

2.0 Description of the Proposal and Alternatives

2.1 Introduction

The City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan, *Toward a Sustainable Seattle*, is a 20-year vision and roadmap for Seattle's future. It provides the framework of goals and policies addressing most of Seattle's big picture decisions on how to grow while preserving and improving quality of life in the city. This may affect where people live and where they work, but it also will affect future choices about how to improve the transportation system and how to prioritize investment in public facilities, such as utilities, sidewalks and libraries.

The urban village strategy is a key component of the plan, providing a comprehensive approach to planning for future growth in a sustainable manner. The plan identifies 32 growth areas in four categories: urban centers, manufacturing/industrial centers, hub urban villages and residential urban villages. The current plan focuses growth in these urban villages.

Toward a Sustainable Seattle was originally adopted in 1994 and has been updated over time. As required by the Washington Growth Management Act, in 2015 the City is updating growth projections to address the 2015–2035 planning period. Through the alternatives considered in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the City is considering alternative approaches to managing future growth patterns, all within the framework of the urban village strategy. The City has initiated this EIS to study the potential impacts of four different growth strategies, including a no action alternative that anticipates a continuation of the urban village strategy's implementation in ways similar to current practices and with similar growth distribution patterns as has occurred in the last twenty years. The three action alternatives represent a range of possible growth distributions, each of which emphasize a different pattern of growth and could lead to different implementing actions. For example, actions, such as rezones, development standards, infrastructure investment and others, could vary depending on the City's policy preferences to more strongly favor compact growth in some or all urban villages, in transit-served areas or a combination of these approaches. The balance of this chapter focuses on a description of these alternatives.

Proposal Overview

The City is considering text and map amendments to the Seattle Comprehensive Plan that would influence the manner and distribution of projected growth of 70,000 housing units and 115,000 jobs in Seattle through 2035, and that would influence the manner in which the

2.1 Introduction

City conducts its operations to promote and achieve other goals such as those related to public health, safety, welfare, service delivery, environmental sustainability and equity.

All Comprehensive Plan elements will be reviewed and updated as part of the proposal. In many cases, proposed policy amendments reflect changes to state and regional guidance, incorporate language and editorial changes to policies to increase readability, clarify direction and remove redundancies; and add new or updated information since adoption of the current Comprehensive Plan. Other policy changes are intended to reflect evolving city policy.

Major policy questions and directions to be addressed in the plan update are briefly summarized below.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GROWTH PATTERNS AND LAND USE MAP AMENDMENTS

Pattern of Growth. Establish an updated distribution of growth within the urban village framework. Alternatives analyzed in this EIS provide a basis for comparison of four different growth scenarios, including a scenario that would generally continue current trends (identified as the No Action Alternative in this EIS).

Boundaries of Urban Centers and Villages. Consider whether to expand boundaries of certain existing urban villages and create new urban villages in order to direct growth to places that have either light rail or superior bus service. Expanded boundaries of urban villages containing high-frequency transit stations would be drawn to represent a 10-minute walking distance from the transit. A possible new urban village at 130th and I-5 would recognize a future light rail station there.

Growth Estimates. Determine whether to eliminate growth estimates for smaller urban villages, recognizing that rates of growth can vary greatly at the smaller urban village scale. Citywide and urban center growth estimates would be retained.

Future Land Use Map. In the urban villages, potentially replace the generalized land use designations with a single designation for each type of urban village (Residential, Hub and Urban Center). The single designation would be accompanied by policies that describe the types and intensities of uses allowed in each type of village. This change is intended to provide greater clarity about the planned future development pattern in each type of urban village and indicate limits to the most intense growth.

POLICY AND TEXT AMENDMENTS

Rezone Criteria. Potentially eliminate land use policies that establish detailed and strict criteria about when it is appropriate to change zoning from a single-family designation. This is the only zoning category that is addressed this way in the Plan and is at a level of detail that is more appropriate for the Land Use Code.

Homeownership. Consider eliminating the goal of increasing home ownership over time as outdated and no longer applicable in Seattle.

Affordable Housing

- Consider adding affordable housing as an appropriate use of City surplus land, along with some guidance for how to select among the various possible uses of surplus property.
- Potentially incorporate new policies that emerge from the City’s Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda.

Travel Modes. Develop a system for identifying the priority travel mode for particular streets.

Tree Cover. Update urban forestry goals to be consistent with the Urban Forestry Stewardship Plan. This means the Comprehensive Plan goal to increase the overall tree cover by 2037 will change from 40 percent to 30 percent.

EQUITY

Through Executive Order 2014-02, Race and Social Justice Initiative, the City of Seattle states that “...equity is a cornerstone of a thriving democracy and the internal actions of local government that contribute to the health and well-being of everyone in our city.” The City’s Equitable Development Initiative is specifically focused on clear policy guidance for equitable growth and development that will be incorporated throughout the Comprehensive Plan. Additional discussion of equity in the context of the Comprehensive Plan and future growth and development can be found in a separate document, the Equity Analysis, available at www.seattle.gov/dpd.

Although a fundamental policy issue considered in the Comprehensive Plan, equity is not an environmental issue addressed through this SEPA EIS. As described in SMC 25.05.448, SEPA Rules establish that an EIS is required to analyze only environmental impacts, and not general welfare or other social policy considerations. The EIS environmental analysis is intended to be used by decision-makers in conjunction with other policy considerations and documents in making final decisions on proposals. For additional discussion of equity and the City’s Equitable Development Initiative, please see the link shown above.

ALTERNATIVES OVERVIEW

Alternatives addressed in this EIS are summarized in Figure 2–1 on the following pages.

1. Continue Current Trends (No Action)
2. Guide Growth to Urban Centers
3. Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Light Rail
4. Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Transit

Each alternative is described more fully in Section 2.3.

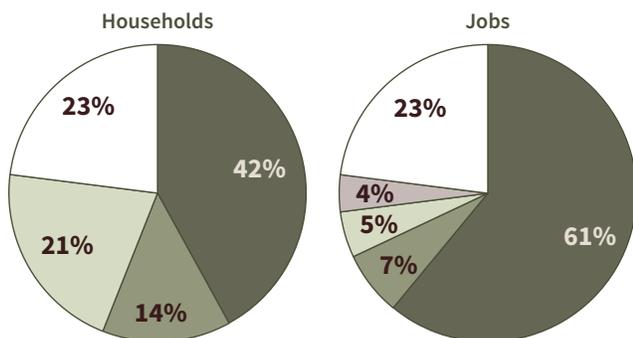
2.1 Introduction

Figure 2-1 Summary of alternatives

Alternative 1

Continue Current Trends (No Action)

Growth will generally follow current market trends. Residential growth will continue in the urban village neighborhoods that have experienced significant growth in the past 20 years, with a relatively low level of change in other urban villages. New jobs would occur primarily in Downtown and South Lake Union.

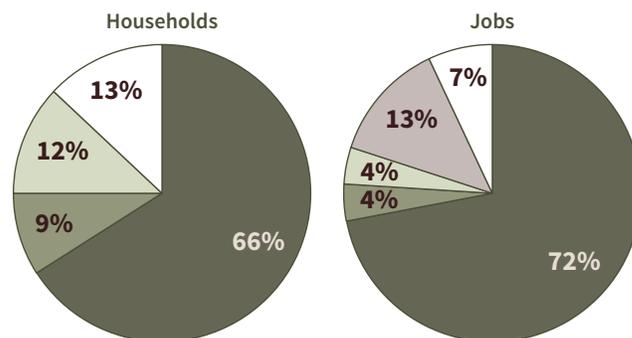


- No change in the number, designation or size of urban villages.
- Greater residential growth emphasis in hub urban villages, in selected residential urban villages and more growth outside of urban villages.
 - Hub urban village emphases: Ballard, Bitter Lake, Lake City and West Seattle Junction.
 - Residential urban village emphases: 23rd & Union-Jackson, Aurora-Licton Springs, Columbia City, Madison-Miller and Othello.
 - Nearly 1/4 of residential growth (16,000 units) to occur outside of urban villages.
- Comparatively, urban centers would have a smaller role in accommodating residential growth and a continued focus on job growth.

Alternative 2

Guide Growth to Urban Centers

Urban centers will become magnets that more strongly attract new residents and jobs, faster than over the last 20 years. This change may lead to a significant rise in the number of people walking or biking to work, and a corresponding decline in driving and car ownership. Alternative 2 represents a significantly more concentrated pattern of new growth in the urban centers compared to past trends.



- No change in the number, designation or size of urban villages.
- More growth in urban centers, especially in Downtown, First/Capitol Hill and Northgate and South Lake Union.
- Less growth outside urban centers, including the least emphasis on hub urban village growth.
- More mid- and high-rise housing is likely to occur than under other alternatives, given the more concentrated growth patterns.
- A higher concentration of jobs in urban centers, especially Downtown, Northgate and South Lake Union.

Figure 2-1 Summary of alternatives (cont.)

Alternative 3

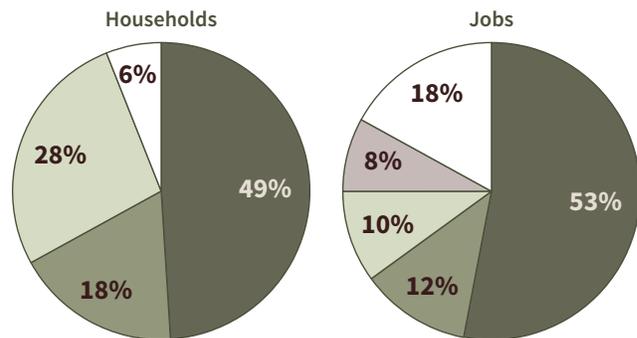
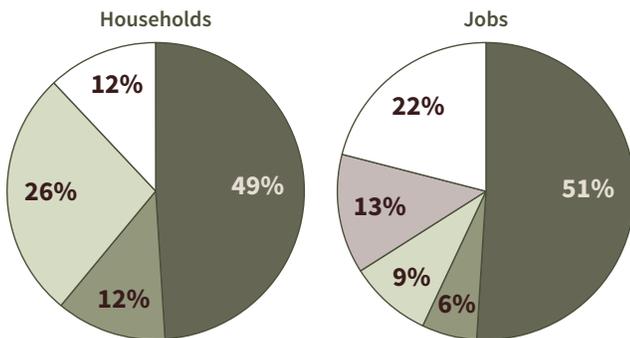
Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Light Rail

An emphasis on growth in urban centers, but also in urban villages near the light rail stations. Would include boundary adjustments to urban villages with light rail stations to encompass a 10-minute walk to the station. A new village could be designated at 130th St/I-5 and possible reconfiguration of the Mount Baker and 23rd & Union-Jackson urban villages near the I-90 East Link Station would occur.

Alternative 4

Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Transit

The greatest number of transit-oriented places—served by either bus or rail—that are preferred for growth. In addition to areas covered in Alternative 3, more growth would also be concentrated in other urban villages that currently have very good bus service. Relatively more urban villages would be subject to increased growth and possible boundary changes.



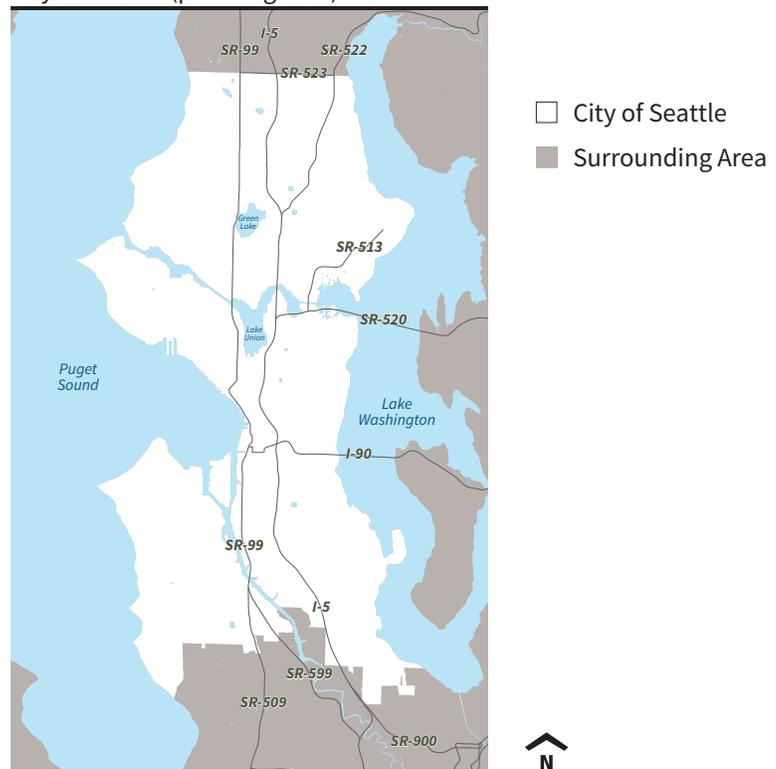
- Larger share of growth and expanded urban village boundaries near light rail stations (Mount Baker, Columbia City, North Beacon Hill, Othello, Rainier Beach, Roosevelt).
- Possible new residential urban village around the North Link 130th Street Station and possible reconfiguration of the Mount Baker and 23rd & Union-Jackson urban villages near the I-90 East Link station.
- An intermediate level of growth in urban centers that is less concentrated than assumed for Alternative 2.
- A relatively smaller share of growth in urban villages without light rail, comparable to Alternative 2.

- Includes the higher-growth assumptions and expanded urban village boundaries of Alternative 3 (to capture 10-minute walksheds), and the addition of other selected areas that have very good bus service. These include areas are located in the western half of the city (Ballard, Fremont, West Seattle Junction and Crown Hill).
- Three of the four added areas are hub urban villages, which defines this alternative as having the greatest emphasis on growth in the hub urban villages.
- This assumes a smaller share of residential growth would occur outside centers and villages than all of the other alternatives.



2.1 Introduction

Figure 2-2
City of Seattle (planning area)



Planning Area

The proposal applies to the entire City of Seattle, as shown in Figure 2-2 above. The City encompasses approximately 83 square miles, or 53,182 acres. The City is bounded on the west by Puget Sound, the east by Lake Washington, the north by the cities of Shoreline and Lake Forest Park and the south by unincorporated King County and the cities of Burien and Tukwila.

Objectives of the Proposal

The City's objectives for this proposal include:

- Retaining the urban village strategy and achieving a development pattern in line with it
- Leverage growth to create housing choices and to promote healthy, complete communities
- Create jobs and economic opportunity for all city residents
- Build on regional transportation investments and balance transportation investments
- Support strategic public investment that addresses areas of need and maximizes public benefit
- Become a more climate-friendly city
- Distribute the benefits of growth more equitably

2.2 Planning Context

Seattle Comprehensive Plan

The Seattle Comprehensive Plan, *Toward a Sustainable Seattle*, is a 20-year plan that provides guidance for how Seattle will accommodate growth in a way that is consistent with the vision of the residents of the City. As a policy document, the plan lays out general guidance for future City actions. The City implements the plan through development and other regulations, primarily found in the City's zoning map and land use code. The City may also use functional plans to implement the policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

Consistent with the Washington Growth Management Act (GMA), the City adopted the Comprehensive Plan in 1994. Since then, it has been updated in an annual cycle of amendments, and in "periodic reviews" in 2004 and again in 2015. As part of the 2015 annual amendments, the City expects to adopt King County's allocation that the City accommodate 70,000 new housing units and 115,000 new jobs through 2035.

The City's Comprehensive Plan consists of thirteen major elements:

1. Urban Village
2. Land Use
3. Transportation
4. Housing
5. Capital Facilities
6. Utilities
7. Economic Development
8. Neighborhood Planning
9. Human Development
10. Cultural Resource
11. Environment
12. Container Port
13. Urban Design

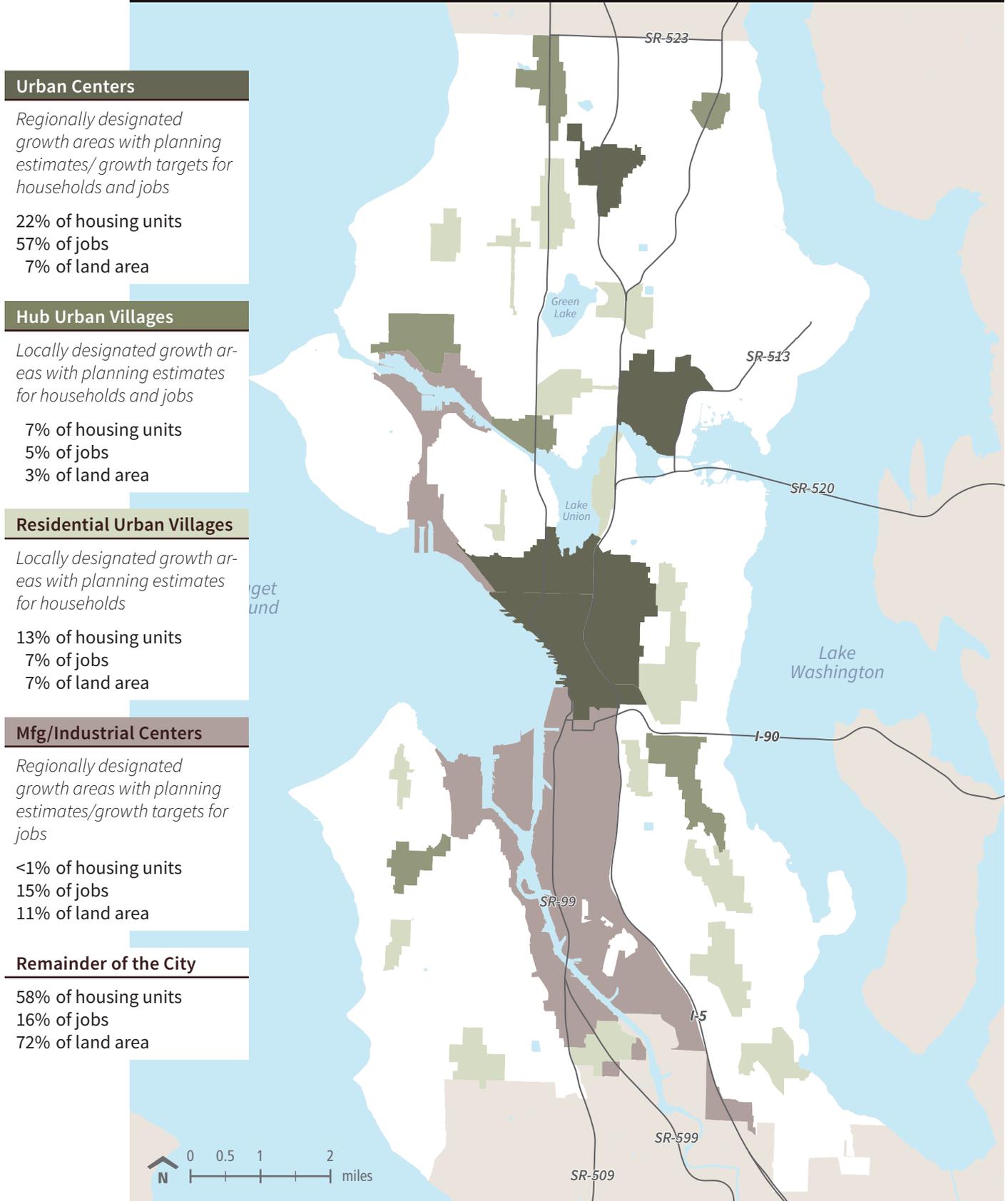
All of these elements will be reviewed and updated as part of the proposal, in order to promote achievement of the City's overall Comprehensive Plan objectives.

URBAN VILLAGES

The urban village strategy is the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan and has shaped the planned pattern of future growth in the City. Four categories of growth areas are identified as shown in Figure 2-3: urban centers, manufacturing/industrial centers, hub urban villages and residential urban villages. Each urban village type has a different function and character, varying amounts and intensity of growth and different mixes of land uses. The Urban Village Element of the Comprehensive Plan describes their differences:

2.2 Planning Context

Figure 2-3 2012 Seattle housing units and jobs in urban centers and villages



2.2 Planning Context

1. **Urban centers** are the densest neighborhoods in the city and are both regional centers and neighborhoods that provide a diverse mix of uses, housing and employment opportunities. Larger urban centers are divided into urban center villages to recognize the distinct character of different neighborhoods within them.
2. **Manufacturing/industrial centers** are home to the city’s thriving industrial businesses. As with urban centers, manufacturing/industrial centers are regional designations and are an important regional resource.
3. **Hub urban villages** are communities that provide a balance of housing and employment, generally at densities lower than those found in urban centers. These areas provide a focus of goods, services and employment to communities that are not close to urban centers.
4. **Residential urban villages** provide a focus of goods and services for residents and surrounding communities but do not typically provide a concentration of employment.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) is a required part of the Comprehensive Plan that shows the locations of the urban villages and where different categories of designated uses, such as single family, multifamily, mixed-use, commercial and industrial are expected to occur. The FLUM is discussed in the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The land use designations shown on the FLUM are implemented through the City’s Official Zoning Map and Land Use Code. Please see Figure 2–5 for the current Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map.

PLANNING ESTIMATES FOR GROWTH

The proposal considered in this EIS assumes the citywide planning estimates for growth for the period from 2015 through 2035 of 70,000 new housing units and 115,000 new jobs (see Figure 2–4). For the purpose of analysis in this EIS, planning estimates for growth are also assumed for each urban village, as described in Section 2.3.

DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

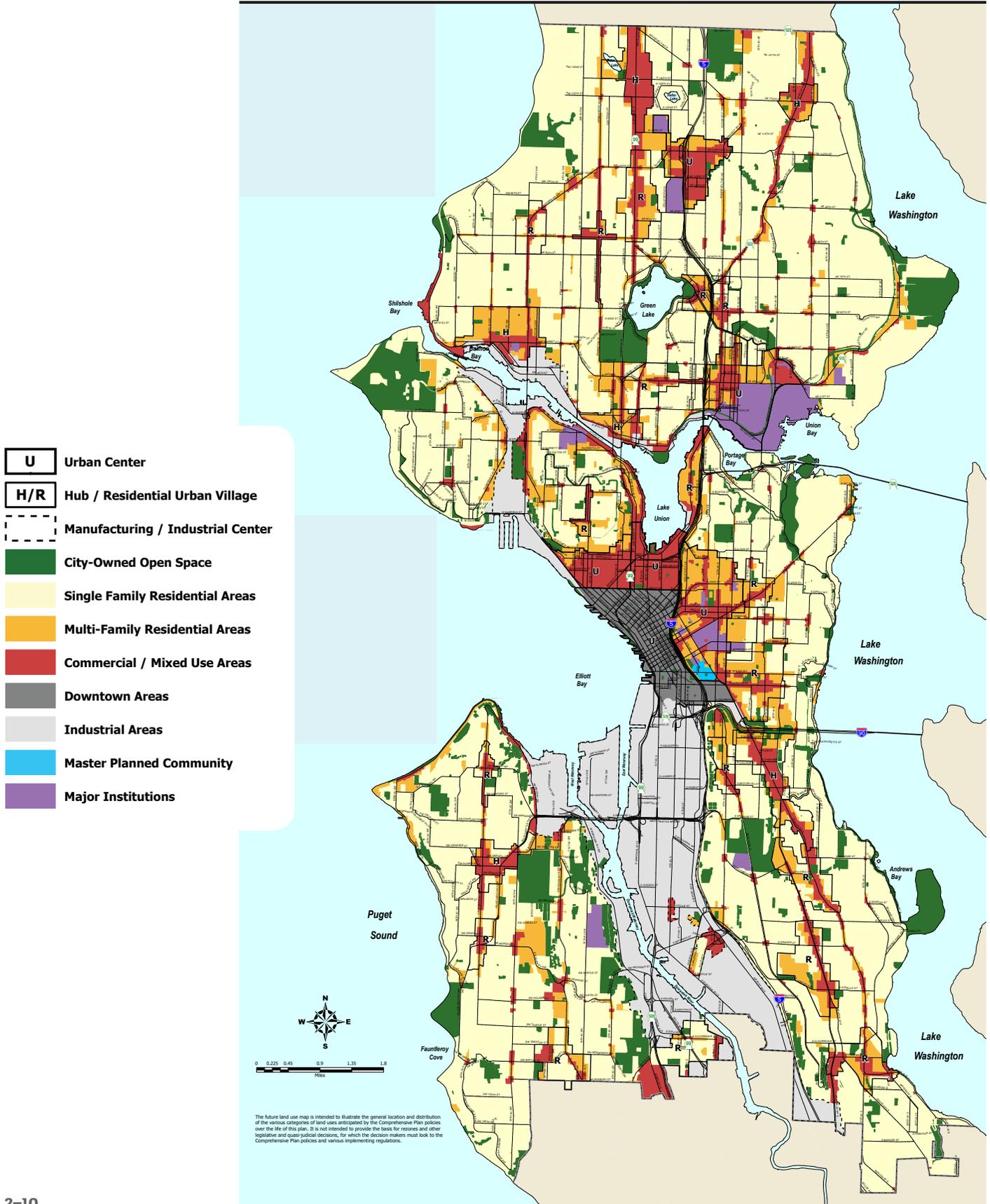
Development capacity, also referred to as zoned development capacity or zoned capacity, is an estimate of how much new development could occur theoretically over an unlimited time period. It represents the difference between the amount of development on the land today and the likely amount that could be built under current zoning. Because the city has many different zones, there are specific assumptions for each zone. Residential development capacity is expressed in number of units and non-residential development capacity is expressed as number of jobs.

Figure 2–4
 Planning estimates for growth



2.2 Planning Context

Figure 2-5 Current Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map



As shown in Table 2-1, the existing urban centers, urban villages and manufacturing/industrial centers collectively have development capacity for 172,475 housing units and 217,172 jobs. Other capacity also exists outside these areas.

Table 2-1 Urban village development capacity

	Housing Units	Jobs
Urban Centers		
Downtown	33,512	51,764
First/Capitol Hill	19,009	3,186
University District	8,933	10,491
Northgate	10,966	14,089
South Lake Union	20,277	25,418
Uptown	4,165	4,900
Total	96,862	109,848
Hub Urban Villages		
Ballard	5,314	5,606
Bitter Lake	10,521	19,391
Fremont	1,677	515
Lake City	4,282	5,395
Mount Baker	9,276	12,868
West Seattle Junction	5,157	5,663
Total	36,227	49,438
Residential Urban Villages		
23rd & Union-Jackson	4,381	2,072
Admiral	817	66
Aurora-Licton Springs	4,072	6,099
Columbia City	3,405	1,824
Crown Hill	1,556	175
Eastlake	1,100	186
Green Lake	774	292
Greenwood-Phinney Ridge	2,295	1,395
Madison-Miller	1,493	702
Morgan Junction	583	40
North Beacon Hill	1,952	786
Othello	4,463	4,001
Upper Queen Anne	848	46
Rainier Beach	4,362	751
Roosevelt	2,814	1,930
South Park	1,115	1,095
Wallingford	1,857	233
Westwood-Highland Park	1,499	149
Total	39,386	21,842
Mfg/Industrial Centers		
Greater Duwamish		27,797
Ballard-Interbay-Northend		8,247
Total		36,044
Total Development Capacity of Centers and Villages	172,475	217,172

Source: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development, 2014.

2.2 Planning Context

Existing Zoning

Seattle Municipal Code Title 23 establishes general zoning classifications for land uses in the City. These can be broadly categorized into five major classifications, listed below:

- Single Family Residential
- Multi-family Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Downtown

See the existing Zoning Map, Figure 2-6.

Public Outreach

The City's public outreach effort for the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update is intended to build awareness of the project, identify issues that people are concerned about, highlight key decisions to be made and collect feedback on the different patterns of growth that are being studied. As described in the Community Engagement Progress Report 2013–2014, the City's public engagement efforts have focused on both in-person and online strategies. Some of these are briefly summarized below:

- Open house format meetings at City Hall and other community locations, including nine community meetings with Public Outreach and Engagement Liaisons (POELs) in traditionally under-represented communities. Small meetings were held in six cultural communities: Oromo, Amharic, Cambodian, Filipino, Latino and African American.
- Partnerships with other organizations to produce lectures and panel discussions to highlight issues and invite discussion. Whenever possible an open house was held at the venue prior to the event, where people could talk with city staff. The Seattle Channel filmed events so video was available online for those unable to attend.
- Information tables at community and other public events where people gather
- A Seattle 2035 display with general information and engaging graphics was installed at six high traffic community locations such as libraries and recreation centers.
- An online branded website was created for the Comprehensive Plan update containing project information, calendar and a comment tool.

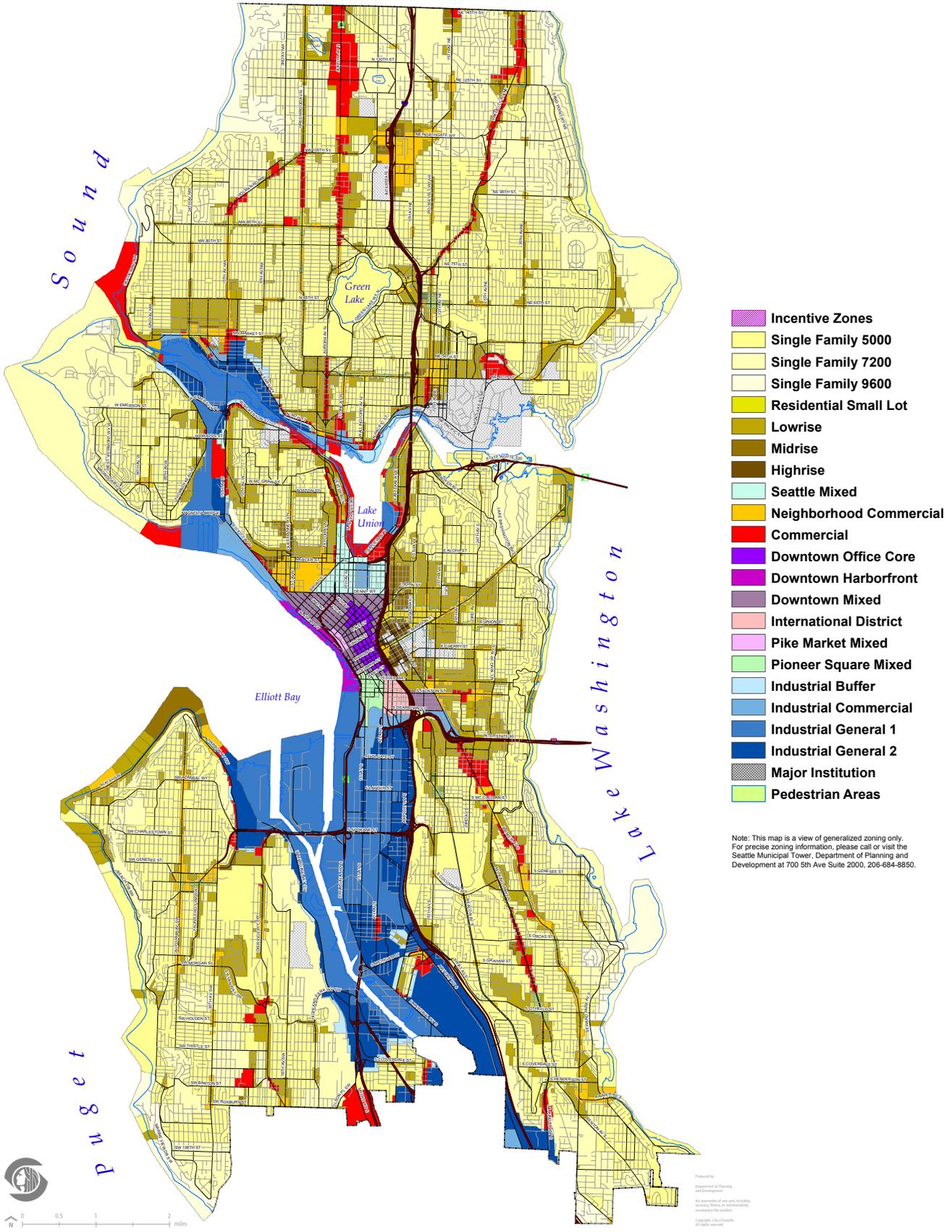


Interactive Seattle 2035 display.

Active public outreach will continue to be an integral part of the comprehensive plan update planning process. Additional information about public outreach may be found in the *Seattle 2035 Community Engagement Progress Report* (January 2015).

2.2 Planning Context

Figure 2-6 City of Seattle generalized zoning



2.2 Planning Context

Branded website for the Comprehensive Plan update containing project information, calendar and a comment tool.



ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING

Specific to this EIS, the City requested public comment on the topics to be addressed in this EIS through a formal public scoping process. A scoping notice was issued on October 17, 2013 and the public comment period continued through April 7, 2014. During this period an informational meeting to describe the EIS process, including proposed topics for analysis, and to ask for comments on issues that should be considered in the EIS was held. Following issuance of the Draft EIS, a public comment period and public hearing will be held to invite comment on the document.

2.3 Proposed Action and Alternatives

The City has identified four alternatives for consideration in this EIS. The alternatives are structured to evaluate differing levels of growth emphases that may occur in various areas of the city, and with differing levels of resulting land use intensities. Each alternative emphasizes different patterns of projected future growth amount and intensity among the urban centers, urban villages and transit-related areas.

- **Alternative 1, Continue Current Trends (No Action)**, would plan for a continuation of current growth policies associated with the Urban Village Strategy along with a continuation of assumed trends that distribute growth among all of the urban centers and urban villages.
- **Alternative 2, Guide Growth to Urban Centers**, prioritizes greater growth concentrations into the six existing urban centers—Downtown, First/Capitol Hill, University District, Northgate, South Lake Union and Uptown.

The emphasis in alternatives 3 and 4 is on providing opportunity for more housing and employment growth in areas closest to existing and planned transit service. Specifically:

- **Alternative 3, Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Light Rail**, prioritizes greater growth concentrations around existing and planned light rail transit stations.
- **Alternative 4, Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Transit**, prioritizes greater growth concentrations around light rail stations and in specific areas along priority bus transit routes.

The boundaries of the existing urban villages would remain unchanged under both alternatives 1 and 2. Alternatives 3 and 4 would result in expansions to some urban village boundaries and the possible designation of one new urban village (at NE 130th Street/Interstate 5) in order to encompass a 10-minute walkshed around existing/planned future light rail stations and priority transit routes.

A **walkshed** is the distance that the average person is able to walk in ten minutes (about one-half mile).

The alternatives and their associated land use actions are further described below.

Alternative 1. Continue Current Trends (No Action)

Alternative 1, No Action, accommodates future growth by continuing to employ the Urban Village Strategy as over the past twenty years. This approach would encourage a substantial portion of residential and employment growth to locate in existing urban centers, an intermediate amount to hub urban villages and somewhat lesser amounts to most of the residential urban villages.

The continuation of growth trends and planning approaches is projected to lead to a broad distribution of growth across the designated urban centers and urban villages as well as in areas beyond. As they evolve, the urban centers and urban villages will continue to become more intensively developed with more residences and more retail and commercial establishments providing goods, services and amenities.

2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

No changes to current urban village boundaries are proposed, as shown in Figure 2–8, Figure 2–9 and Figure 2–10. About 77 percent of new residential and employment growth is projected to occur within urban centers and urban villages, and 23 percent outside of the centers and villages. Compared to the other alternatives, Alternative 1 has the largest proportion of growth projected to occur outside the urban villages overall (see Figure 2–7).

Alternative 1 planning estimates of residential and employment growth for each of the designated urban centers and urban villages are shown in Table 2–2 (housing) and Table 2–3 (employment).

DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

Under Alternative 1, the types, character and relative geographic distribution of future development are expected to occur in ways similar to that experienced over the past 20 years. Over time, residential and non-residential densities and intensities would continue to increase in the urban centers and urban villages. Outside of the urban centers and urban villages, growth and development would also continue, consistent with past growth patterns.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

No changes to Future Land Use Map boundaries are proposed (as noted previously and shown in Figure 2–8).

POLICY AND REGULATORY AMENDMENTS

As shown in Table 2–4 on page 2–32, no amendments to the Land Use Code or other regulations are required to implement Alternative 1.

Alternative 2: Guide Growth to Urban Centers

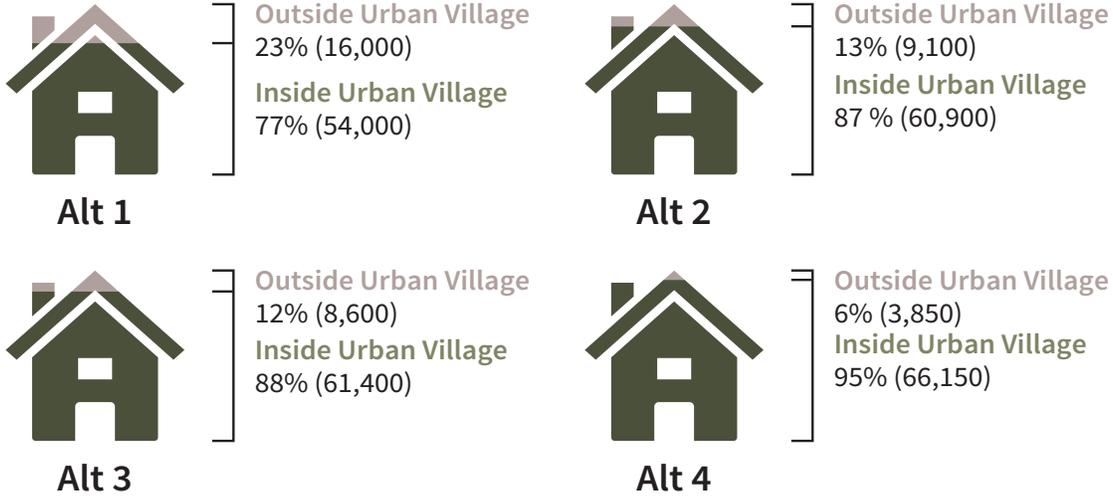
Under Alternative 2, future growth would be focused in the six existing urban centers to a greater degree than the other alternatives, with about 66 percent of new residential growth and 72 percent of new jobs projected to occur in the urban centers. Alternative 2 would result in the most concentrated growth pattern of any alternative, emphasizing a denser “center city” core which includes Downtown, First/Capitol Hill, South Lake Union and Uptown. Denser mixed-use cores in the University District and Northgate would also occur.

Alternative 2 planning estimates of residential and employment growth for each of the designated urban centers and urban villages are shown in Table 2–2 (housing) and Table 2–3 (employment).

Figure 2-7 Growth inside and outside of urban villages

Households

70,000 new households total



Jobs

115,000 new jobs total



2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

Under Alternative 2, relatively high density and high intensity development would occur in urban centers. Here, most new housing would be mid- and high-rise buildings with some low-rise, all primarily on properties that currently have low-density development.

In areas outside of the urban villages, the overall type, character and distribution of future development are likely to remain comparable to today's patterns, with a prevalence of relatively low-rise, small scale development. Given the greater emphasis on dense urban center growth, a lesser amount of growth is projected to occur in the urban villages and places outside urban villages and centers. This could result in growth that in many places could be perceived as a slower pace of change than has occurred over the past twenty years.

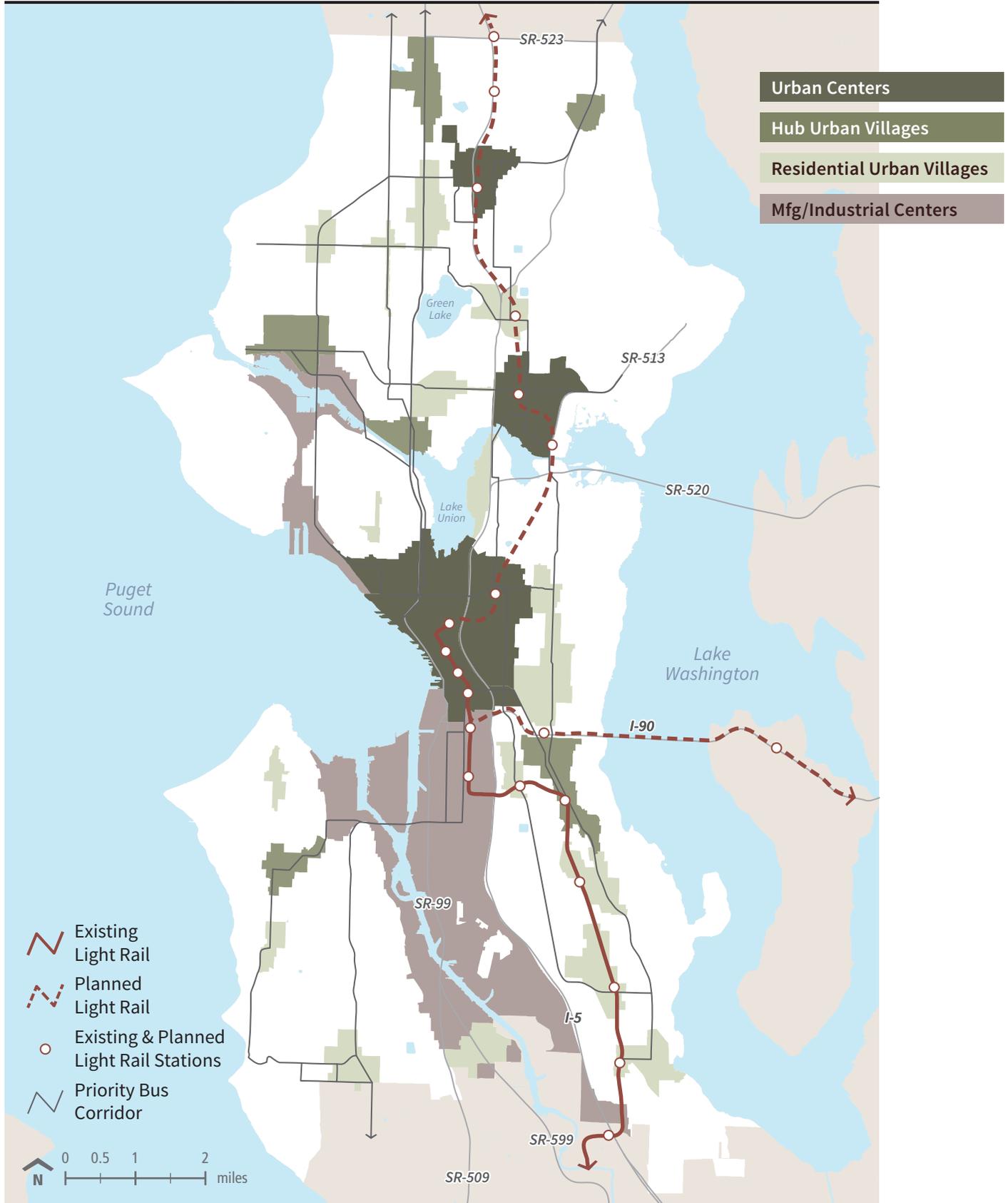
FUTURE LAND USE MAP

No changes to Future Land Use Map boundaries are proposed (as noted previously and shown in Figure 2-8, Figure 2-9 and Figure 2-10).

POLICY AND REGULATORY AMENDMENTS

As shown in Table 2-4 on page 2-32, implementing actions under Alternative 2 to encourage focused growth in urban centers may include increased zoning flexibility and development incentives and focused public investments to support increased livability.

Figure 2-8 Urban village boundaries under alternatives 1 and 2



2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

Figure 2-9 Urban village boundaries under alternatives 1 and 2 (north)

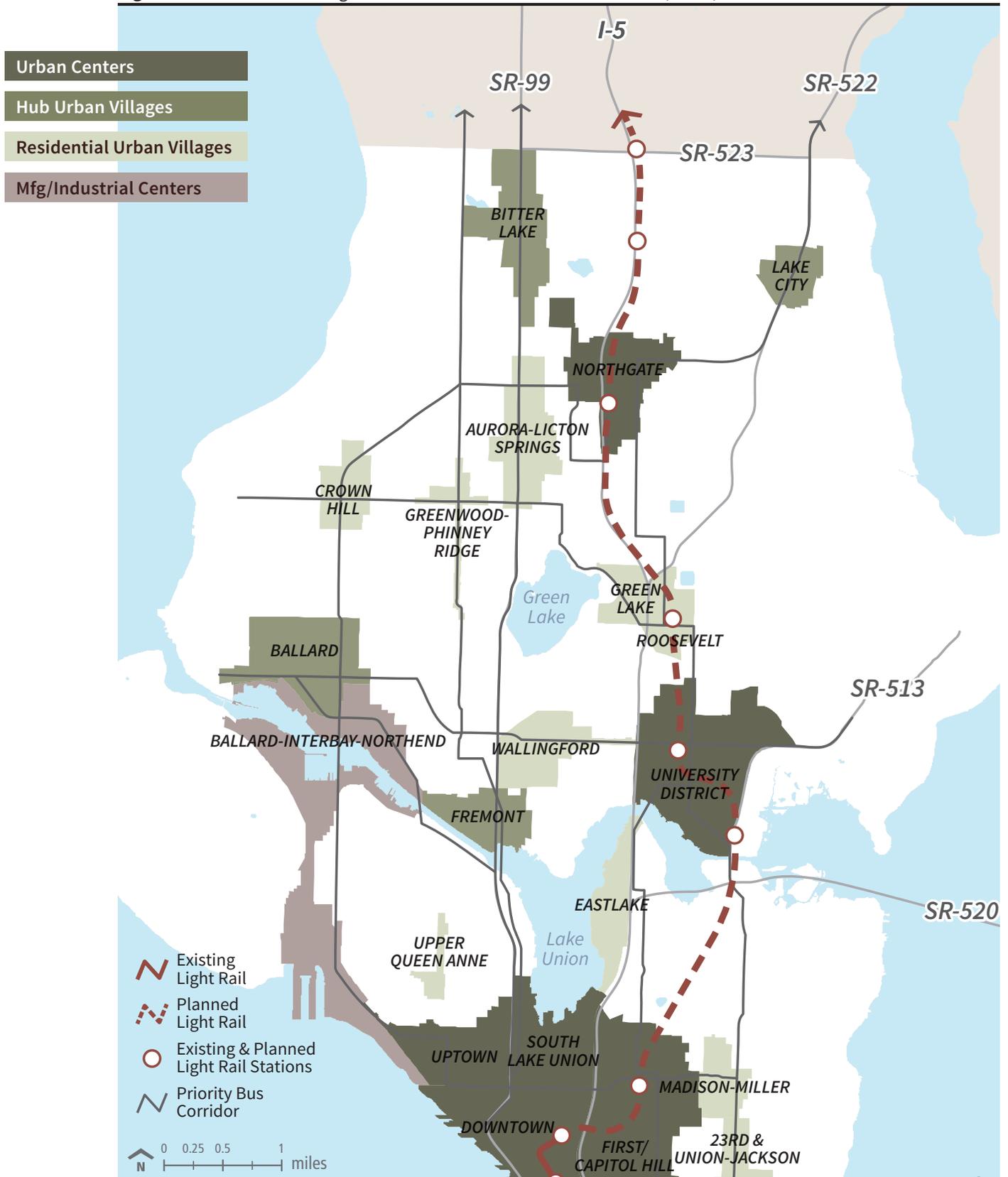
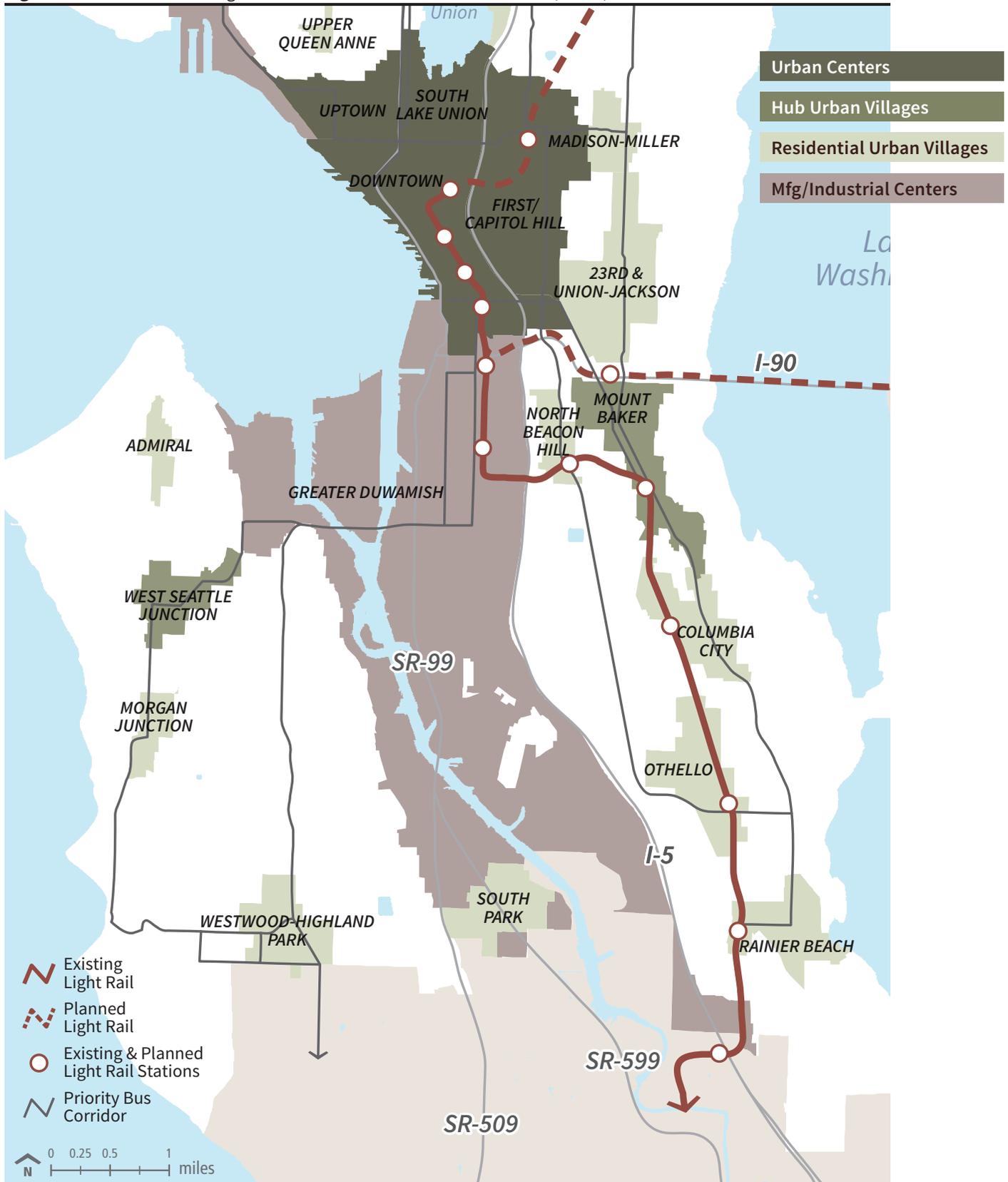


Figure 2-10 Urban village boundaries under alternatives 1 and 2 (south)



2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

Table 2-2 Housing growth assumption

	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4
Urban Centers				
Downtown	10,000	15,000	12,000	12,000
First/Capitol Hill	7,000	8,000	6,000	6,000
University District	2,700	4,000	3,500	3,500
Northgate	1,600	5,000	3,000	3,000
South Lake Union	4,700	12,000	8,000	7,500
Uptown	3,500	2,500	2,000	2,000
Total	29,500 (42%)	46,500 (66%)	34,500 (49%)	34,000 (49%)
Hub Urban Villages				
Ballard	3,000	1,500	1,500	3,000
Bitter Lake	2,100	1,000	1,000	1,000
Fremont	900	700	700	1,300
Lake City	1,400	1,000	1,000	1,000
Mount Baker	700	800	3,000	3,500
West Seattle Junction	1,400	1,200	1,250	3,000
Total	9,500 (14%)	6,200 (9%)	8,450 (12%)	12,800 (18%)
Residential Urban Villages				
23rd & Union-Jackson	2,200	600	1,750	1,750
Admiral	200	200	300	300
Aurora-Licton Springs	2,500	500	700	700
Columbia City	2,200	800	2,700	2,700
Crown Hill	100	300	300	1,200
Eastlake	800	300	300	300
Green Lake	500	500	700	700
Greenwood-Phinney Ridge	700	600	600	600
Madison-Miller	1,100	500	500	500
Morgan Junction	300	300	300	300
North Beacon Hill	200	500	1,500	1,500
Othello	1,700	800	2,500	2,500
Upper Queen Anne	600	300	300	300
Rainier Beach	100	500	1,500	1,500
Roosevelt	400	300	1,500	1,500
South Park	200	300	300	300
Wallingford	800	600	600	600
Westwood-Highland Park	400	300	600	600
Total	15,000 (21%)	8,200 (12%)	18,450 (26%)	19,350 (28%)
New Residential Urban Villages				
130th/I-5			1,500	1,500

Source: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development, 2014.

2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**Table 2-3** Employment growth assumptions

	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4
Urban Centers				
Downtown	30,000	33,000	25,000	30,000
First/Capitol Hill	4,000	7,000	5,000	5,000
University District	8,000	8,000	4,000	4,000
Northgate	5,000	11,000	7,500	7,500
South Lake Union	20,000	20,000	15,000	12,000
Uptown	3,500	3,500	2,000	2,000
Total	70,500 (61%)	82,500 (72%)	58,500 (51%)	60,500 (53%)
Hub Urban Villages				
Ballard	2,500	1,200	1,200	4,000
Bitter Lake	1,500	500	800	2,000
Fremont	400	400	400	400
Lake City	1,500	900	900	1,200
Mount Baker	1,000	800	3,200	3,200
West Seattle Junction	800	600	800	2,500
Total	7,700 (7%)	4,400 (4%)	7,300 (6%)	13,300 (12%)
Residential Urban Villages				
23rd & Union-Jackson	400	400	1,200	1,200
Admiral	50	75	50	50
Aurora-Licton Springs	400	400	400	1,000
Columbia City	1,400	600	1,400	1,400
Crown Hill	150	150	150	150
Eastlake	150	150	150	150
Green Lake	250	250	250	250
Greenwood-Phinney Ridge	400	400	400	600
Madison-Miller	500	500	500	500
Morgan Junction	30	30	30	30
North Beacon Hill	150	150	500	500
Othello	600	300	2,000	2,000
Upper Queen Anne	30	30	30	30
Rainier Beach	300	300	600	600
Roosevelt	400	400	1,600	1,600
South Park	100	100	100	300
Wallingford	180	180	180	180
Westwood-Highland Park	100	100	100	100
Total	5,590 (5%)	4,515 (4%)	10,040 (9%)	11,040 (10%)
New Residential Urban Villages				
130th/I-5			400	400
Mfg/Industrial Centers				
Greater Duwamish	3,000	12,000	11,000	6,000
Ballard-Interbay-Northend	1,500	3,000	3,000	3,000

Source: City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development, 2014.

2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

Transit oriented development (TOD) is typically described as a relatively high-density mixed use community that is centered around and within walking distance to a public transit station.

Alternative 3: Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Light Rail

Under Alternative 3, future growth would be accommodated primarily as transit-oriented development (TOD) with increased densities in areas around existing and planned light rail transit stations. Selected urban village boundaries near light rail stations would be expanded (see more details below). Future growth would also be concentrated in all urban centers, but at lower levels of intensity than Alternative 2 (see Figure 2–7).

Alternative 3 planning estimates of residential and employment growth for each of the urban centers and urban villages are shown in Table 2–2 (housing) and Table 2–3 (employment).

DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

Under Alternative 3, the growth anticipated in urban centers would likely be a mix of mid- and high-rise development while growth in transit-oriented development nodes would likely be mid-rise. Growth in the hub urban villages would likely be mid-rise development while growth in the residential urban villages would likely be a mix of low- and mid-rise.

Areas of expanded or new urban villages would likely convert from existing lower intensity to higher intensity development. For example, if a light rail station is planned for an area currently zoned predominantly single-family, future land use actions would likely rezone the areas within a ¼ or ½ mile of the station to accommodate low-rise multifamily and possibly local-serving commercial uses.

In areas outside of the urban villages, the overall development character and pattern would likely remain as currently exists.

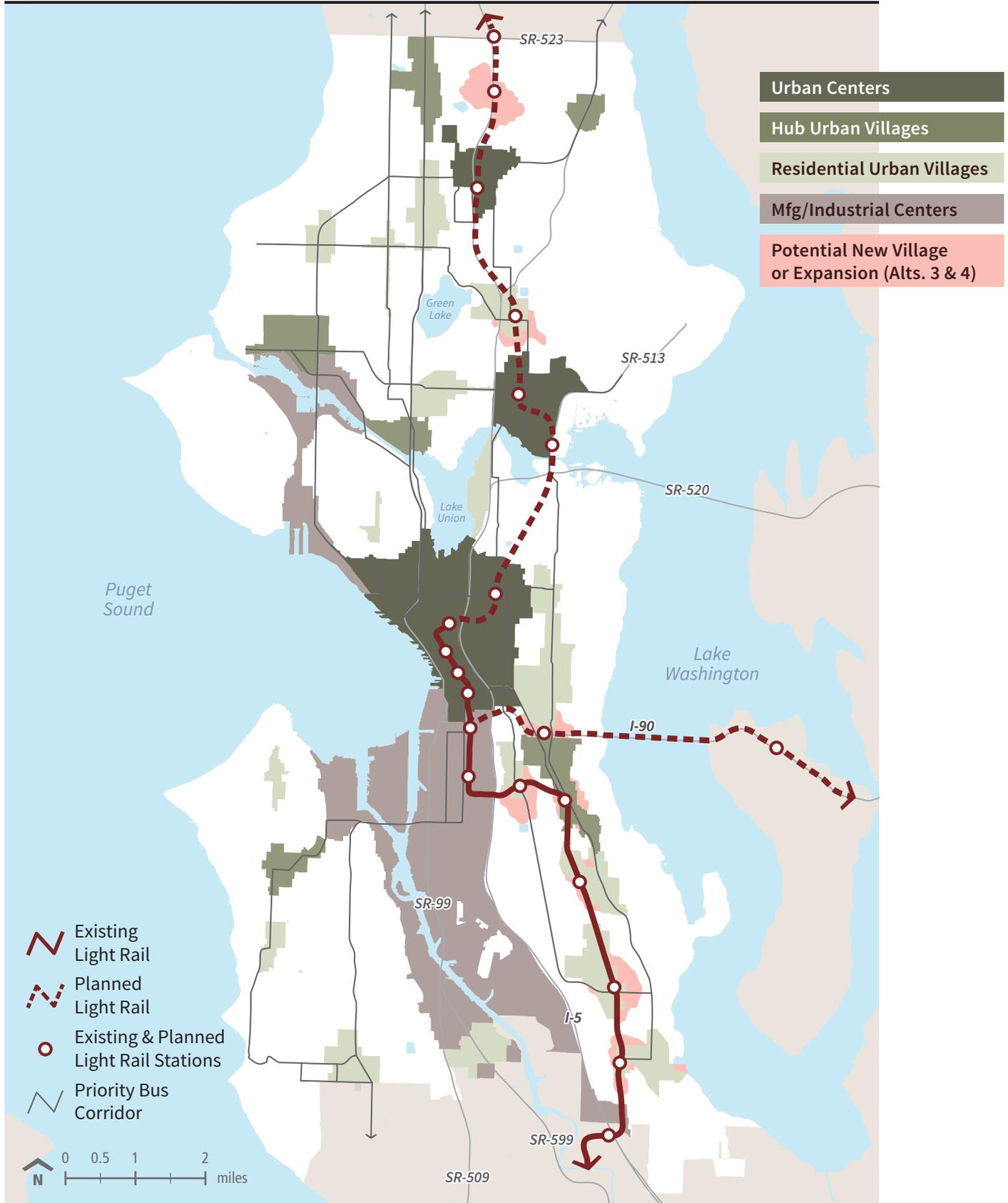
FUTURE LAND USE MAP

Alternative 3's proposed expansion of selected urban village boundaries to cover ten-minute walksheds of existing and planned light rail stations would affect portions of the Mount Baker Hub Urban Village and the 23rd & Union-Jackson, Columbia City, North Beacon Hill, Rainier Beach, Roosevelt and Othello residential urban villages. These changes would align with the TOD planning concept that encourages the most intensive development of locations that are in reasonable walking distance of high-capacity rail transportation stations. In addition, one possible new urban village included in Alternative 3 could be located around the NE 130th Street station. Although specific boundaries for the added and new urban village areas have not yet been defined, the approximate areas of proposed expansions and new villages are shown in Figure 2–11, Figure 2–12 and Figure 2–13.

The majority of the urban village boundaries would remain unchanged under this alternative. These include the hub urban villages of Ballard, Bitter Lake, Fremont, Lake City and West Seattle Junction and the residential urban villages of Admiral, Aurora-Licton Springs, Crown Hill, Eastlake, Green Lake, Greenwood-Phinney Ridge, Madison-Miller, Morgan Junction, Upper Queen Anne, South Park, Wallingford and Westwood-Highland Park.

2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

Figure 2-11 Urban village boundaries under Alternative 3



2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

Figure 2-12 Urban village boundaries under Alternative 3 (north)

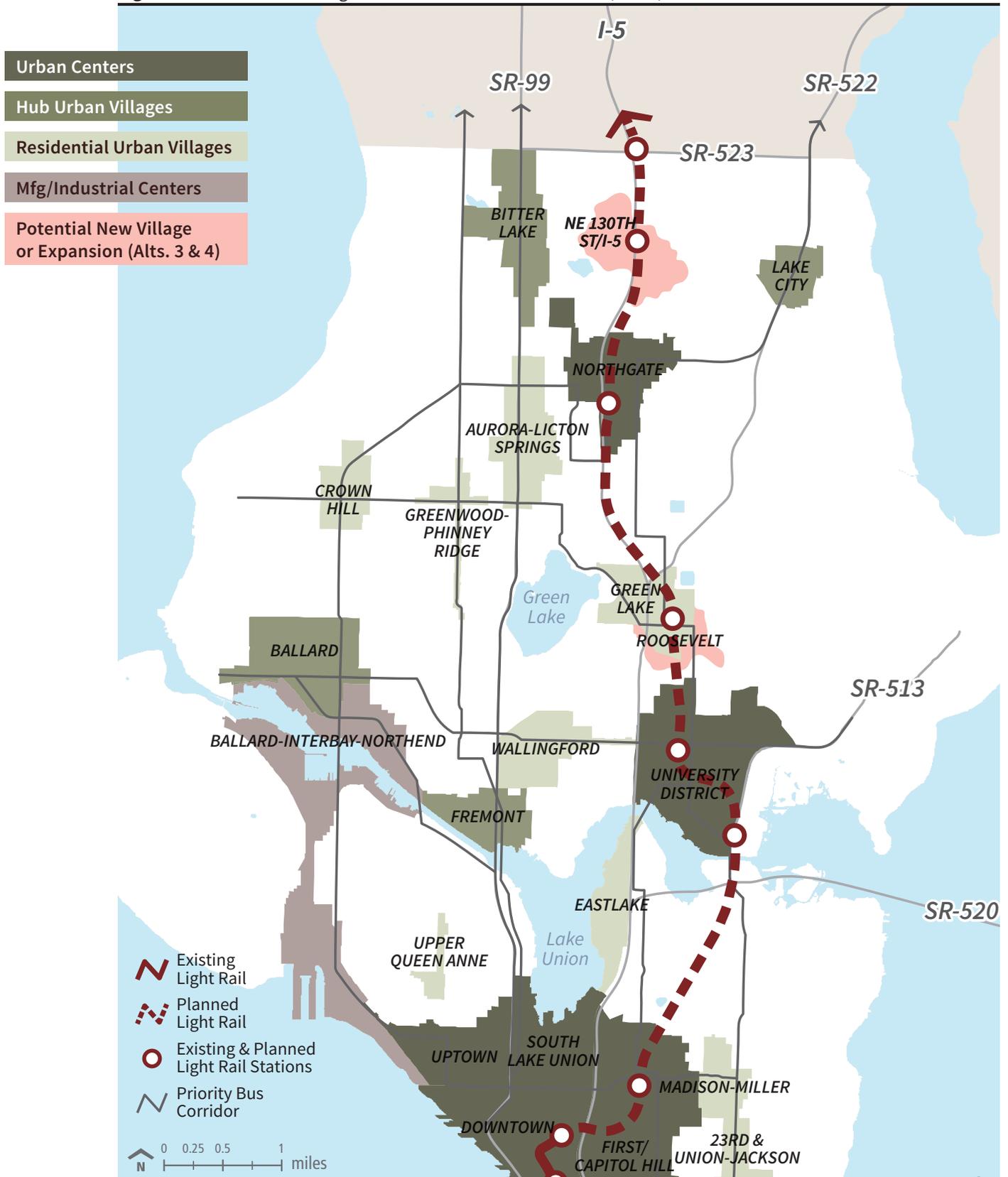
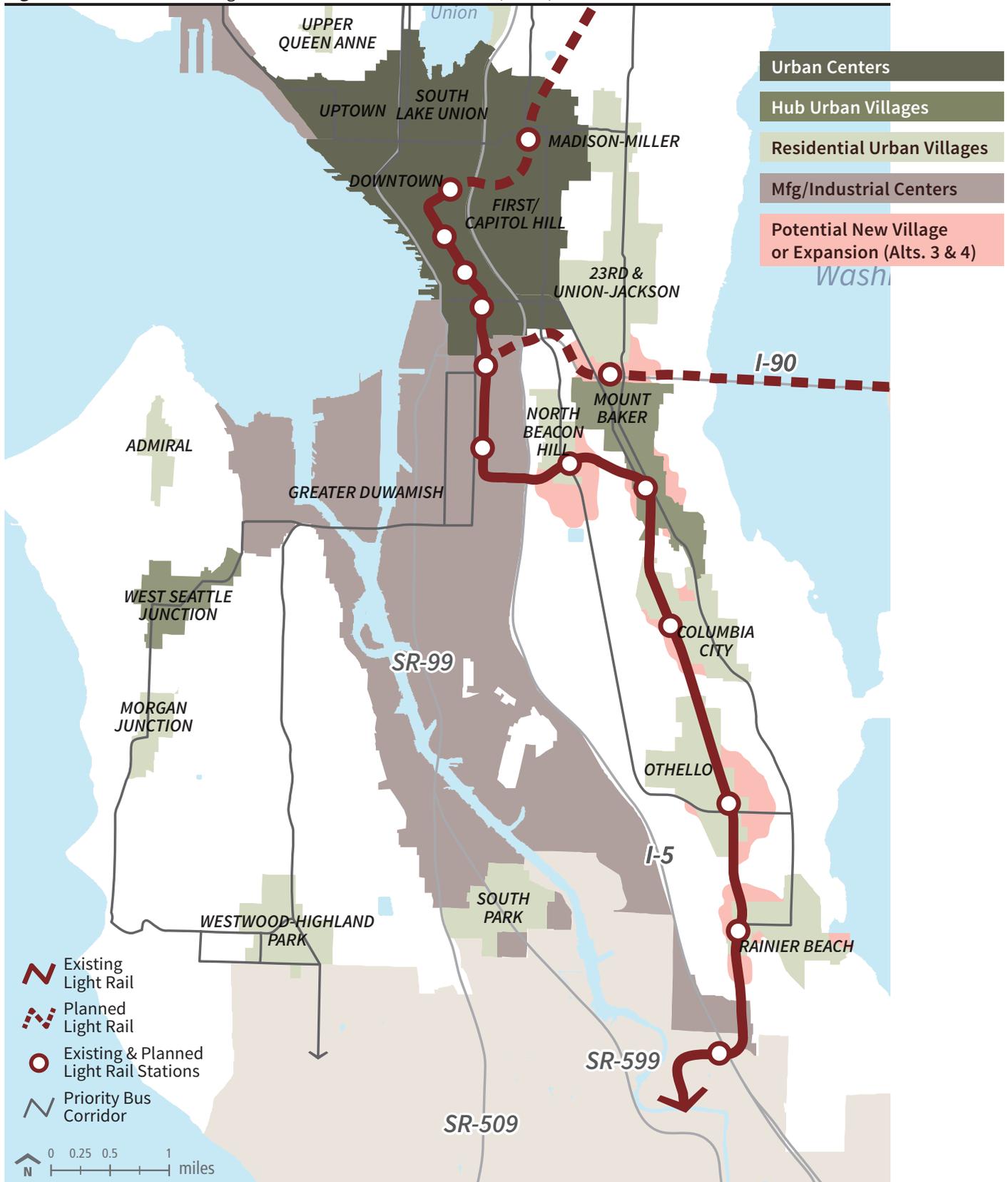


Figure 2-13 Urban village boundaries under Alternative 3 (south)



2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

Alternative 3 would also generalize land use designations in the urban centers and urban villages to provide greater flexibility, consistent with the intent and function of the specific urban center and village, in place of the more specifically defined Future Land Use Map designations.

POLICY AND REGULATORY AMENDMENTS

Similar to Alternative 2 and as shown in Table 2–4 on page 2–32, implementing actions under Alternative 3 to encourage focused growth around existing and planned light rail stations may include increased zoning flexibility and development incentives and focused public investments to support increased livability. This would be accomplished by changing the designation of urban centers and urban villages on the Future Land Use Map so that each category (center, hub, residential) would show as a single category with a distinct color, compared to the current map, which shows major land use categories by color. The map change would be accompanied by policies that describe the types and scales of development that would be expected inside each category. The effect would be to allow more flexibility for the zoning types that could be applied in the centers and villages.

Alternative 4: Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Transit

Under Alternative 4, future growth would be accommodated around light rail transit stations and in selected urban villages along priority transit corridors.

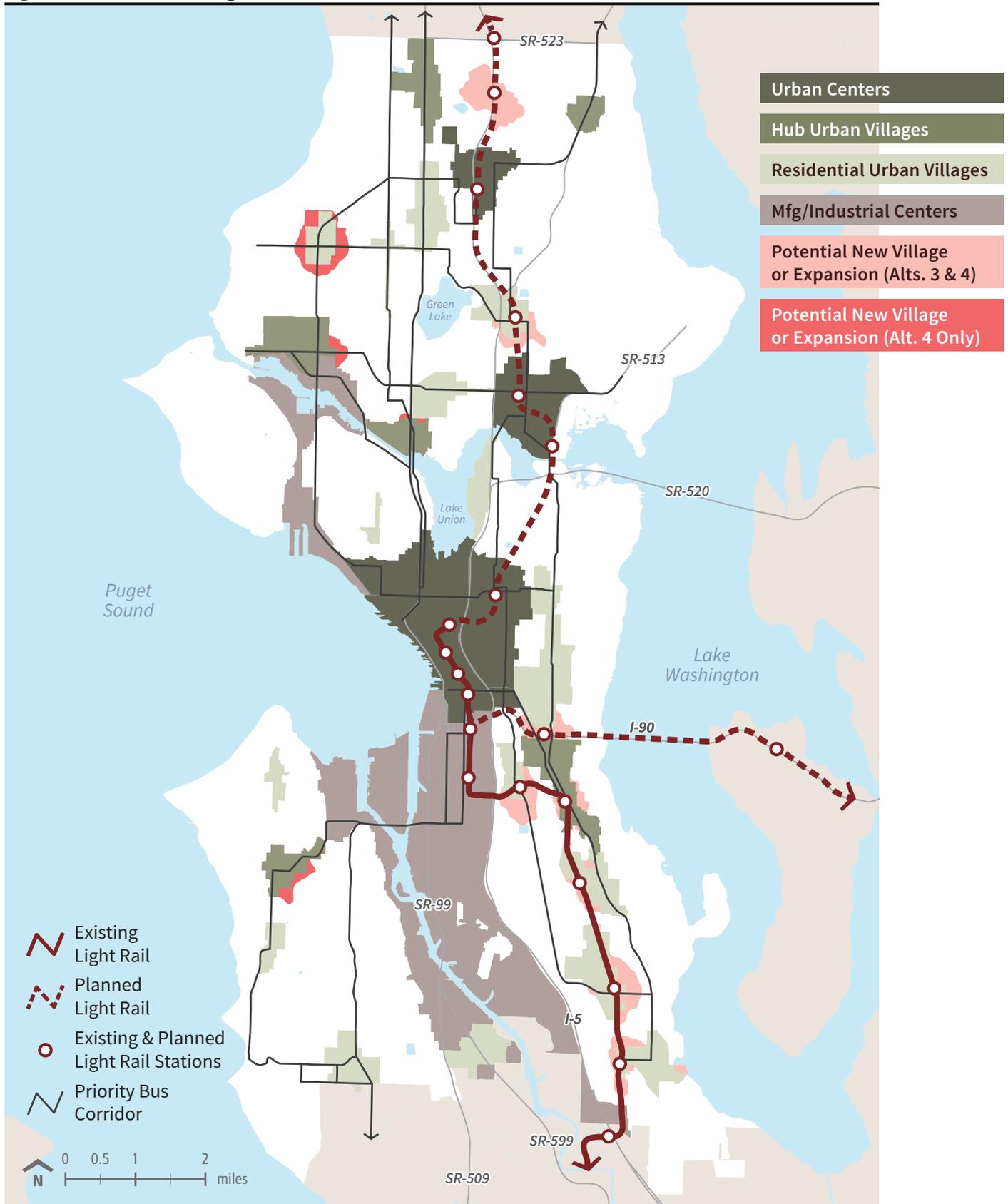
Alternative 4 would include the expanded urban village boundaries of Alternative 3 with additional expansions to encompass ten-minute walksheds around selected bus transit nodes in the Ballard, Fremont, West Seattle Junction and Crown Hill urban villages. Like Alternative 3, a new urban village would be located around the potential NE 130th Street station as shown in Figure 2–14, Figure 2–15 and Figure 2–16. All other urban village boundaries would remain unchanged.

Under Alternative 4, about 95 percent of new residential and 82 percent of new employment growth would likely occur within the urban villages and urban centers. Compared to the other alternatives, Alternative 4 would result in the greatest amount of residential growth within urban centers and urban villages (see Figure 2–7). Alternative 4 would likely also produce a development pattern having more locations of greater growth, especially in urban villages. Compared to the other alternatives, Alternative 4 would yield more projected development in more urban villages, resulting in the largest expansion of urban village boundaries.

Alternative 4 planning estimates of residential and employment growth for each of the urban centers and urban villages are shown in Table 2–2 (housing) and Table 2–3 (employment).

2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

Figure 2-14 Urban village boundaries under Alternative 4



2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

Figure 2-15 Urban village boundaries under Alternative 4 (north)

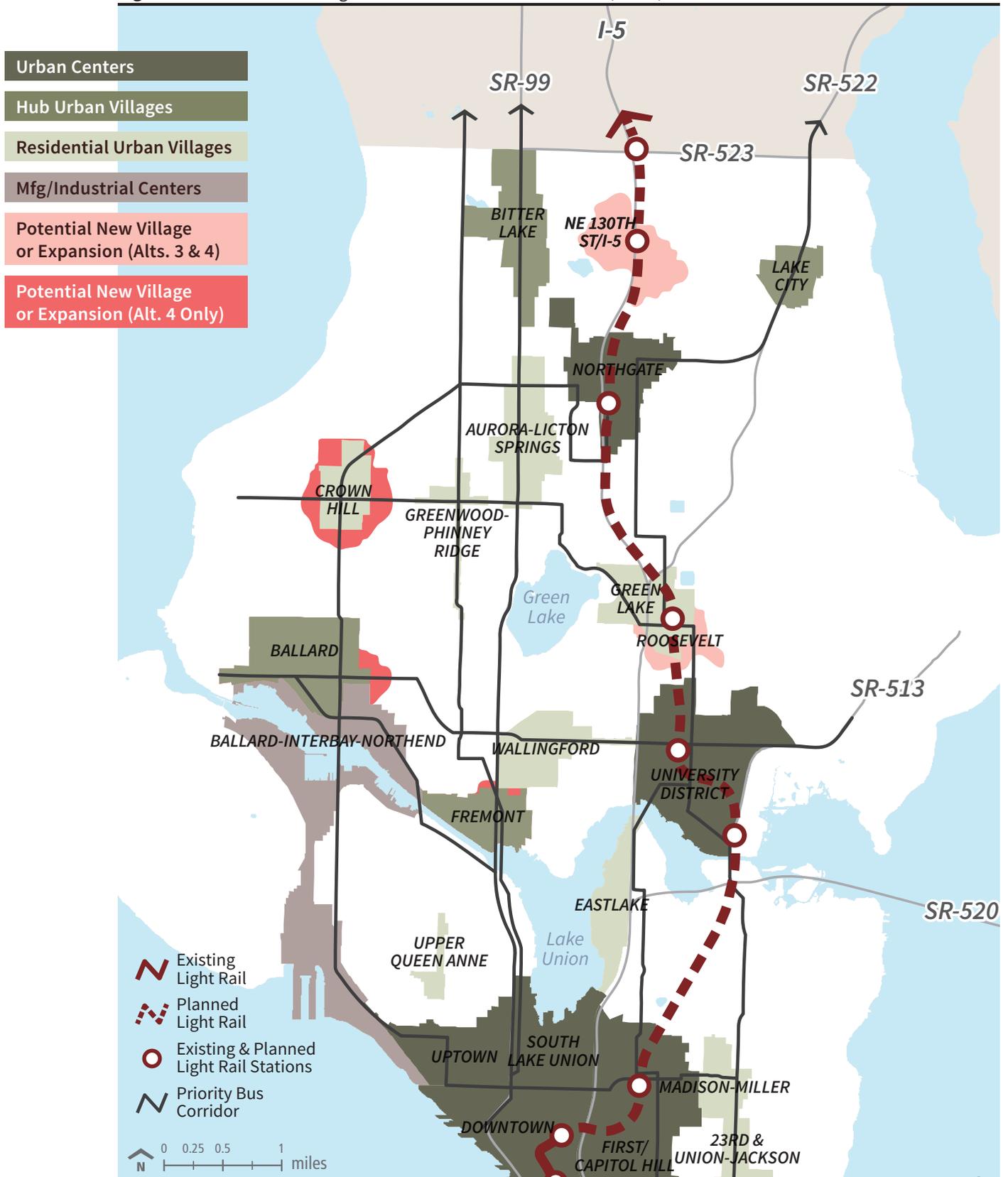
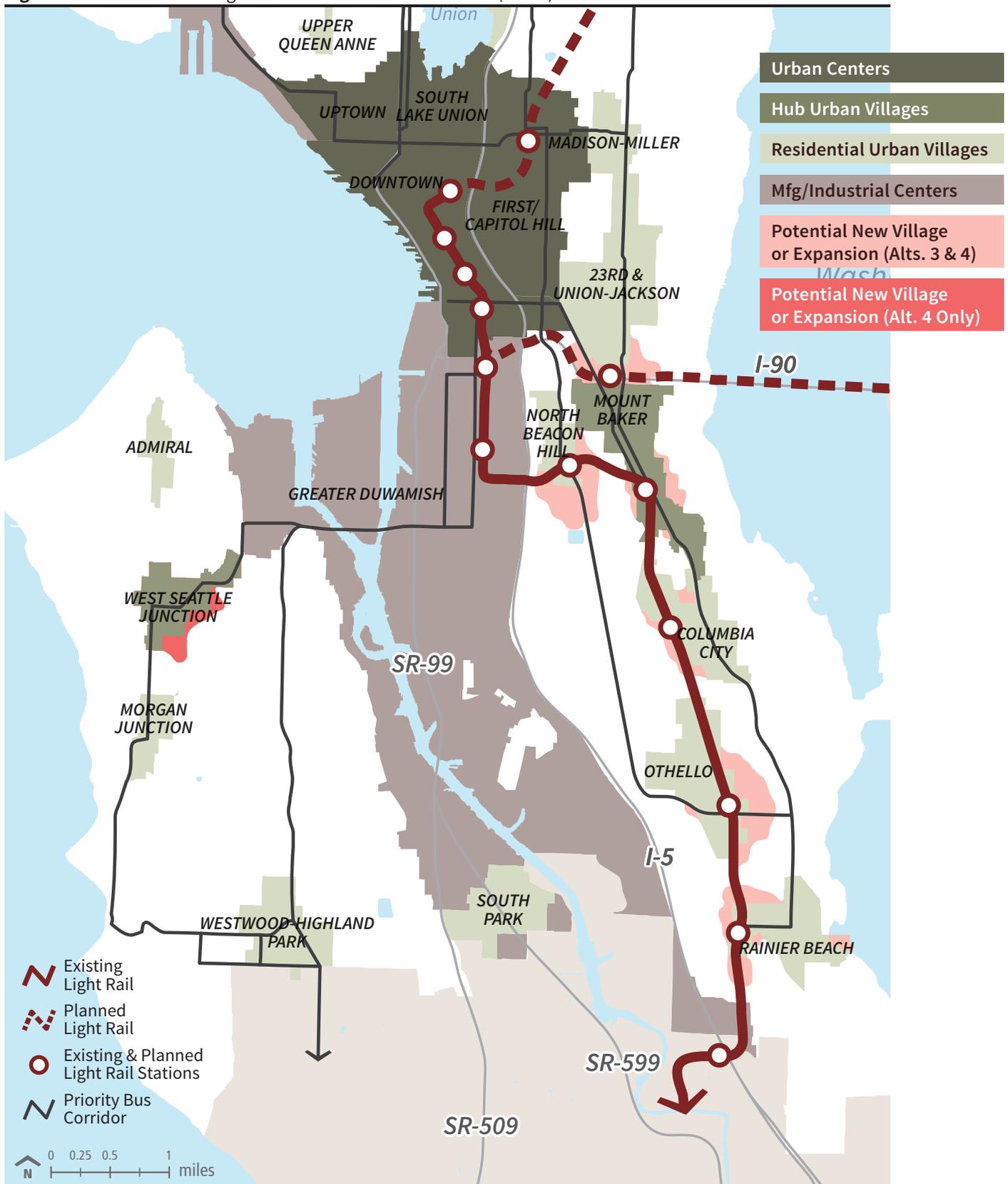


Figure 2-16 Urban village boundaries under Alternative 4 (south)



2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

Residential and employment character would be anticipated to be similar to that described for Alternative 3. Additional urban villages affected under Alternative 4 include Ballard, Fremont, West Seattle Junction and Crown Hill.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

Alternative 4 would include the same proposed changes as Alternative 3, plus additional expansions of urban villages to include all areas within a ten-minute walk-shed of selected bus transit nodes. These additional expansions would occur in West Seattle Junction, Ballard, Fremont and Crown Hill only under Alternative 4.

POLICY AND REGULATORY AMENDMENTS

Similar to Alternative 2 and 3, and as shown in Table 2–4, implementing actions under Alternative 4 to encourage focused growth around existing and planned light rail stations may

Table 2–4 Potential implementing measures

	Rezones	Other Zoning Code, regulatory, policy or investment strategies
Alternative 1 Continue Current Trends (No Action)	None known and none needed*	None known and none needed*
Alternative 2 Urban Center Focus	None known and none needed* Future potential rezones are undefined but could be pursued by the City, as an implementing strategy	Complementary strategies supporting urban center growth could be pursued: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools for zoning flexibility • Other growth incentive tools or programs to attract new buildings • Public investments to aid livability and attract development A precise description of content of such strategies is not defined at this time.
Alternative 3 Added Light Rail Community Focus	Change mapped designations of urban centers and urban villages on the FLUM to allow flexibility Similar to Alternative 2, except FLUM change may enable more rezones to occur inside urban villages	Same as Alternative 2
Alternative 4 Expanded Transit Focus	Same as Alternative 3	Same as Alternative 2

* Does not preclude future unrelated rezones or other comprehensive plan designation changes.

include increased zoning flexibility and development incentives and focused public investments to support increased livability. This would be accomplished by changing the designation of urban centers and urban villages on the Future Land Use Map so that each category (center, hub, residential) would show as a single category with a distinct color, compared to the current map, which shows major land use categories. The map change would be accompanied by policies that describe the types and scales of development that would be expected inside each category. The effect would be to allow more flexibility across zoning types that could be applied in the centers and villages.

Policy and Regulatory Amendments

Potential implementing measures associated with each alternative are summarized in Table 2-4 at left.

2.4 Environmental Review

PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

SEPA requires government officials to consider the environmental consequences of proposed actions, and to consider ways to accomplish the objectives that minimize adverse impacts or enhance environmental quality. They must consider whether the proposed action will have a probable significant adverse environmental impact on the elements of the natural and built environment.

The adoption of a comprehensive plan or development regulations is classified by SEPA as a non-project (also referred to as programmatic) action. A non-project action is defined as an action that is broader than a single site-specific project, and involves decisions on policies, plans or programs. An EIS for a non-project proposal does not require site-specific analyses; instead, the EIS will discuss impacts and alternatives appropriate to the scope of the non-project proposal and to the level of planning for the proposal (see WAC 197-11-442 for detail). The analysis in this EIS may also be used in the future to help inform project level development proposals.

SEPA INFILL EXEMPTION

According to Washington State's environmental policies (see RCW 43.21c), the City may consider adjustments to "categorical exemptions" from environmental review, including for "infill development" as described in RCW 43.21c.229, if it fulfills certain requirements. Among these requirements is SEPA environmental review of a comprehensive plan in an EIS. By conducting this review, the City fulfills this obligation and identifies the potential range of impacts that may occur by pursuing alternative courses of growth policy directions ranging from a continuation of current policies (Alternative 1/No Action Alternative) to strategies that would differently emphasize growth patterns among urban centers, urban villag-

2.4 Environmental Review

es, light rail station area vicinities and/or other transit-served vicinities. The range of impact findings also help illustrate the implications of the possible future City action that could be taken to define higher SEPA categorical exemption levels related to infill development, which would eliminate environmental review for certain size ranges of future development. Such higher exemption levels could continue until applicable levels of density or intensity of development, as defined in the Comprehensive Plan, are met.

SCOPE OF ANALYSIS

The City issued a Determination of Significance and Scoping Notice on October 17, 2013. During the scoping comment period, which extended from October 17, 2013 to April 21, 2104, interested citizens, agencies, organization and affected tribes were invited to provide comments on the scope of the EIS. During the comment period, the City held a public scoping meeting to provide information and invite comment from interested parties.

Based on the comments received during the scoping process, the City finalized the alternatives and scope of the EIS. Elements of the environment addressed in this EIS include:

- Earth/Water Quality
- Air Quality and Climate Change
- Noise
- Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility
- Relationship to Plans and Policies
- Population, Employment, Housing
- Transportation
- Public Services
- Utilities

OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City may at a later date in 2015, issue a Determination of Non-Significance for a set of amendments to the Comprehensive Plan on actions with 2015 deadlines or that are part of the 2015 annual amendment cycle, including:

- Adoption of new citywide growth targets and updated inventories and analysis into the Comprehensive Plan as required by the state Growth Management Act (GMA).
- Amendment to neighborhood-specific policies in the Neighborhood Planning Element and amendments to the Future Land Use Map for the Lake City Hub Urban Village and the 23rd & Union-Jackson and Morgan Junction residential urban villages.
- Amendments to policies addressing Environmentally Critical Areas.
- Amendments to Environment Element policies addressing stormwater drainage management and permeable surfaces.
- Housing Element amendments.

LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

In general, the analysis in the EIS is conducted on a citywide basis. Where information is available and would help in understanding potential impacts of the alternatives, smaller geographic units used by the City of Seattle are examined. These include, for example, urban villages, police precincts and fire service battalions. In other cases, particularly for transportation and some of the public services, this EIS defines eight analysis sectors for use in discussing potential impacts, including Northwest Seattle, Northeast Seattle, Queen Anne/Magnolia, Downtown/Lake Union, Capitol Hill/Central District, West Seattle, Duwamish and Southeast Seattle. These analysis sectors are shown in Figure 2-17 and referred to in the pertinent sections of Chapter 3.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

For each of the alternatives, potential environmental impacts to the elements of the environment listed above are described in Chapter 3 of this EIS and briefly summarized in Chapter 1. Please refer to these chapters for a comparison of the impacts of the alternatives, potential mitigating strategies and significant unavoidable adverse impacts.

2.5 Benefits and Disadvantages of Delaying the Proposed Action

SEPA requires a discussion of the benefits and disadvantages of reserving, for some future time, the implementation of a proposal compared to possible approval at this time. In other words, the City must consider the possibility of foreclosing future options by implementing the Proposal.

From the perspective of the natural environment, there is neither benefit nor disadvantage to delaying implementation of the proposed action. Regardless of whether the proposal is adopted, future growth and development will continue and City, state and federal requirements for environmental protection will continue to apply.

From the perspective of the built environment, reserving implementation of the proposal for some future time could result in delay of the City's ability to focus future development and resource allocations to the urban centers and urban villages as portrayed in the action alternatives. Such a delay could result in relatively less development occurring in areas within a reasonable watershed around existing and future light rail transit stations and priority transit corridors and related increased transportation congestion. If implementation of the proposal is delayed for some future time, existing growth trends and patterns of development would likely continue.

2.5 Benefits & Disadvantages of Delaying the Proposed Action

Figure 2-17 Eight analysis sectors

