

Outcomes

- Impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through mitigation measures and design standards.

Land & Shoreline Use



Types of Impacts

- Land use impacts are identified in the categories of consistency with plans and policies, incompatible land uses, employment mix, and inadequate transitions from industrial to non-industrial areas.
- Minor inconsistencies with plans and policies would be present due to continuing trends of stand-alone retail and offices under the No Action Alternative, and related to housing in industrial areas in alternatives 3 and 4.
- Employment mix would remain more than 50% industrial under all alternatives.
- Transition impacts are most likely for the Ballard and Interbay Dravus subareas.
- Alternatives that introduce the II and UI zones in larger areas could create some incompatibilities between new activity patterns and adjacent areas of continued industrial uses.
- The geographic pattern of impacts varies by alternative.

Key Mitigations

- Apply the existing Shoreline Master Program within 200' of shorelines.
- Limit the geography of industry supportive housing allowances to pilot areas of the proposed UI zone.
- Expand contributions by public and private partners towards equitable development.
- The Preferred Alternative includes unique development standards for the proposed mixed use area in central Georgetown, a workforce development space incentive in the proposed II zone, and added flexibility for existing non-conforming uses in the proposed MML zone.

Outcomes

- Minor and moderate land use impacts were identified under all alternatives but none would be significant adverse impacts.

Abbreviated Summary of Impacts

See Final EIS Chapter 1 for a full summary. Not all the impacts and mitigation can be included in this abbreviated summary.

Housing



Types of Impacts

- There is limited existing housing of 413 dwelling units in the nearly 11 square mile study area.
- No significant loss of existing housing due to redevelopment is anticipated under any of the alternatives.
- Increases in housing in alternatives 3 and 4 and the Preferred Alternative will place residential uses in proximity to air quality and noise emissions.
- Increased employment growth under the action alternatives could shift more jobs into the study area, causing an impact on housing.

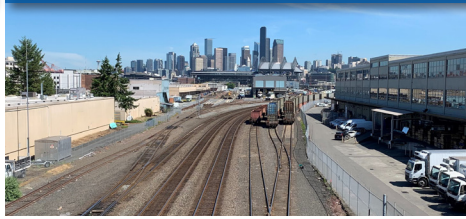
Key Mitigations

- Apply the City's Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) program to development in the II zone.
- Add capacity for housing in urban villages with fast access to parts of the study area expected to have large employment growth under action alternatives.

Outcomes

- Small changes to housing patterns will occur under the action alternatives that are unavoidable but not considered significant adverse impacts, with appropriate mitigation.

Transportation



Types of Impacts

- Traffic volumes and travel times would increase due to growth within the study area and other parts of the city.
- Under Action Alternatives, more people would be walking, biking, and riding transit in parts of the study area with incomplete networks, resulting in some impacts to those modes due and significant adverse impacts to active transportation and safety.
- Due to greater levels of growth, alternatives 3 and 4 would result in significant impacts to auto and freight on three corridors.

Key Mitigations

- Implement Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO), travel demand management (TDM), pedestrian and bicycle system improvements under all alternatives.
- Apply location-specific mitigation measures along 15th Ave W and W Dravus St including intersection operation refinements, transit and freight only lanes, and replacement of the Ballard Bridge.
- Reduce the share of non-industrial jobs in alternatives 3 and 4 in the Greater Duwamish MIC. This is accomplished in the Preferred Alternative.

Outcomes

- Mitigation measures could bring down travel time impacts to 15th Ave W and W Dravus St to a less than significant level.
- Since all pedestrian and bicycle network gaps are not likely to be addressed in areas where more vulnerable users would be walking or biking, there would be significant unavoidable adverse impact to active transportation and safety under the action alternatives.

Historic, Archaeological, & Cultural Resources



Types of Impacts

- GIS maps document a variety of historic and cultural resources in the study area.
- There is a potential for alteration, damage, or destruction of resources are present under all alternatives.
- Alternatives that create more pressure for redevelopment have higher potential to impact resources.

Key Mitigations

- Fund City-initiated proactive landmark nominations.
- Develop histories of the study area centering indigenous perspectives.
- Prioritize City funding for retrofitting unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings.
- Unique development standards for the Georgetown under the Preferred Alternative in the new mixed use zone could incentivize preservation and retention of historic structures by providing code flexibility when a structure is preserved.

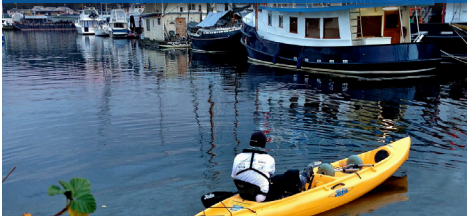
Outcomes

- Some significant adverse impacts to resources are expected, but are avoidable with mitigation.

Abbreviated Summary of Impacts

See Final EIS Chapter 1 for a full summary. Not all the impacts and mitigation can be included in this abbreviated summary.

Open Space & Recreation



Types of Impacts

- Action Alternatives would create increased demand on existing parks, demand for new park land due to increased employment in the study area.
- Net new open space would be needed to meet the City's level of service standard of 8 acres of open space for every resident, with more new open space needed under alternatives 3 and 4 and the Preferred Alternative.
- Removal of focused land from industrial zoning near Duwamish Waterway Park and Terminal 117/Duwamish River People's Park under alternatives 3 and 4 and the Preferred Alternative would increase the likelihood of future visual/physical access to river front from privately owned parcels.

Key Mitigations

- Apply design standards in the new land use concepts including standards for trees and landscaping.
- Continue planning by City of Seattle and Seattle Parks District to address open space needs.
- Create linear parks and trails and increase connectivity between existing and future parks.

Outcomes

- There are opportunities to meet the City's level of service for parkland through implementation of Seattle plans and development regulations. No significant unavoidable adverse impacts would result.

Public Services



Types of Impacts

- Growth in worker and residential populations could increase number of calls for emergency services, or workload for police services.
- Increased traffic volumes could increase response time for some emergency vehicles.
- Alternatives that include residential uses may generate students and increase demand on library services.

Key Mitigations

- Ongoing City capital improvement planning and budgeting efforts are anticipated to address fire and police facility needs.
- Ongoing Seattle School District capital facilities management is anticipated to be sufficient to address increases in student population under the alternatives.
- The Seattle Public Library strategic plan would guide provisions of library services.

Outcomes

- No significant unavoidable adverse impacts are expected with application of mitigation measures and regular capital planning.

Utilities



Types of Impacts

- Growth in population and employment under the alternatives may result in changes to the amount of wastewater flows and stormwater runoff generated as well as CSO frequency. Electrical demand could also increase.

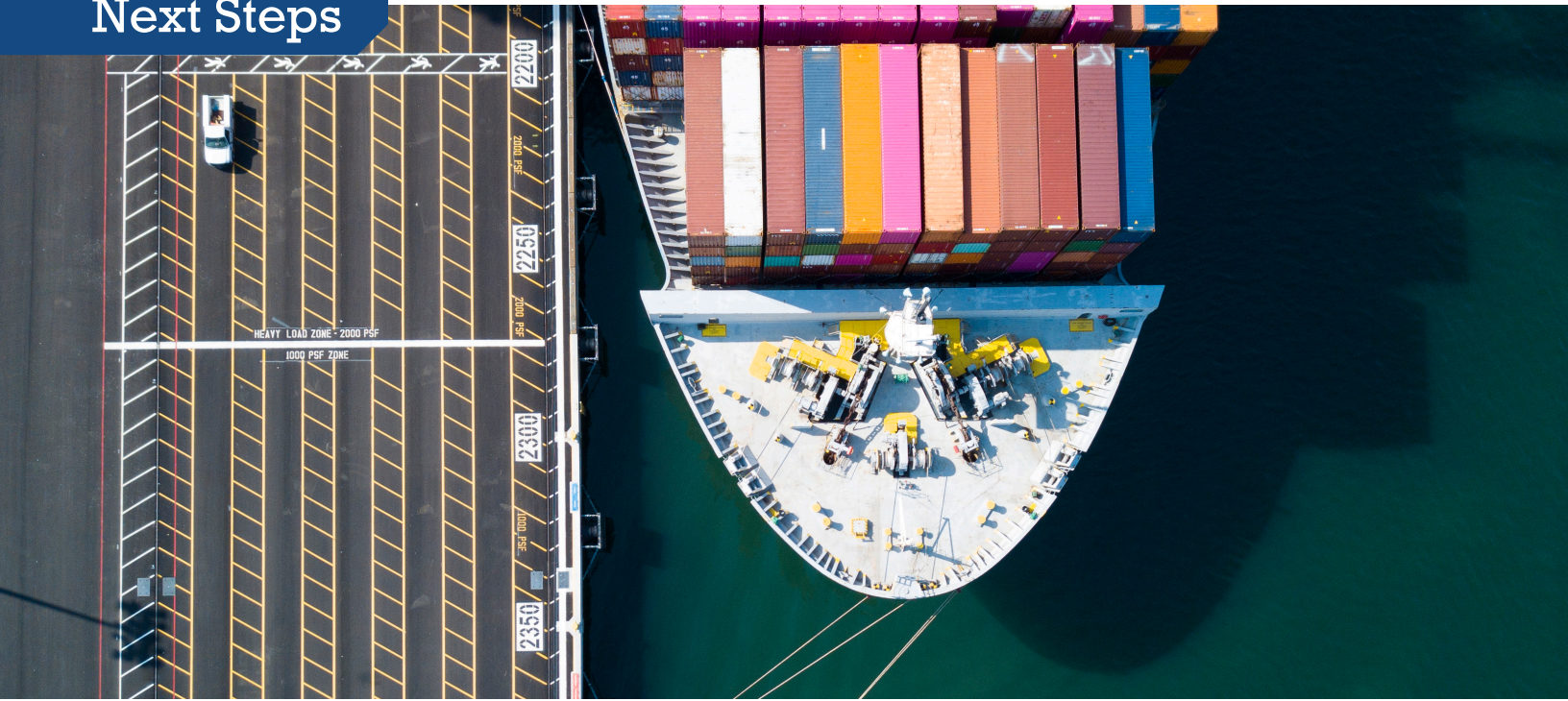
Key Mitigations

- Seattle Public Utilities, King County Wastewater Treatment Division, and Seattle City Light plan, manage, and deliver capital projects that could mitigate the impact of all the alternatives.
- Seattle stormwater code requires onsite stormwater management.

Outcomes

- No significant unavoidable adverse impacts are expected because the level of development proposed under all alternatives will be managed by existing, ongoing processes such as capital improvement planning and code requirements.

Next Steps



The Draft EIS was issued on December 16th, 2021. Written and verbal comments were invited during a 45-day public comment period (December 16, 2021 to January 31, 2022). The City further extended the comment period to March 2, 2022 to allow more time for review.

The City held public engagement events during the comment period to help refine its Preferred Alternative, including two public hearings and a series of meetings with the South Park and Georgetown community members in neighborhood locations. Comments from the South Park and Georgetown communities were included through April 15, 2022. Meetings and comment periods regarding the proposals are described on the City's project webpage: [Industrial and Maritime Strategy—OPCD | seattle.gov](https://www.seattle.gov/industry-maritime).

The City reviewed and responded to all Draft EIS comments and issued a Final EIS on September 29, 2022. All public comments were considered and are addressed in Chapter 4 of the Final EIS. The Final EIS refines information, provides additional information or corrections, and includes identification of a Preferred Alternative.

Following the EIS process, the City will develop specific policy and zoning proposals that will be the subject of public meetings and public hearings by the City Council.