MITIGATION STRATEGIES

REQUIRED/PROPOSED MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Given the type and magnitude of impacts discussed in this section, no mitigation measures or strategies are required or proposed to be mandatory actions accompanying approval of any of the alternatives.

OTHER POSSIBLE MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Based upon conditions observed in graphic skyline representations and the analysis of project prototypes depicting development conditions under the various alternatives, the following potential mitigation measures have been identified for consideration.

Height

The mapping of height limits could be more "fine-grained" to better achieve the variety of development conditions desired in different Downtown locations. For example, in areas where it is desirable to maintain the present scale and character of development, height limits more closely reflecting existing conditions could be applied to ensure a more compatible relationship between new projects and existing structures. Added height could increase the prominence of one area by making the buildings located there more visible from other areas, and lower height limits could help define special environments, such as residential enclaves or neighborhood shopping streets, where a more pedestrian-scale of development is desired. Variation in the heights of buildings, however it is achieved, would add interest to the skyline.

Bulk

Bulk Characteristics of Development

- Encourage more slender, tapering towers by allowing additional height contingent upon a reduction in bulk/floor size as structures increase in height. This measure would be similar to provisions in current zoning that allow additional height in DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones if there is a reduction in the size of floors in the portion of the structure extending above the mapped height limit.
- Reduce the floor size limit exempt from upper-level development standards for residential use. Currently, structures with floor sizes of 15,000 square feet or less are exempt from upper-level development standards. This standard reflects a relatively small floor size for commercial buildings and was intended to provide an incentive for more slender, smaller-scale commercial towers. When applied to residential use, the 15,000 square foot threshold represents a very large residential floor size. Without any limits on building dimensions or floor area density, this exemption could result in bulky, slab residential towers.
- Establish development standards for the residential portion of structures, similar to those that apply in the Downtown Mixed Residential zone, as an alternative to addressing the potential bulkiness of residential and mixed-use projects. Such standards could include minimum site size requirements, separation of facades, coverage limits at various height elevations, maximum façade dimensions and maximum floor size limits. These measures could be limited to designated areas, perhaps through overlays, to achieve specific objectives such as a stronger residential character or better transition in scale, or could apply only as conditions for structures exceeding current height limits.
- Consider how the use of color and materials in building design could mitigate perceptions of bulk; structures with dark, uninterrupted facades are often perceived as bulkier than lighter-clad, more articulated structures of similar volume.

Massing

- Require upper-level setbacks under certain conditions, such as along specifically designated streets where a more "open" character is desired, or along all or portions of frontages on narrower streets, to reduce the perception of bulk and enhance the pedestrian environment. Upper-level setbacks can also help relate new development to the scale of adjacent smaller buildings and historic landmark structures.
- Require or offer incentives for mid-block "corridors of space" on long blocks to prevent the uninterrupted massing of development along the entire blockfront. Massing solutions that help open up mid-block areas could also be a condition of alley vacations.

Height and Bulk Relationship

Under certain conditions, proposed height and density increases could result in situations where height limits may be too constraining to accommodate the maximum permitted density without resulting in development that appears excessively bulky. In addition to ensuring that the total floor area permitted on a site can be accommodated in desirable types of development within the established height limits, the following actions can also address this condition:

- For zones with high density limits (FAR) relative to the permitted height limit, reduce incentives for large site assembly that result in an amount of permitted floor area that is difficult to accommodate without large-floor-plate structures extending to the prescribed height limit. Options could range from:

  --denying alley vacations that enable full-block site assembly;
  --establishing a maximum lot size for development;
  --prohibiting vacated right-of-way from inclusion in lot area calculations for determining permitted floor area; or
  --establishing a variable FAR limit that allows a higher maximum FAR for development on sites of a half-block in area or less and a lower FAR for larger sites.

- Establish a density limit for residential use to treat bulk conditions more evenly among commercial-only, residential, and mixed-use developments. However, to continue to provide incentives for residential and mixed-use development, the density (FAR) limit for these projects could be slightly higher than that allowed for commercial-only development, similar to conditions in commercial zones outside of Downtown with height limits exceeding 85 feet.
- As a variation of the option above, establish density limits only for development exceeding a base height limit. The base height limit could be established as the existing mapped height limit, and for development opting to extend above this limit up to the proposed height increase, uses currently exempt from FAR calculations would be subject to a density limit.
- As an alternative to assigning a density limit to residential use, establish bulk standards for portions of a structure occupied by residential use.

Scale

Transition

- Maintain current height and density limits in sensitive transition areas.
- Establish overlays for sensitive transition areas, such as areas abutting special review districts or residential zones, to apply additional measures that address height and bulk conditions and promote a better scale relationship between areas. Increases in height could be restricted in these areas, or allowed contingent on applying special measures to address bulk conditions. These overlay areas

could also be used to target locations where special measures to limit the bulk or density of residential and mixed-use development would apply.

- Prohibit alley vacations in sensitive transition areas to prevent the larger scale of development that results from development on full-block sites through alley vacations.

Compatibility between new and existing development

The possible measures below apply to situations where greater compatibility between varying scales of development is desired, both under general development conditions and, more specifically, with landmark structures. Because of the project-specific nature of these measures, their effectiveness would be most likely achieved through the design review process. Their application may also be limited to specific areas where it is desirable to retain an existing well-established development pattern.

- Require upper-level setbacks on new structures, especially on long sides of half-blocks, even if cornice lines do not align, to create a range of building and street wall heights that is more characteristic of an established development pattern. Where no setbacks are required for new development, require the continuity of the cornice lines on facades of new towers.
- Relate the facades of new structures to the typical lot widths more characteristic of the established development pattern.
- Maintain streetwall continuity next to landmark structures to avoid exposing lot line elevations or "back sides" of historic structures.
- Avoid irregular geometry of new development below the cornice line of adjacent structures that tends to conflict with the traditional geometry and street grid relationship of historic structures.
- Locate open spaces opposite historic structures in mid-block locations, to enhance views of these structures.
- Prohibit alley vacations on blocks including landmark structures that would result in the massing of new development not conforming to the established development pattern. Current policy discourages but does not prohibit alley vacations.

Development diversity

- Prohibit alley vacations unless proposed development includes a varied mix of uses. This action may be especially appropriate in the DMC zones where there is a stronger emphasis on mixing uses than in office core zones.
- Expand the potential use of variable-scale TDR to allow sites not within the same block to qualify as eligible sending sites. To limit the use of this form of TDR, transfers between blocks could be restricted to certain areas where maintaining a varied scale is a priority.

Residential Character

- Discourage structured parking above-grade through such measures as including all—or a specified portion of—a project's accessory residential parking above-grade as chargeable FAR. For residential-only development, this would require that a density limit be established for residential use. As an alternative for residential projects, establish a standard requiring above-grade parking to be screened by another use along all or portions of the project's street frontage.
- Require ground-level open space and landscaped areas to enhance the residential character of high-density residential development sites.

- Require base structures with residential use at street level in certain locations, such as along designated Green Streets, to promote a more residential character.
- Establish overlays for areas intended to accommodate concentrations of residential development that would include provisions to strengthen residential character, which might include some of the measures described above.

SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

Additional height and bulk enabled by proposed zoning changes would add incrementally to the scale of development, resulting in greater differences from the development authorized by existing zoning. The most significant impact of these changes would occur under Alternative 1 where the greatest height and commercial density increases are proposed in areas currently zoned to provide transitions in scale and intensity of development between the Downtown commercial core and adjacent residential and mixed-use neighborhoods. Additional height and density in these areas would permit more intensive commercial development and a more abrupt change in the physical scale of development along these more sensitive zone edges.

URBAN DESIGN—PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACE

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Pedestrian Amenities and Streetscape

Within Downtown, the public realm is primarily the street environment. Individual buildings and their relationship to neighboring buildings, the street and other open spaces influence the pedestrian's perception of this environment. Factors influencing the character of the streetscape and contributing to the quality of the pedestrian experience include:

- the width of streets and sidewalks;
- the effects of sun, shadow and wind;
- topography;
- the degree of visual interest;
- the level of interaction with activity, both on the street and in abutting development;
- the bulk of buildings and how they appear to pedestrians; and
- the sense of scale, enclosure, comfort and safety.

Seattle's Downtown is organized around a street grid forming rectangular blocks. Avenues, generally the widest and most heavily traveled routes, run roughly north/south and have the most level grade, while the east/west streets are typically narrower and often have steep grades, particularly in the Commercial Core. Alleys for service access parallel the avenues, bisecting many blocks. Shifts in the orientation of the street grid at Yesler Way and Stewart Street/Olive Way, and thoroughfares cutting diagonally across the street network, such as Westlake Avenue, interrupt the uniformity of the street pattern. Along these "seams," streets converge at odd angles and create complex intersections, building forms become irregular, pedestrian flows are interrupted and use patterns and activities often change. Buildings located where streets change direction often form the backdrop of long views down the street, creating a strong sense of enclosure by visually "walling off" one area from another.

Most of the central portion of Downtown between Yesler Way and Olive Way/Stewart Street is strongly knitted together by streets that, from block to block, have strongly defined edges created by buildings built at or close to the street property line. Pedestrian access to most uses is oriented onto the wide, level avenues running north/south, while blank walls, parking garages, and vehicular and services entrances more typically occur along the steeper east/west streets. Consequently, the avenues generally provide greater pedestrian activity and visual interest. Furthermore, development directly abutting the street and orienting pedestrian access onto the street frequently provides overhead weather protection, street trees, and other features intended to enhance the pedestrian environment and increase pedestrian comfort. This more traditional pattern of development—where buildings abut the street property line and provide continuous street level uses oriented to pedestrians—is most evident west of 3rd Avenue between Pioneer Square and the Pike Place Market and in the areas surrounding the retail core.

Streetscape conditions are less cohesive in the area north of Olive Way/Stewart Street. Here, the pattern of structures with continuous streetfronts is interrupted by expanses of surface parking lots and occasional automobile-oriented development. These interruptions contribute to a less-defined pedestrian streetscape, especially in areas where blocks are occupied by parking lots.

The size of Downtown blocks and their subdivision into development sites has a strong influence on the streetscape character. In the early stages of development, buildings occupied single lots. As demand for space has increased and building technologies advanced, lots were combined to form larger project sites.

Increasingly, half-block and full-block sites (formed through alley vacations) have been created to accommodate a greater scale of development. Some blocks originally occupied by multiple, modest-scaled structures on individual lots have over time been redeveloped with a single large structure. Most of the development in the DOC 1 zone over the last 20 years has occurred on full-block sites, and several of the recently proposed projects in the DOC 2 300' zone involve full-block sites.

While the consolidation of parcels on a block into a single site allows for a greater scale of development and provides more space for a particular use, it also often reduces the variety of buildings and mix of uses in an area. The streetscape becomes less varied and often less interesting. On the other hand, because of zoning incentives and development practice, projects on larger sites often provide public open space in the form of plazas or landscaped areas which, when properly designed and sited, contribute positively to the pedestrian environment and help offset the impacts of the larger scale of development. Such spaces can have a negative effect on the pedestrian environment, however, when they are poorly integrated with street level activity and interrupt established patterns of street level use.

On sites throughout Downtown, private and public projects include features that enhance conditions for pedestrians, including public open spaces and landscaped areas; sheltered passages and street frontages that protect pedestrians from inclement weather; elevators and other mechanical assists that help pedestrians ascend steep slopes; and street-level uses that add interest and accommodate pedestrian services. In many locations, especially near the retail core, the public sidewalk area is improved with street trees, special paving, street furniture, special lighting fixtures, or public art that further contribute to the quality of the pedestrian environment.

Existing Measures Addressing Streetscape Conditions and Pedestrian Amenities

The current Downtown Land Use Code addresses the relationship between the pedestrian street environment and abutting development through the following provisions:

Street edge conditions. Required street façade heights and limits on street façade setbacks ensure that the street level portions of new projects are well-integrated with pedestrian activity and contribute to a comfortably-scaled streetscape. The specific standards vary according to anticipated pedestrian volumes on different streets and existing development conditions.

Street level uses. To promote an active street level environment, street level uses are required along certain mapped streets and encouraged in other areas. Projects including these uses are eligible for a floor area bonus and can exempt this space from the FAR density limits if certain development standards are met, such as providing overhead weather protection for pedestrians along sidewalk frontages.

Transparency requirements and blank facade limits. Development standards limit the extent of blank walls and require transparent openings at street level along street frontages to promote greater visual interest for pedestrians. The specific standards vary based on anticipated pedestrian volumes on different streets and the importance of a particular street in the overall pedestrian network.

Variable development scale. In addition to measures that specifically promote the preservation of designated landmark structures, several incentives encourage greater variety in the mix and scale of development within Downtown. These include:

- Within-block transfer of development rights (TDR) allowing the transfer of unused development rights between sites located on the same block in DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones as an incentive to retain some of the existing development on a block as redevelopment occurs.
- Exemption from upper-level development standards for small sites to facilitate development of smaller "infill" sites.

- Projects in DOC 1 and portions of DOC 2 zones can increase height up to 20% above the mapped height limits if a specified percentage of the development site is occupied by either open space or existing or new structures of limited height (no greater than 35 feet or 65 feet, depending on the percentage of the site occupied by the lower structures).

Pedestrian amenities. Several provisions promote features in new development that enhance the pedestrian environment, including requirements for street trees and minimum sidewalk widths, and floor area bonus incentives for public open space, through-block connections, hillclimb assists and Green Street improvements.

Upper level development standards. To make buildings appear less bulky to pedestrians and to address the sun, shadow and wind impacts of new development, the Code limits the extent to which the upper floors of buildings can be built close to the street. This is achieved through development standards limiting the amount of building coverage allowed within a specified area along street frontages at specified elevations. In addition, there are limits on the width of façades allowed for portions of the structure built within a specified distance from the street.

Parks and Open Space

Downtown Seattle is generally considered to have a shortage of major public parks or open spaces. However, the area does have a variety of smaller public parks and open spaces as well as privately-provided open spaces related to individual buildings, such as plazas and landscaped building setbacks. Certain streets, such as 5th Avenue and Pine Street, provide wide sidewalks, landscaping and street furniture.

Within the study area, publicly-owned open space resources are limited, and located mostly on the edges. Freeway Park, on the northeastern edge of the Commercial Core, is the largest public space (5 acres). Waterfront Park, on the western edge of the Commercial Core, is another large open space providing a heavily used amenity for tourists and locals. Other sizable public spaces include City Hall Park, the lawn of the old Federal Courthouse, and landscaped areas on the Art Museum and Benaroya Symphony Hall sites. Public open space in the DOC 2 300' and DMC zones north of Union Street is limited to the plaza located at the Convention Place Transit Tunnel Station. Additional public open space will be added in the office core upon completion of the City's Civic Center.

Small parks, plazas, and landscaped setback areas are scattered throughout the study area on private development sites, with the greatest concentration in the Commercial Core. Generally connected with major office developments, these features typically are the result of floor area bonus incentives established under earlier Downtown zoning provisions. As with publicly-owned resources, only limited amounts of this type of open space are present in the DOC 2 300' and DMC areas north of Union Street; the most prominent being the spaces provided in the Metropolitan Park complex and the sunken plaza of 1600 Pine Street (Qwest Plaza). However, several planned projects in this area include proposed open space features on site, including the new Federal Courthouse now under construction, the Touchstone project at 1000 Stewart Street and planned development at the Frederick Cadillac site.

Within the Denny Triangle and the Commercial Core neighborhoods, the combined area of public and privately owned open spaces of at least 10,000 square feet in size is approximately 19.8 acres. Most of this open space, 17.5 acres, is in the Commercial Core (see Table J-1 in Appendix J). While many of the available open spaces provide only limited recreation opportunities—primarily passive use by office workers—these spaces do introduce landscaping, light and air into the Downtown environment, and provide visual relief from the concentrations of large-scale development.

Some streets within the affected area have acquired a more open, landscaped character because of the plazas and landscaped areas sited along them. This character is especially evident on Second Avenue and University Street in the Commercial Core. Sixth Avenue in the Denny Triangle also has a more open landscaped character due to street width and numerous landscaped building setbacks on abutting sites. These setbacks accentuate Sixth Avenue's width and contribute to a sense of openness, but generally are neither large enough nor designed to function as usable open space. New open spaces in proposed projects at Sixth/Blanchard and Sixth/Bell will contribute further to this character.

Other parks nearby or adjacent to the study area include Denny Park, Regrade Park, Prefontaine Park, and harborfront recreational amenities. Denny Park is a 4.6-acre park located north of Denny Way between Dexter Avenue and 9th Avenue N, containing grassy open space, trees, landscaping, benches and play equipment. East of Denny Park is an additional open space with an outdoor basketball court and grassy field. Regrade Park is a 0.3-acre urban park with benches and limited recreational amenities. City Hall Park is a 0.7-acre open space adjacent to the King County Courthouse with benches, grass and trees. Harborfront recreational amenities include Waterfront Park, the Seattle Aquarium, the Washington Street Boat Dock, and several other tourist-oriented attractions extending as far north as Myrtle Edwards Park and the site of the future Olympic Sculpture Park. Figure 26 shows existing Downtown open spaces.

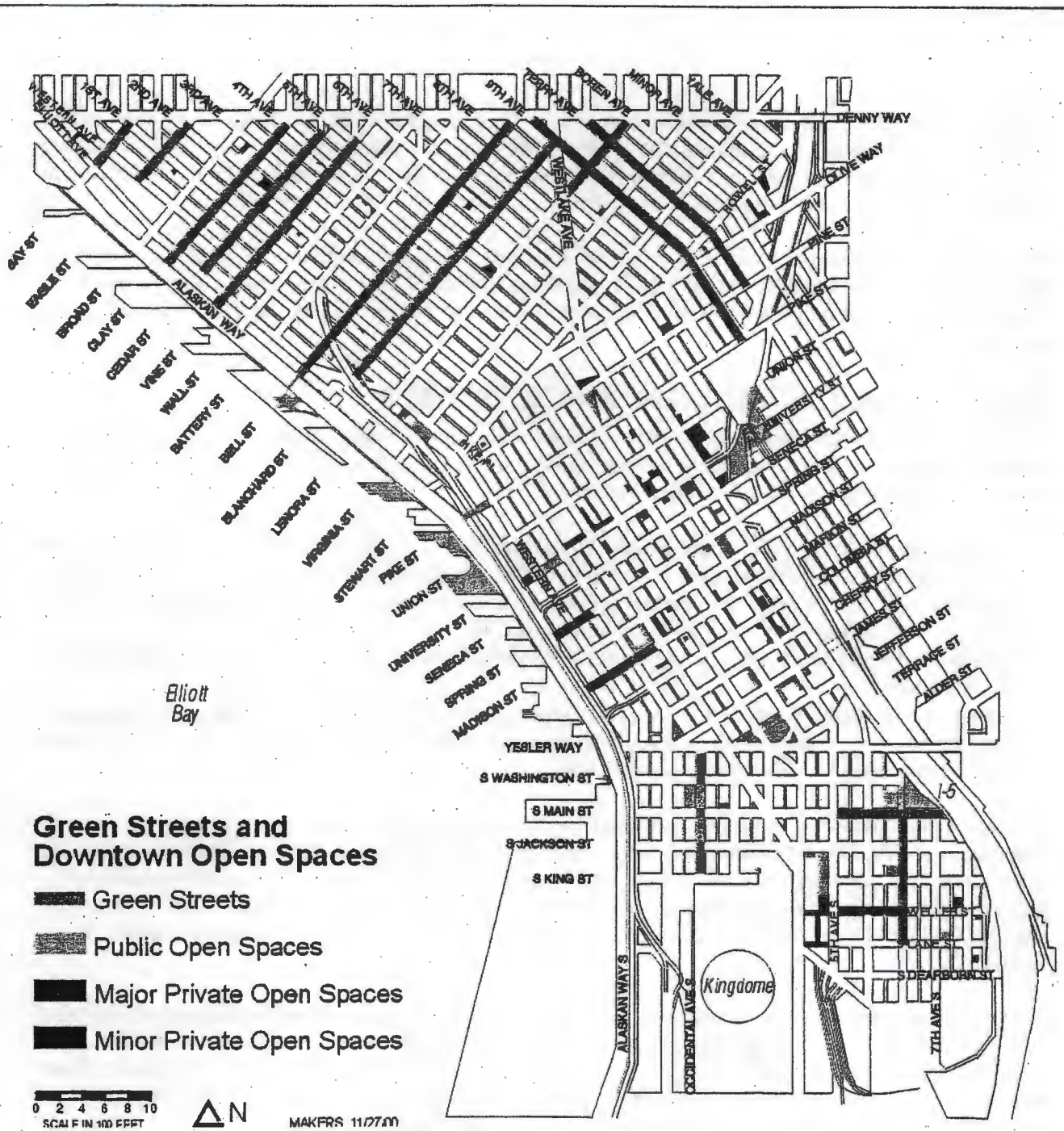
Green Streets. Due to the scarcity of open space resources Downtown and limited prospects for acquiring future open space sites, the Downtown Plan calls for a greater emphasis on landscaping and pedestrian use of certain public street rights-of-way designated as Green Streets. Several Green Streets and portions of Green Streets are located in the affected area, including Lenora Street, 9th Avenue, Terry Avenue, Blanchard and Bell Streets in the Denny Triangle, and portions of Marion, Spring and University Streets in the Commercial Core. The Harbor Steps represent one extreme design solution for Green Streets; originally an undeveloped street right-of-way, the area now is accessible only to pedestrians and used primarily as open space. However, most Green Street treatments are expected to be limited to some amount of sidewalk widening to increase pedestrian and landscaping areas while maintaining vehicular use of the street. While this type of treatment has occurred on portions of University and Spring Streets, most Green Streets remain unimproved. Design plans for the Lenora, 9th and Terry Avenue Green Streets, however, have been prepared and await implementation. In addition to improvements within the public rights-of-way, development on abutting properties is required to provide landscaped setbacks along these Green Streets. Existing designated Green Streets are shown on Figure 26 below.

Existing Measures Addressing Open Space in Affected Zones

Requirements. Office projects with floor area exceeding 85,000 square feet are required to provide open space for the use of project occupants. The amount of open space required is 20 square feet for every 1,000 square feet of office space. The open space may be for the private use of building occupants, but open space provided for general public use may be eligible for a floor area bonus.

Residential projects with more than 20 units are required to provide common recreation area in an amount equivalent to 5% of a project's total floor area in residential use. While all required area must be available for the common use of building occupants, up to 50% of the required area may be interior space. Improvements made to abutting Green Streets, or any nearby Green Street for Denny Triangle projects, may satisfy up to 50% of the requirement.

Incentives. Commercial projects in the DOC 1, DOC 2, and DMC zones in the affected area can increase permitted floor area up to specified amounts through bonuses for providing certain open space features, including plazas, parcel parks, and hillside terraces. Projects making improvements to Green Streets can



GREEN STREETS AND DOWNTOWN OPEN SPACES

FIGURE 26

Strategic Planning Office
City of Seattle
May 21, 2002

Graphic from "Downtown Open Space Evaluation" prepared by the Strategic Planning Office, April 2001.

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also gain additional floor area. Gains in commercial floor area above base density limits can also be achieved through the purchase and transfer of development rights from eligible open space TDR sending sites. A preliminary inventory of potential open space sending sites estimates the supply under current conditions to be just under 1 million square feet.

Within the Denny Triangle, residential or mixed-use projects that gain additional height by participating in the transfer of development credits (TDC) program are required to provide public amenities like open space or Green Street improvements, or contribute to a fund to be used to provide such amenities in the neighborhood.

Comprehensive Plan Open Space Goals for Downtown

The Comprehensive Plan includes open space goals for Downtown neighborhoods that include goals for the overall amount of space desired for the residential and employment populations, as well as the desired proximity of the open space to the populations served.

- **Open Space Goals for the Employment Population.** The Comprehensive Plan establishes an open space goal for the Downtown core of one acre of "Village Open Space" per 10,000 jobs (4.35 sq. ft. per job). For the purposes of this analysis, the Downtown core is defined as the study area zoned DOC 1, DOC 2, and DMC, as well as the retail core (DRC).
- **Residential open space goal.** The goal for residents calls for 1 acre of village open space for each 1,000 households.
- **Open space distribution goal.** The open space goals for both the residential and employment populations include distribution goals. Regardless of the overall amount of open space, all locations need to be within 1/8 mile of Village Open Space.

"Village Open Space" is generally described as public open space in the ¼ acre to ½ acre range (approximately 10,000 to 21,000 square feet). The Plan is not specific about the characteristics of village open space. It is possible that some non-City public space and some privately developed, bonused public spaces would qualify. However, the goals do call for at least one usable open space of at least one acre in size, a "Village Commons," for each urban center village with a growth target exceeding 2,500 households.

The Comprehensive Plan does not specify whether the same open space can be counted towards meeting both the residential and employment open space goals. While the open space/recreational needs are likely to be different, it is reasonable to assume that there will be some overlap in the use of space by both populations. However, the extent to which this overlap can successfully meet the needs of both residents and workers will largely be a factor of design, location and programmed use.

Table 30 shows the study area's current status in terms of meeting open space goals. The existing conditions are well within the open space goals for employment and residential populations, but the goal for distribution of open space is not addressed in Table 30. Additional open space would need to be provided in some areas in order to meet the distribution goal.

Table 30
Open Space Goal Status—Existing Conditions

	Commercial Core Area: 276 acres	Edge of Belltown Area: 38 acres	Denny Triangle Area: 143 acres	Total Area: 457 acres
Amount of open space*	17.5 acres	0 acres	2.3 acres**	19.8 acres
Employment population	107,705 jobs	7,221 jobs	19,340 jobs	134,226 jobs
Jobs/acre of open space	6,155 jobs/acre of open space	0 open space	8,409 jobs/acre of open space	6,779 jobs/acre of open space
Housing Units	2,280 units	997 units	927 units	4,204 units
Housing units/ acre of open space	126 units/acre of open space	0 open space	403 units/acre of open space	212 units/acre of open space

*Includes committed projects like City Hall Plaza and Federal Courthouse Plaza
**Does not include Denny Park, a 4.6-acre open space abutting the northwest corner of the neighborhood.

IMPACTS

Alternative 1 – High End Height and Density Increase

STREETSCAPE AND PEDESTRIAN AMENITY

Impacts on the streetscape and pedestrian environment are expected to be similar for all of the alternatives. General impacts for specific areas are described below:

Denny Triangle

Under all alternatives, the greatest impacts on the streetscape and pedestrian environment are anticipated in the Denny Triangle due to the concentration of future development predicted to occur there, particularly in the DOC 2 zone and portions of abutting DMC zones. To the extent that Alternative 1 allows the greatest height and density of development, these impacts would be slightly more pronounced under this alternative.

Positive Impacts

- **Narrow sidewalks widened.** As new development occurs, sidewalks currently too narrow to meet minimum standards will be widened to accommodate increased pedestrian volumes.
- **Additional street trees provided.** New development will also be required to provide street trees along many of the streets in the Denny Triangle currently lacking this amenity.
- **Green Street improvements provided.** With the large number of redevelopment sites abutting Green Streets in the area, developers are likely to implement Green Street improvements.
- **Continuous street-level uses promoted along several streets.** Requirements and incentives for street-level uses will promote continuous street-level uses along Westlake Avenue, Stewart Street, Olive Way, Pine Street and many of the avenues in the area east of Westlake.

Adverse Impacts

- **Above-grade parking could separate occupied floors from the street, deadening the atmosphere of the street environment.** While this is likely to occur in all alternatives, the

increase in height in Alternative 1 throughout the area may further encourage providing structured parking above-grade.

- **Low level of streetscape amenity in Denny Triangle west of Westlake Avenue.** Development in the Denny Triangle area west of Westlake Avenue is not required to provide street level uses on any of the streets, which could result in very limited street level activity in what is likely to emerge as a high-density office district. Westlake Avenue on the eastern edge of this area is the only designated Class I Pedestrian Street, so development on most streets would be subject to minimal standards for façade transparency and blank wall limits. The lack of an existing development context in this area means that its future character will primarily be established by new development over the next 20 years—mostly large-scale high-rise projects. This could result in streetscapes with less variety and interest than would be expected to occur in an area that developed incrementally over an extended period of time, or where more substantial older development remained as part of the development mix.
- **Greater sense of "enclosure" within several streets.** The larger scale of development will create a stronger sense of enclosure within several streets. However, this will be relieved somewhat in the area along Westlake Avenue and to the west, where the street environment should retain a somewhat more open character because of the wider streets and the additional right-of-way area introduced by Westlake Avenue cutting across the street grid. This openness could be reinforced by the lower scale of development likely to remain on the irregular small parcels created by Westlake Avenue's swath across the grid.

Belltown Edge

Potential redevelopment sites are generally less than a half-block in size, so future projects will likely occur as "infill" mixed with existing development. Based on development trends and the presence of amenities attractive to housing, a cluster of residential and mixed-use development is predicted to occur in this area, particularly along 2nd Avenue. Because residential use is not subject to a density limit, and residential bulk limits are minimal, these structures have the potential to be quite bulky and larger in scale than existing development in this transition area. For example, the Cristilla residential high-rise now under construction has above-grade floor area equivalent to 19.2 FAR in a zone that limits commercial use to 7 FAR.

Positive Impacts

- **Improved pedestrian facilities.** Since the north/south Avenues in this portion of Belltown are all designated Class I Pedestrian Streets, and street level uses are required along several street frontages, future projects will likely contribute to an active pedestrian environment at street level, strengthening pedestrian connections between Belltown and the Commercial Core.

Adverse Impacts

- **Above-grade parking levels could detract from streetscape character.** Projects that include parking on the lower floors of structures may be less compatible with existing development and detract from the streetscape character.
- **Loss of open character on some east/west streets.** Some east/west streets west of 2nd Avenue provide views out to Elliott Bay. As larger structures built to the street edge replace existing, lower development, the scope of view down these streets will narrow, diminishing the current "open" character.

Commercial Core

In the DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones of the office core, future development would be dispersed and include commercial as well as public projects.

Positive Impacts

- **Improved pedestrian facilities.** Given Pedestrian Street designations and requirements for street level uses, new development is expected to contribute to an integrated, active streetscape. Development on vacant land abutting 5th Avenue near Yesler Way will also likely strengthen pedestrian connections between this part of the office core and the International District to the south.
- **Existing setback requirements will aid in scale and bulk control.** Along the western edge of the office core, upper level setback requirements along view corridors will help maintain a pedestrian scale and offset the bulky presence of towers by requiring lower heights for portions of the structure abutting these view streets.
- **New public open space in developments should benefit pedestrians.** Several projects are likely to include some amount of public open space, especially public projects, which should provide pedestrians with some relief from the overall intensity of development in the area. Projects that opt to incorporate hillside terraces or hillclimb assists on-site should enhance pedestrian circulation in steeply sloping areas.

Adverse Impacts

- **Possible loss of older structures may diminish variety and pedestrian orientation at street level.** Larger projects are expected to replace many remaining, smaller-scale structures over time. These older, smaller-scale structures often add architectural interest and diversity, and tend to have a stronger pedestrian orientation at street level. Their loss would likely result in less variety and interest in the streetscape.

First Avenue/Western Avenue Vicinity

A limited number of development projects would be scattered in the western edge of the Commercial Core between the DOC 1 zone and the Harborfront.

Positive Impacts

- **Existing setback requirements will aid in scale and bulk control.** While taller structures would be permitted, the required upper level setbacks along view corridors should promote a relationship with the pedestrian environment that is similar existing development in the area.
- **Infill development would fill in gaps in the streetscape.** As development on "infill" sites currently occupied by surface parking lots, these projects should fill in the gaps in the existing streetscape.

Adverse Impacts

- **Non-requirement of street level uses.** Due to no requirements for street level uses along Western Avenue, there could be interruptions in the continuity of street level activity.
- **Above-grade parking levels could detract from streetscape character.** Parking on the lower above-grade floors of a structure could detract from the character of the streetscape.

OPEN SPACE IMPACTS

Future development under any alternative will result in increases to Downtown employment and residential populations, creating more demand for the use of existing open space resources. Through zoning requirements and incentives, as well as common development practices, some of this demand will be met by development providing required open space to meet the needs of building occupants, as well as public open space to help augment existing public open space resources.

Several public projects, including the new City Hall, Federal Courthouse and Convention Place TOD site, will contribute to the supply of available open space within the study area. These and a few other private development projects underway or in planning stages may provide approximately 3 acres of open space.

Potential Public Open Space Added Through Development Incentives (Floor Area Bonuses and TDR)

Developers can increase project floor area through bonuses for providing open space amenities on the development site, or under recently-adopted transfer of development rights (TDR) provisions. The Downtown Land Use Code limits the amount of floor area that can be gained through these options. Future projects will likely use some combination of open space bonuses and other bonus options to obtain additional floor area.

Table 31 describes the maximum amount of on-site open space that could be gained through development projected to 2020, along with an adjusted estimate based on review of the development sites. Alternative 1 would likely generate approximately 1.7 acres of on-site open space, the least of any alternative, due to the combination of fewer but larger developments than the other alternatives. On-site open spaces would tend to be placed in fewer developments and/or be smaller in size, and would not be *required* features. Under Alternative 4, the amount of on-site open space would be greater, partly because the lower density limits require more development sites to accommodate projected growth, increasing the opportunities for on-site open space. Also, Alternative 4 includes recently adopted provisions that require open space in order to reach the highest height allowed. Tables J-3 and J-4 in Appendix J provide more details about these open space calculations.

Table 31
Potential Supply of Public Open Space Added Through Use of Floor Area Bonuses

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Best-case maximum using floor area bonus for on-site open space	5.3 acres	6.3 acres	9.7 acres	11.2 acres
Predicted amount of on-site open space developed in future projects	1.7 acres	1.9 acres	1.9 acres	2.9 acres

Source: SPO, 2002

Use of Open Space Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). Another incentive for increasing the supply of public open space Downtown is Open Space TDR. Under this approach, developers need not provide the open space on their project site, but instead acquire development rights from public open space sites at another location and "transfer" them to their site to increase floor area. The potential supply of open space TDR under the various alternatives is estimated to range from approximately 1 to 1.3 million square feet. This is available or possibly available from sites including the Olympic Sculpture Park site, the Civic Center sites, Westlake Circle and Olive/Howell Triangle sites. (Table J-5 in Appendix J estimates the available supply of open space TDR from potential sending sites.)

The idealized maximum amount of open space TDR that could be used by future development under Alternative 1 is approximately 1.2 million square feet. However, given the range of bonus and TDR options available to gain floor area, this maximum amount is not likely to occur, and the potential supply of Open Space TDR is likely to exceed demand in all alternatives. Proposed increases in base FAR in Alternative 1 will increase the supply of available TDR from eligible open space sending sites.

Open Space Requirements

As described in Affected Environment, Downtown development is subject to requirements for open space or common recreation area according to use. Hotel and retail uses are not subject to any type of open space requirement.

Office Open Space Requirement. Under the office development requirement, 20 square feet of open space is required for every 1,000 square feet of office space in a project. Table 32 below indicates the total amount of open space that projected office development over the next 20 years would be required to provide under the four alternatives.

Table 32
Required Open Space for Office Development Added Between 2000 and 2020

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Total square feet of office space	17,175,036	16,864,155	16,923,900	17,002,603
Total amount of open space required	343,501 sf (7.9 acres)	337,283 (7.7 acres)	338,478 sf (7.8 acres)	340,052 sf (7.8 acres)

Source: SPO, 2002

Since the projected amount of office development is essentially the same for all alternatives, there is no significant difference between the alternatives in terms of the amount of open space required.

Common recreation area requirement for residential use. In projects with over 20 dwelling units, residential use is subject to a common recreation area requirement. The amount of area required is calculated as 5 percent of the project's total gross floor area in residential use. Up to 50% of the required common recreation area may be provided as enclosed space, and on sites abutting a Green Street, up to 50% of the common recreation requirement may be met through participation in Green Street improvements.

Within the Denny Triangle, residential floor area gained through the TDC program is exempt from the common recreation area requirement. Developers can contribute instead to an amenity credit fund used to provide public open space and Green Street improvements in that neighborhood.

Table 33 below indicates the total amount of common recreation area that projected residential development over the next 20 years would be required to provide under the four alternatives. Alternatives 1 and 2 would result in the greatest amount of common recreation area provided in future residential projects because of the amount of residential floor area exempted from the requirement in Alternatives 3 and 4, where use of TDC is greatest.

Table 33
Required Common Recreation Area for Residential Use

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2*	Alternative 3*	Alternative 4*
Total square feet of residential floor area	6.3 million sf (7,378 units)	6.5 million sf (7,636 units)	6.3 million sf (7,454 units)	6.5 million sf (7,625 units)
Total amount of common recreation area required	313,565 sf (7.2 acres)	312,885 sf (7.2 acres)	281,732 sf (6.5 acres)	281,520 sf (6.5 acres)

*Floor area gained through TDC exempt from common recreation area requirement

Contributions to Amenity Credit Fund under the Denny Triangle TDC Program

Under Alternative 1, the proposed height increases are assumed to terminate the use of TDC as an incentive program because development would be permitted greater height limits outright.

Comprehensive Plan Open Space Goals for Downtown

Because of the distribution of projected growth under the four alternatives, it is most instructive to discuss potential impacts by Downtown neighborhood.

Denny Triangle

The Denny Triangle Urban Center Village is expected to receive over 60% of the total employment growth and over 70% of the total residential growth projected for the study area. With current projects and anticipated development over 20 years, available open space in the Denny Triangle area would total approximately 5 acres. This amount is approximately the same across the alternatives, except for slightly less open space projected for Alternative 3 and slightly more for Alternative 4. This amount does not account for any potential future public investments in open space. (Table J-11 in Appendix J provides more details about these calculations.)

Employment Goal. With existing and projected open space totaling 5 acres, the Denny Triangle area would fall short of the 1 acre of open space per 10,000 jobs goal, with 1 acre per about 12,000 jobs. If no additional open space is provided, the Denny Triangle area would fall far short of the open space goal, with about 1 acre per 25,000 jobs.

Residential Goal. With projected residential growth and a total of 5 acres of open space, the Denny Triangle area would fall short of the 1 acre of open space per 1,000 households goal, with 1 acre per about 1,200 households. If no additional open space is provided, the Denny Triangle would fall far short of the open space goal, providing less than half of the open space needed to meet the goal.

In all the alternatives, the mixing of high-density housing with employment activity in the same area may make it difficult to obtain large open spaces usable to residents. The greatest concentration of future housing is likely to occur in the portion of the Denny Triangle neighborhood east of Westlake Avenue, where Green Street improvements, improved access to Denny Park, and potential open space improvements on the Convention Place Transit Station site may help serve the future residential population.

Distribution Goal. A large portion of the Denny Triangle is currently not served by an open space within a 1/8-mile radius. The distribution of projected open space in future development is likely to accomplish the desired distribution goal. However, most of this additional open space would be more oriented to serving employee open space needs than residential needs.

Village Commons. At approximately one acre, the plaza of the new Federal Courthouse is the largest open space currently planned in the area, but its use is likely to be restricted. An open space as large as one acre is unlikely to occur as part of a private development, so unless there is significant public investment, the area is not likely to acquire an open space serving this function.

Commercial Core

With current projects and anticipated development over 20 years, available open space in the Commercial Core would total approximately 18.6 acres. This amount is the same across the alternatives. This amount does not account for any potential future public investments in open space. (Table J-12 in Appendix J provides more details about these calculations.)

Employment Goal. With existing and projected open space, the Commercial Core would exceed the 1 acre of open space per 10,000 jobs goal, with approximately 1 acre per 7,000 jobs. The peripherally-located Waterfront Park and Freeway Park account for a large portion of this open space.

Residential Goal. With projected residential growth and open space, the Commercial Core would far exceed the 1 acre of open space per 1,000 households goal, with 1 acre per about 150 households.

Distribution Goal. Most of the Commercial Core between Union and James Streets and 1st and 5th Avenues currently lacks open space and would likely need about three sites totaling about 3/4-acre of space to meet the distribution goal. Planned open space on the City Hall and Public Safety Building sites and additional spaces on private development sites will likely accomplish the desired distribution.

Housing in the Commercial Core is concentrated along the southern edge adjacent to Pioneer Square and along the western edge, primarily in and around the Pike Place Market, along 1st Avenue, and along 2nd Avenue adjacent to the retail core. Future residential development is likely to continue to locate in these areas, which have reasonably good access to the open space resources along the harborfront. Since tourists and the Downtown working population also heavily use these open spaces, additional spaces that more directly serve the needs of the residential population may also be desirable.

Village Commons. Although not quite one acre in size, Westlake Park and Plaza in the retail core already serve as the Commercial Core's "Village Commons."

Green Street Improvements Associated with Future Development

The substantial amount of development expected in the Commercial Core and Denny Triangle provides opportunities for carrying out Green Street improvements on development sites abutting designated Green Streets.

Proposed/Probable Green Street Improvements. The following is a list of proposed Green Street projects already being undertaken by the City or expected to occur as a result of planned private development on an abutting site:

- Terry Avenue TDC Green Street demonstration project: Terry Avenue between Lenora and Virginia Streets (Denny Triangle);
- 2119 6th Avenue (UA Cinema site): portions of Blanchard Street between 5th and 6th Avenues (Denny Triangle);
- 2300 5th Avenue: Bell Street between 5th and 6th Avenues (Denny Triangle).

Potential Green Street Improvements. Table 34 below identifies how many projected future development sites would abut designated Green Streets under the four alternatives. Many or most of these future development projects would take advantage of available development incentives for Green Street improvements. The difference among the alternatives would occur only in the vicinity of 7th and 8th Avenues between Blanchard and Lenora Streets.

Table 34
Number of Assumed Future Development Sites Abutting Green Streets

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Number of Assumed Development Sites	10	10	11	14

Source: SPO, 2002

Alternative 2 - Concentrated Office Core

STREETSCAPE AND PEDESTRIAN AMENITY

Conditions under Alternative 2 would be very similar to Alternative 1. The biggest distinctions would likely be within DMC zones of the Denny Triangle, Belltown and the western edge of the Commercial Core, where development would not be as tall and dense as allowed under Alternative 1. However, even in these areas, streetscape conditions as perceived by pedestrians would not be significantly different than would occur under Alternative 1.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Alternative 2 is relatively similar to Alternative 1 in terms of open space impacts.

Potential Public Open Space Added Through Development Incentives

Use of Open Space Floor Area Bonuses. Under the scenarios used to depict potential future development in this analysis, Alternative 2 shows only slightly more open space provided on development sites than Alternative 1 (1.9 acres versus 1.7 acres).

Use of Open Space Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). Because there are no increases in the base FAR under this alternative, the potential supply of open space TDR is the same as under existing conditions. However, increased maximum density limits in DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones create the potential for more demand for open space TDR, similar to that in Alternative 1.

Open Space Requirements

Office Open Space Requirement. The projected amount of office development is essentially the same for all alternatives. Consequently, there is no significant difference between alternatives in terms of the amount of open space required.

Common Recreation Area Requirement for Residential Use. The amount of common recreation area required for residential use in Alternative 2 is similar to Alternative 1.

Contributions to Amenity Credit Fund under Denny Triangle TDC Program

Alternative 2 results in a substantial reduction of the area where the TDC program applies. In Alternative 2, additional heights in the DMC zones of the Denny Triangle still could only be gained through participation in the TDC program. The proposed height increase in the DOC 2 zone of the Denny Triangle under this alternative is assumed to terminate the use of TDC as an incentive in this zone since development would be permitted the greater height outright. Compared to Alternatives 3 and 4, Alternative 2 would generate the least contribution to the amenity credit fund, due to the reduced area where the TDC program would apply (see Table 35).

Table 35
Contributions to Amenity Credit Fund through Participation in TDC Program

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Total square feet of residential floor area gained though TDC	NA	232,900 sf (274 units)	701,250 sf (825 units)	850,850 sf sf (1,001 units)
Contribution to amenity credit fund at current rate of $5/sq.ft.	NA	$1,164,500	$3,506,250	$4,254,250

Source: SPO, 2002

Comprehensive Plan Open Space Goals for Downtown

Alternative 2's relationship to these goals is similar to that of Alternative 1.

Green Street Improvements Associated with Future Development

Potential Green Street Improvements. Alternative 2's relationship to Green Streets improvements is essentially the same as that of Alternative 1, with 10 future development sites located adjacent to Green Streets.

Alternative 3 – Residential Emphasis

STREETSCAPE AND PEDESTRIAN AMENITY

Streetscape conditions in Alternative 3 would be similar to the other alternatives. The biggest distinction would be in areas reclassified to a more residential-oriented designation, including the southern edge of Belltown and north central edge of the Denny Triangle. Standards dictating less bulky towers and greater spacing between towers would likely promote more positive conditions within the street environment, including greater solar access relative to the bulkier development allowed under the other alternatives, and a perception of greater openness. Alternative 3 would also maintain existing height and density limits in the portions of the DOC 2 zone in the Denny Triangle with narrower street widths. To the extent that Alternative 3 includes more projects on the periphery of the office core than Alternatives 1 and 2, some additional areas will benefit from streetscape improvements required of new development.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Potential Public Open Space Added Through Development Incentives

Use of Open Space Floor Area Bonuses. Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 would result in similar amounts of open space provided on-site. In Alternative 3, residential development in residentially zoned areas is one factor that would limit the amount of open space provided. Since housing is not subject to density limits and there is no requirement for public open space, there is no direct incentive to provide publicly accessible open space on a residential development site.

Use of Open Space Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). Because there are no increases in the base FAR under Alternative 3, the potential supply of open space TDR would be the same as under existing conditions. However, increases to maximum density limits in DOC 1 and most DOC 2 zones, and the ability for development in areas redesignated DMR/C to use open space TDR for all floor area gained above the base FAR, would increase the amount of open space TDR future projects could use relative to Alternatives 1 and 2.

Open Space Requirements

Office Open Space Requirement. Because the amount of projected office development is essentially the same for all alternatives, there is no significant difference in the amount of open space required.

Common Recreation Area Requirement for Residential Use. Alternatives 3 and 4 would result in lower amounts of required common recreation area because use of the TDC program in these alternatives would allow projects to exempt this requirement in exchange for contributions to the Denny Triangle Amenity Credit Fund. Consequently, open space that would otherwise be provided as common recreation area in individual projects would be provided as public open space funded through TDC amenity credits.

Contributions to Amenity Credit Fund under Denny Triangle TDC Program

Alternative 3 will result in some reduction in the area where the TDC program applies. In Alternative 3, additional heights in the DMC zones and portions of the DOC 2 zone of the Denny Triangle still could only be gained through participation in the TDC program. The proposed height increase in the central portion of the DOC 2 zone under this Alternative is assumed to terminate the use of TDC as an incentive in this area, since development would be permitted the greater height outright. However, due to projects in DMC zones, Alternative 3 would generate contributions of approximately $3.5 million to the Amenity Credit Fund, which is approximately $2.3 million more than would be generated under Alternative 2 (no such funds would be generated under Alternative 1).

Comprehensive Plan Open Space Goals for Downtown

Alternative 3's relationship to these goals is nearly the same as Alternative 1. However, Alternative 3 proposes zoning changes to concentrate residential development in a northern portion of the Denny Triangle. This could provide a better opportunity to achieve a residentially-oriented open space amenity.

Green Street Improvements Associated with Future Development

Potential Green Street Improvements. Under Alternative 3, approximately 11 future development sites would be adjacent to Green Streets and could implement such improvements, one more site than identified for Alternative 1. Alternative 3's zoning changes along 9th and Terry Avenues could encourage the "residential enclave" called for by the Denny Triangle Neighborhood Plan, more so than the other EIS alternatives.

Alternative 4 – No Action

STREETSCAPE AND PEDESTRIAN AMENITY

Alternative 4's streetscape/pedestrian impacts would be similar to those described for Alternative 1. To accommodate the same amount of growth, more properties would need to be redeveloped under Alternative 4 than Alternative 1. This would provide the opportunity to achieve street-level improvements along several more properties than under Alternative 1, as well as the potential for adverse impacts as identified in the Alternative 1 discussion. The larger number of redeveloped properties could also result in more on-site open space and Green Street improvements, which could help enhance the overall quality of the street level environment.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Potential Public Open Space Added Through Development Incentives

Use of Open Space Floor Area Bonuses. Alternative 4 may result in the greatest amount of on-site public open space provided by future development—approximately 4.4 acres, or 1 more acre than predicted for Alternative 1. This is due to the larger number of properties predicted to redevelop under Alternative 4, providing more opportunities for on-site open space. Lower development densities could mean that open space would be more easily incorporated into site plans, especially in DMC zones. This is consistent with observations of current projects being planned under existing conditions, which include substantial areas of open space (2300 5th Avenue, Stewart Place).

Use of Open Space Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). Alternative 4 would allow for the greatest use of open space TDR, due to the range of opportunities in the current Land Use Code to use open space TDR, particularly in DMC areas. The potential supply of open space TDR is less for Alternative 4 than estimated for Alternative 1.

Open Space Requirements

Office Open Space Requirement. No significant difference between alternatives in the amount of open space required.

Common Recreation Area Requirement for Residential Use. Alternative 4 would result in approximately 6.5 acres of required common recreation area, about 10 percent less than would occur under Alternative 1. However, if the TDC program is used, other public on-site open space may be provided instead of this common recreation area.

Contributions to Amenity Credit Fund under Denny Triangle TDC Program

With the continued functioning of the TDC program, Alternative 4 would result in the greatest overall level of contribution to the Denny Triangle Amenity Credit Fund—an estimated $4.2 million. This would be approximately $3.1 million more than would be generated under Alternative 2 and $750,000 more than would be generated under Alternative 3 (no such funds would be generated under Alternative 1).

Comprehensive Plan Open Space Goals for Downtown

Given that the amount of additional open space predicted under Alternative 4 is similar to Alternative 1, Alternative 4's relationship to Comprehensive Plan open space goals would be similar to Alternative 1. However, due to the predicted redevelopment of more properties under Alternative 4, the distribution of open space on development sites could be slightly more widespread in the Denny Triangle than under Alternative 1, and therefore more consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Green Street Improvements Associated with Future Development

Potential Green Street Improvements. Due to an additional four sites predicted for redevelopment in the Blanchard/Lenora/7th/8th Avenue vicinity, Alternative 4 may result in a few more improved Green Street frontages than the other alternatives. Also, assuming the TDC program is functioning, additional resources generated through the TDC amenity fund could be available for Green Street improvements within the Denny Triangle.

Impact Summary Table

Table 36 summarizes the findings of the Pedestrian Amenities and Open Space impacts section, for the convenience of the reader.

Table 36
Summary of Open Space Impacts

	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4
Ped. Amenities & Streetscape				
Positive Impacts	• Narrow sidewalks would be widened. • Additional street trees would be provided. • Green Street improvements would be provided. • Continuous street level uses would be promoted along several streets, aided by infill development over time. • New public open spaces in developments should benefit pedestrians.	Similar to Alt. 1. Even in areas with retained zoning (in DMC zones), the streetscape conditions as perceived by pedestrians would not be much different than would occur under Alt. 1.	Similar to Alt. 1, except greater chance for positive street environment in the residential-zoned areas, due to lower bulk limits. Lack of zone changes in some DOC 2 areas would avoid some streetscape effects related to greater building bulk.	Same amount of growth would be accommodated on more properties than under Alt. 1, providing more opportunities for streetscape improvements, including Green Streets.
Adverse Impacts	• Above-grade parking could detract from street-level character. • In some areas, non-requirement of street level uses could limit street level activity in buildings. • There would be a greater sense of "enclosure" within several streets. • In some areas, possible loss of older structures may diminish variety and pedestrian orientation at street level.	Similar types of impacts as under Alt. 1. However, lack of zone changes in DMC areas would mean buildings less dense and lower in height in these areas than under Alt. 1.	Similar types of impacts as under Alternative 1, but somewhat less potential for impacts, due to residential-oriented zoning changes in some areas, and lack of change in some DOC 2 areas.	Same amount of growth on more properties than under Alt. 1 would have additional risk of adverse impacts occurring along some streets, as listed under Alt. 1.
Parks & Open Space				
Predicted on-site open space developed in future projects	1.7 acres	1.9 acres	1.9 acres	2.9 acres
Use of open space TDR	The potential supply of open space TDR is approx. 1.0-1.3 million sq.ft. Demand is not expected to exceed supply.	Supply would remain the same. Changes in DOC zones would increase demand similar to Alt. 1.	Similar to Alt. 1 and 2, but areas rezoned to DMR/C would allow slight increase in use of open space TDRs.	Supply would be less than under Alt. 1, but Alt. 4 would allow for the greatest use of open space TDR among the alts.

	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4
Open space required for office uses	7.9 acres	7.7 acres	7.8 acres	7.8 acres
Common rec. area open space required for residential uses	7.2 acres	7.2 acres	6.5 acres	6.5 acres
Predicted Contributions to TDC Amenity Credit Fund	None, since Alt. 1 would likely terminate the use of the TDC program.	Est. $1.2 million	Est. $3.5 million	Est. $4.3 million
Relationship to Open Space Goals				
Denny Triangle	Even with predicted open space in future developments, this area would fall a bit short of meeting the residential and employee-oriented open space goals. However, Alt. 1 would likely meet the distribution goal.	Similar to Alt. 1	Nearly the same as Alt. 1, except residential-zoned area could promote more residentially-oriented open space.	Slightly more open space in Denny Triangle, possibly spread over more area than Alt. 1.
Commercial Core	Would meet or exceed the residential and employee-oriented open space goals, and would likely meet the distribution goals.	Similar to Alt. 1	Similar to Alt. 1.	Similar to Alt. 1.
Number of future development sites adjacent to Green Sts.	10 sites	10 sites	11 sites	14 sites

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

REQUIRED/PROPOSED MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Given the type and magnitude of impacts discussed in this section, no mitigation measures or strategies are required or proposed to be mandatory actions accompanying approval of any of the alternatives.

OTHER POSSIBLE MITIGATION STRATEGIES

The following potential mitigation measures have been identified for consideration.

Streetscape and Pedestrian Amenity

- Where the long blocks of the Denny Triangle are assembled for redevelopment through alley vacations, encourage mid-block connections between north/south avenues to enhance pedestrian circulation and promote better streetscape conditions along the long dimensions of the block.
- Review the network of pedestrian street classifications and mapped streets requiring street-level uses to determine if they are consistent with anticipated development activity and emerging development patterns. Propose necessary adjustments to reinforce desired conditions.
- Examine how streetscape conditions can best accommodate the increase in high density mixed-use development anticipated in areas initially intended primarily for high-density office use.

- Designate streets of special significance or character for enhancement through coordinated public and private actions, including public improvements to the pedestrian environment, integrated public open space improvements and development standards for abutting properties, such as setbacks and street façade treatments, that ensure new projects reinforce the special character desired.

Parks and Open Space

General

- Explore mechanisms for pooling resources for open space improvements (payment in-lieu, voluntary payment option similar to the program recently established for floor area bonuses through payment to an affordable housing and childcare fund) to fund public spaces sited and designed to more directly meet specific open space needs of Downtown residents.
- Investigate measures for addressing the additional demand generated by employment growth and increased tourism on Downtown public open space resources.
- Consider measures that may apply to market-rate residential development to address demand generated by increased residential population on public open space resources.

Denny Triangle

- Prioritize public investment in open space to enhance the livability of this emerging high-density urban neighborhood where existing open space resources are very limited.
- Investigate alternative strategies for maintaining a viable Transfer of Development Credit program in the Denny Triangle in situations where substantial height increases are proposed.
- Modify standards and guidelines for bonused open space to promote features better suited to the needs of a residential population.

Commercial Core

With limited future opportunities for siting open space, efforts in the Commercial Core neighborhood could be focused on improvements that would both introduce limited amounts of open space in the area while improving pedestrian connections to the neighborhood's major open space resources along the Harborfront. Improvements along University Street provide one potential model. Here, University Street is lined with hillside terraces for two blocks along the frontages of Benaroya Hall and the Art Museum, and the steps of the Harbor Steps project further extend this linear stretch of open space for a total of three and a half blocks. Setbacks accommodate landscaping and pedestrian amenities while enhancing vistas to the water and linking the harborfront with the edge of the financial district. Improvements on other east/west streets could be coordinated to create similar linear open space connections between areas of concentrated employment and the open space resources along the Harborfront.

SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

Streetscape and Pedestrian Amenity

Under all the alternatives, future development will reduce solar access to the pedestrian environment and increase the physical enclosure of the street level environment.

Parks and Open Space

Under all the alternatives, the per capita amount of public open space available for use by Downtown residents and employees will diminish.

VIEWS AND AESTHETICS

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This section discusses view impacts of the alternatives with regard to the City's SEPA Public View Protection policies, including the topics of public viewpoints, views of landmarks, skyline views, and views from scenic routes. The discussion also attempts to recognize other City objectives pertaining to urban design, aesthetics and the future development of Downtown. It is important to acknowledge that the discussion of views, aesthetic values, and related impacts is highly subjective. It also should be noted that the City's existing zoning regulations already accommodate a level of future development that will affect views from some locations, over time. Where possible, the impact analysis in this EIS attempts to identify the additional increment of view impact attributable to the alternatives and the relative differences in impacts among the alternatives.

Public Viewpoints

The City's SEPA rules identify 87 locations where project impacts on views of natural and built features are to be addressed (SMC Section 25.05.675 P.2.a.i., Attachment 1). Among the 87 designated viewpoints, approximately 26 locations have views of the Downtown skyline and/or views across Downtown toward natural features like Mt. Rainier, the Olympic Mountains or Elliott Bay. From some viewpoints, Downtown is just one of several observable features, and may or may not be the most significant. Some of the views of Downtown are quite distant, and changes of the magnitude studied in this analysis would be imperceptible. Table L-1 in Appendix L provides an inventory of identified SEPA viewpoints, listing observable features specified by SEPA for view protection and a brief description of the nature of available views from each location.

Certain viewpoints are considered to have greater significance to this study because of the prominence of views toward Downtown and because their location in relation to the study area creates the greatest potential for impacts. These include Kerry Park, Bhy Kracke Park, Belvedere Viewpoint, Jose Rizal Park, Four Columns Park, Hamilton Viewpoint, Harbor Vista Park, Alki Beach Park, Pac-Med Bldg. (U.S. Public Health Service Hospital) Viewpoint, Harborview Hospital Viewpoint, Victor Steinbrueck Park, Waterfront Park, Myrtle Edwards Park, and Gasworks Park.

These viewpoints provide several of the "postcard" views of Seattle's Downtown and in many cases also offer views toward Puget Sound, Lake Union, Mt. Rainier or the Olympics. Harborview Hospital Viewpoint and Four Columns Park are the viewpoints nearest Downtown's central office core, featuring both nearby cityscape and territorial views. Victor Steinbrueck Park offers attractive views east and south toward the Pike Place Market vicinity and the office/retail core, south toward Mt. Rainier, and west toward Puget Sound and the Olympics. Because of their greater significance and potential for negative outcomes, this analysis focuses on these viewpoints to assess impacts of the various alternatives.

View Protected Landmarks

SEPA specifies *"it is the City's policy to protect public views of historic landmarks designated by the Landmarks Preservation Board which, because of their prominence of location or contrasts of siting, age, or scale, are easily identifiable visual features of their neighborhood or the City and contribute to the distinctive quality or identity of their neighborhood or the City."* Twenty-three designated landmarks within (or visible from) the study area are identified for public view protection, based on this designation criterion used by the Landmarks Board. Eight of these are located within the study area, seven are within the retail core or Belltown, and eight are outside the study area but visible from portions of Downtown (see Table 37).

Table 37
Inventory of View-Protected Landmarks Related to Study Area

Within the Downtown Study Area	Outside Study Area But Within Downtown
• Rainier Club	• Coliseum Theater
• 1st Avenue Group/Waterfront Center	• Olympic Tower/United Shopping Tower
• Times Square Building	• Northern Bank & Trust/Seaboard Building
• Hoge Building	• Bon Marché
• McGraw Square	• Mann Building
• Terminal Sales Building	• Frederick & Nelson Building (Nordstrom)
• Lyon Building	• Guiry Hotel (Belltown)
• Camlin Hotel	
Outside Downtown But Visible from Downtown Study Area	
• Space Needle	• Queen Anne High School
• Trinity Parish Church (First Hill)	• Summit School/Northwest School (Pike-Pine)
• Immanuel Lutheran Church (Cascade)	• Pacific Medical Center (Beacon Hill)
• Seattle First Baptist Church (First Hill)	• Wintonia Hotel (Pike-Pine)

Some of the landmarks identified above are very visible due to their height and/or prominent physical setting. Pacific Medical Center and Queen Anne High School are noticeable skyline features outside the study area, visible from several locations due to their location on Beacon Hill and the ridge of Queen Anne Hill. A few church steeples, such as those of the Trinity Parish Church and Immanuel Lutheran Church, are also locally visible from portions of the study area. Several structures located outside of Downtown are visible from limited locations within Downtown, including the Wintonia Hotel in Pike/Pine or the church steeples mentioned above. However, the visual enjoyment of these structures is primarily of interest to the neighborhood in which they are located, making visibility from adjacent areas like Downtown less of a priority.

Several of the other view-protected landmarks are distinctive older buildings that contribute to the overall visual and architectural quality of Downtown. These buildings are most visible within one or two blocks where the viewer can appreciate the quality of the building within its urban context. Examples include the Coliseum Theater, Rainier Club, Times Square Building, Hoge Building, Bon Marché, Frederick & Nelson (Nordstrom) Building, Terminal Sales Building, and a grouping of buildings along First Avenue. Some of these buildings gain added visual prominence due to their location at shifts in the street grid, where they terminate views down the street and may be visible for several blocks. The Josephinum's location at the "bend" in Second Avenue at Stewart Street is an example.

Most Downtown structures identified as view protected-landmarks are integrated with surrounding development and observable primarily from streets in the immediate vicinity. However, some buildings, like the Camlin Hotel, are more visually prominent because of their location in less built-up portions of Downtown. The increased visibility of the Camlin Hotel is due primarily to its location amid surface parking lots and the open pit of the Metro Transit Station. Typically, such a building would be absorbed over time into a fully-developed blockfront, remaining visible only from adjacent streets.

SEPA is not specific about the nature of protection provided for views of landmarks. There is little guidance about where the view of a particular landmark should be protected from, or the amount or

particular aspects of the view that warrant protection. Table L-3 in Appendix L describes the visibility and context of the studied landmarks to better understand their visual prominence.

The City Council addressed this issue as it related to protecting views of the Space Needle, one of the identified view-protected landmarks. In November 2001, the City's SEPA view protection policies were clarified with respect to Space Needle views, recognizing that *"restricting development throughout the city to protect all public views of the Space Needle is inconsistent with the City's land use, housing and other policies and goals, as more fully described in the report, 'Seattle View Protection Policies: Space Needle Executive Report and Recommendations,' April 2001"* (Ordinance 120605). To clarify and focus efforts to protect the most critical views, ten specific protected public views of the Space Needle were identified, including those from:

- Alki Beach Park
- Bhy Kracke Park
- Gasworks Park
- Hamilton Viewpoint
- Kerry Park
- Myrtle Edwards Park
- Olympic Sculpture Park
- Seacrest Park
- Seattle Center
- Volunteer Park

In addition, the April 2001 report recommended that other culturally and historically significant structures or features be evaluated based on a citywide viewpoints analysis to further clarify SEPA policy.

Scenic Routes

The City's SEPA policies address the protection of public views from City streets designated as scenic routes. *"It is the City's policy to protect public views of significant natural and human-made features: Mount Rainier, the Olympic and Cascade Mountains, the downtown skyline, and major bodies of water including Puget Sound, Lake Washington, Lake Union and the Ship Canal, from public places consisting of the specified viewpoints, parks, scenic routes, and view corridors identified in Attachment 1."* (SMC Section 25.05.675 P.2.a.i. and Attachment 1).

The City's designated SEPA scenic routes are identified on a map as Exhibit 1 to the City's SEPA policies (SMC 25.05.675, Exhibit 1). Since SEPA does not identify where view locations occur along these routes, or specify the object of view, it is difficult to assess which characteristics of these scenic routes are to be protected under SEPA policies. Some scenic routes are oriented toward the aesthetic qualities of the immediate surroundings (such as green boulevards, neighborhood commercial streets or adjoining parks), while others have more distant views of natural features (mountains and major water bodies) and the city skyline. There is great variety in visual character along the routes—some portions do not have any appreciable scenic qualities.

Assessing view conditions on scenic routes also needs to consider the intended observer and direction of travel in relation to the view. Many of these routes, like Aurora Avenue, the Alaskan Way Viaduct, and I-5, accommodate high volumes of traffic traveling at high speeds. While certain view features may be visible from these routes, the fact that the observer is traveling at high speed may limit the duration of specific views to brief glimpses. Some routes, like 5th Avenue, are one-way streets, limiting the direction of views for motorists and transit riders. Other scenic routes may be traveled by slower traffic, including pedestrians and bicyclists, potentially expanding the scope and direction of views, as well as the length of time that features remain visible to the observer.

Scenic routes were reviewed and traveled to determine the route segments that provide views of the Downtown study area potentially affected by proposed changes to height and density limits. Scenic views along several routes are intermittently blocked by topography, existing development and vegetation, but locations with higher elevations, wide rights-of-way and/or unobstructed view corridors offer the best opportunities for views toward Downtown (see Figure 27). Examples of scenic route segments with good views toward Downtown include:

- Harbor Avenue SW
- West Seattle Bridge
- Magnolia Bridge
- Northbound SR 99 from the Alaskan Way Viaduct
- Southbound SR 99 north of Battery Street Tunnel
- 12th Avenue S. (including bridge over I-90)
- Small segments of California Ave, Admiral Way
- I-5 southbound at north end of Ship Canal Bridge
- I-5 southbound near Eastlake on-ramp
- I-5 southbound, Lakeview Blvd to Olive Way
- I-5 northbound, S. Spokane St. to Yesler Way
- I-5 northbound, Yesler Way to Seneca St.
- I-5 northbound, near S. Andover St.

Other scenic routes closer to Downtown Seattle with Downtown views (due to topography or street orientation) include: Dexter Avenue N., Aurora Avenue N., Westlake Avenue N., Fairview Avenue, Olive Way and Yesler Way. Dexter Avenue N., Westlake Avenue N. and Fairview Avenue offer views of the Downtown skyline as they approach the study area. Olive Way (near its intersection with Denny Way and at I-5) offers limited views of Elliott Bay, but scenic views are limited primarily to portions of the skyline, due to intervening buildings and trees. Yesler Way westbound between approximately 8th Avenue and 5th Avenue offers good views of Elliott Bay and the Olympic Mountains, with skyline and territorial views as it passes over I-5.

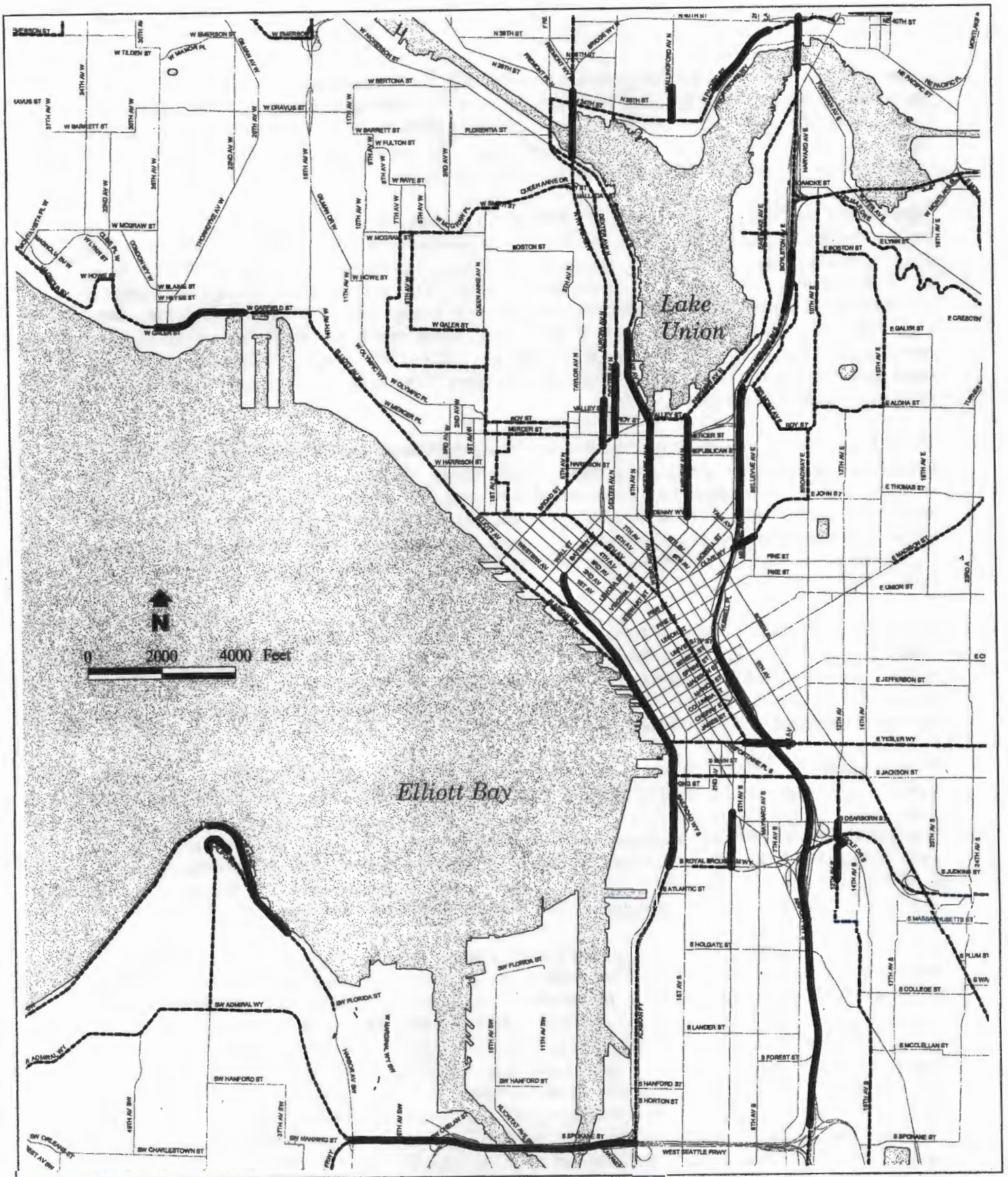
Scenic routes that pass through Downtown Seattle include 5th Avenue, Westlake Avenue, Elliott Avenue, the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Alaskan Way. Along these routes, the immediate surroundings of Downtown development dominate views. At this close range, there are few skyline views of Downtown, except for the Alaskan Way Viaduct (primarily northbound) which has good views of Downtown due to the roadway elevation. Fifth Avenue through the Commercial Core offers occasional views of Elliott Bay at street intersections. The Alaskan Way Viaduct generally impairs views toward Downtown from Alaskan Way and Elliott Avenue; the primary views from these streets are instead oriented toward the waterfront.

Skyline

Due to hilly topography and the presence of large water bodies, several locations offer views of the Downtown Seattle skyline within the context of the surrounding natural setting. Familiar images of the Downtown skyline include views from the west across Elliott Bay, from the north across Lake Union and from the south across the flat, low industrial areas of the Duwamish Valley. Skyline views are also possible from the east from the western slopes of Capitol Hill and a few more distant areas.

The Downtown skyline image is composed of simple elements: building clusters, landforms, water, and singular landmark structures and features. The characteristics of these elements—their color, scale, complexity and variation—also contribute to the image. The composition of these elements defines the image for the viewer and varies depending on the direction and distance of the viewpoint.

Views From the West. The skyline from the west is generally viewed across Elliott Bay and framed to the north by the Space Needle and to the south by the stadiums. The hillsides of Capitol Hill and Beacon Hill provide a green backdrop for the Downtown skyline on either side of the office core cluster. A band of older buildings along 1st and Western Avenues and the linear structure of the Alaskan Way Viaduct



SCENIC ROUTE SEGMENTS WITH VIEWS TOWARD DOWNTOWN

FIGURE 27

Strategic Planning Office
City of Seattle
May 20, 2002

Segments with Views toward Downtown

Other Scenic Route Segments

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create a more horizontal "base" that provides a transition in development scale stepping up from Elliott Bay to the office core. While the older, lower development of the retail core continues to create a break in the skyline profile, taller office and hotel towers are filling in to the north. Taller residential towers in Belltown extend the highrise profile even further north. Downtown areas once distinguished by their height are now less distinguishable within the context of the skyline.

Views From the North. In views from the north looking south, the skyline contrasts dramatically with the low, horizontal plane of Lake Union and the relatively low structures of South Lake Union and the Denny Triangle. From some locations north of Downtown, such as the higher elevations of Queen Anne, Mt. Rainier also becomes part of the view, appearing either to the east or west of the skyline depending on the observation point. The landforms and development of Capitol Hill and First Hill define the eastern edge. While the lower buildings of the retail core provide some transition in height north to south, more recent highrise development north of the core make this transition less apparent. Given the shift in the block pattern that occurs along Denny Way and again along Olive Way, streets provide fewer "gaps" in the visual pattern of development.

Views From the South. Generally, the tallest and bulkiest structures are concentrated on the hillside of the office core. From the south, the towers rise up with the hillside from Elliott Bay, with the low structures of Pioneer Square and the International District in the foreground. The more horizontal aspect and finer grain and scale of these older structures add interest and contrast to the vertical thrust of the larger office towers that generally dominate the view. Depending on the observation point, the green bluff of Magnolia and the Space Needle are visible to the west, and development on First Hill extends the skyline view further east.

Views From the East. Because of topography, panoramic views of the skyline from the east are more limited. Much of First Hill faces the band of the tallest office core skyscrapers stretching along I-5. However, the low scale of development in South Lake Union and the Denny Triangle provide adjacent Pike-Pine and Capitol Hill areas with good views toward the existing skyline and, in some locations, features beyond Downtown to the west.

Built Features. The Space Needle, sports stadiums and structures sited at the crest of ridges like Harborview Hospital and Pac-Med Hospital, are recognized visual landmark features because of their size and location in the skyline profile. Generally, the Space Needle retains its dominance as a skyline landmark because of the lower height of development separating Seattle Center from Downtown highrise areas. Landmarks like the Smith Tower and King Street Station also remain visually prominent because of their location on the outer edge of the core skyline. Their contrast in scale and architectural style makes them stand out against the backdrop of more recent larger highrise development.

While Seattle continues to experience vertical growth, much of its natural setting has not been obscured. Even with an evolving skyline, the topography is still apparent, there continue to be views of green hillsides and the Downtown's place in relation to its natural setting remains clear. New development continues to break the silhouette of the background hills as seen from the water and West Seattle, but glimpses of greenery remain. The street grid has helped maintain these conditions. Because Downtown's tallest structures have historically been concentrated in an area platted with smaller square blocks aligned in a regular street grid pattern, the streets themselves have maintained a regular and frequent spacing between towers. When aligned with streets, views often are unobstructed through Downtown, providing visual links with adjacent areas. Because of the relatively low intensity of development in areas adjacent to the core, views from streets in the core can often continue through adjacent areas, even when the direction of the street is altered by shifts in the street grid pattern.

Other Non-Protected Views

Views from areas adjacent to Downtown. The rising slopes of Queen Anne Hill, Capitol Hill, First Hill and Beacon Hill provide numerous views of the Downtown skyline, and, in many cases, through the skyline to other features beyond. Though somewhat more distant, the east and northeast facing slopes of West Seattle and portions of Magnolia bluff further expand the viewshed that includes the Downtown skyline, as well as other natural features. With the growth of Downtown, the skyline has become increasingly more prominent in the public and private views from these surrounding areas.

The Downtown skyline, a combination of Downtown's "natural" topography and the artificial topography of its buildings, reaches heights in excess of 1,000 feet above sea level at the apex. The current building "envelope"–defined by the maximum height limit—for much of the study area ranges between 240 and 540 feet, with several existing structures exceeding these limits. By comparison, the elevations of the slopes facing Downtown range from approximately 400 feet on Queen Anne, to between 300 and 350 feet on Capitol Hill/First Hill, and 320 feet on Beacon Hill. As development has occurred over time under allowable height limits, some of the "gaps" that previously existed in the skyline have been "filled in", reducing opportunities for views over or through the Downtown skyline to features beyond, like Elliott Bay and the Olympic and Cascade Mountains. In some cases, the skyline itself has emerged as the principal object of view.

Some hillside locations continue to have views of significant natural features in the same viewshed as the Downtown skyline. Portions of the west slope of Capitol Hill provide glimpses of Elliott Bay and the Olympic Mountains beyond. These features are even visible from some locations on First Hill through the highrises of the Downtown core. From some locations on Queen Anne, Mount Rainier and the foothills of the Cascade Mountains are visible to one side of the skyline. Views eastward from the higher elevations of some West Seattle locations include the Cascade Mountains as a backdrop visible above the existing Downtown skyline or through gaps between buildings.

City policy, as reflected in the zoning that applies to areas adjacent to Downtown, recognizes that the loss of some views is an unavoidable consequence of development in dense urban environments. However, the zoned height limits help provide a balance between objectives for accommodating desired levels of development while maintaining reasonable view opportunities.

Views from within Downtown. The presence of views outward to surrounding areas and distant natural features is an important aspect of Downtown Seattle's unique identity. In many instances, surrounding natural features remain visible from locations within Downtown because of the low height of development in peripheral areas. This visual connection with open expanses of water, surrounding green hillsides and distant mountains not only visually introduces elements of nature into the densely built center city environment, but also lends a sense of openness and relief. These views are also important to "wayfinding," helping to guide movement within and through Downtown by providing reference points that identify locations in relation to their surroundings.

Most of these views are not covered under current SEPA view protection measures. However, several streets within Downtown that provide views toward Elliott Bay have been designated in the Land Use Code as View Corridors. Prohibitions on skybridges and restrictions on street use and street vacations apply to these designated view corridors, and on specified street segments, private development is required to provide setbacks to enhance views.

IMPACTS

The existing land use and zoning regulations in the study area currently allow new buildings ranging in height from 125 to 540 feet. As such, future development already can add quite a bit of building bulk that may alter some existing views. Identifying the visual effects of development already allowed by existing regulations is not the main purpose of this section. Rather, the discussion attempts to identify the *additional increment* of view impact attributable to the zoning changes in Alternatives 1, 2 and 3, and the relative differences in impacts among the alternatives.

Alternative 1 – High End Height and Density Increase

PUBLIC VIEWPOINTS

Of the approximately 30 identified locations with viewpoints or view protection status, approximately 11 would experience minimal or no impacts, due to their distance from Downtown and absence of any potential impairment of view features. Of the remaining 19 viewpoints, most would experience change only in the sense that the number and arrangement of buildings composing the Downtown skyline would be different from what is observable today due to changes over time. This type of change does not vary substantially among the alternatives and is not considered a significant adverse impact.

Table L-2 in Appendix L summarizes observations about visual changes at all of the studied viewpoints. Two viewpoints–Four Columns Park (Pike-Pine) and Harborview (First Hill)–warrant further discussion with regard to potential visual impairment of views. Three other viewpoints—Kerry Park (Queen Anne), Belvedere and Hamilton Viewpoints (West Seattle) are discussed later in this section with regard to changes in the Downtown skyline.

Four Columns Park

Four Columns Park, located just east of I-5 at Pike and Boren, is one of the closest viewpoints to the Downtown office/retail core. Its viewshed includes the portion of the study area likely to experience the greatest change. Today, views include the nearest buildings across I-5, such as the Convention Center with its canopy over Pike Street, Metropolitan Park Towers, Paramount Theater and Camlin Hotel, the larger office core buildings in the western middle ground, and Queen Anne Hill and a segment of Olympic Mountains in the background to the northwest. Vacant or underdeveloped lots and the Convention Place transit tunnel station currently provide relatively large open expanses allowing views toward the west and northwest. Some building projects already approved or under construction would reduce views toward the northwest over time.

With probable concentrations of future development in the Denny Triangle under any alternative, as well as continued development outside the study area in Belltown, views from Four Columns Park toward the Olympic Mountains and Queen Anne (including the Queen Anne High School landmark) would gradually be obscured. The City Council in 2001 addressed the issue of protecting views of the Space Needle from public locations, including Four Columns Park. Because of the particular characteristics of this viewpoint, and the potential conflicts with City policies targeting concentrated housing and employment growth in the adjacent Denny Triangle area, the Council determined that Four Columns Park would not be included among the locations where Space Needle views would be protected under SEPA. However, Four Columns Park remains a SEPA viewpoint, with the most prominent view feature being the evolving Downtown skyline to the west and northwest.

Over time, this viewpoint would increasingly be oriented to foreground and middle ground views of Downtown's buildings and skyline across I-5. Views of other features beyond Downtown from Four

Columns Park will likely be gradually obscured by future development, even under existing regulations. The amount of impact attributable to Alternative 1 would be the additional 100 feet of height and increased bulk allowed for commercial development in the nearby DOC 2 and DMC zones. However, it is not expected to cause different types of visual impairment than are already possible under existing regulations. Under all alternatives, views to the north/northwest across the Denny Triangle are likely to be altered by future development. Lesser alteration of views is expected toward the Downtown skyline to the west/southwest, due to lesser amounts of expected future development.

Harborview Viewpoint

Harborview Viewpoint is perched above and east of I-5, with views toward the office core, the southern portion of Elliott Bay, the Olympic Mountains, Duwamish lowlands and even Mount Rainier to the south. This park/plaza is approximately one block in length between Jefferson and Terrace streets, plus a smaller elevated plaza on a newer structure to the south. Views toward the office core encompass buildings nearest I-5 from the King County Jail north to approximately Two Union Square, as well as other buildings further west within the office core. There are only a couple of narrow gaps between buildings allowing views through to Puget Sound. Future development with or without zoning changes would not generate significant adverse impacts on views toward the central office core because future development would contribute to the skyline without adversely impairing existing views.

Views to the south and southwest encompass the south end of Elliott Bay, West Seattle and the Olympics beyond, the Duwamish lowlands, Pioneer Square and the athletic stadiums. In the foreground to the southwest and considerably lower than the viewpoint is a vacant sloping open space tract and parking lot property between Yesler Way and Jefferson Streets, 5th and 6th Avenues. Future highrise development in this area would probably obscure views to the southwest of a portion of Elliott Bay and West Seattle. This would occur even with the current zoned height limit of 240 feet, which allows increases in height up to 20 percent (288 feet) under special conditions. The proposed change in height limit to 312 feet and increase in permitted commercial density could result in taller, bulkier buildings within the identified block, with a greater total amount of visual impairment. However, under either height limit, the views of the south end of Elliott Bay and West Seattle would be similarly impaired. Views further to the south would not be affected.

VIEW PROTECTED LANDMARKS

The potential adverse impacts of Alternative 1 on view-protected landmarks would be generally similar in magnitude to the impacts of Alternatives 2, 3 and 4, because similar physical factors are relevant to all alternatives. Most of the landmark sites and structures specified for view protection under SEPA are relatively small compared to potential future development allowed by land use regulations. The visual prominence of these structures will diminish as bigger buildings occupy adjacent sites under any alternative. Even modestly sized new buildings could impair views of landmark sites or structures visible from distant streets or viewpoints. This would be most noticeable in the lesser-developed Denny Triangle area where surface parking lots and low-scale buildings currently contribute to greater visibility across larger areas. Future development may also contribute to visual contrasts of age and scale by placing newer, larger buildings adjacent to or near landmark structures.

Alternative 1 would represent the greatest amount of increase in density limits (FARs) and height limits, resulting in greater building bulk and scale in some locations that could potentially impact view-protected landmarks. This could potentially result in the greatest contrast in scale between existing and new development of any alternative. Alternative 1 would also change the zoning across the most area of any alternative. The areas subject to zoning changes and potential impacts on view-protected landmarks would include the Denny Triangle's DOC 2 office core and essentially all of the DMC-zoned area north

to Denny Way, and the DOC 1 office core and peripheral DMC and DOC 2-zoned areas along the edges of the Commercial Core.

Interpretation of Site-Specific Landmark View Impacts

Of the 23 view-protected landmarks identified above in Table 37, 11 would be subject to some level of potential impact from future development in the study area. Those without impact potential are located in areas where zoning would not change. Public locations where impacts on these views are considered include SEPA-identified viewpoints or public parks, designated scenic routes, public street rights-of-way, and public parks not identified by SEPA. An assessment of existing view conditions from these locations is provided for each landmark in Table L-3 of Appendix L. Table L-4 of Appendix L provides an overall, general interpretation of the potential impacts of future development on each view-protected landmark.

Changes in views from various locations toward Queen Anne High School and the Camlin Hotel are the most notable impacts identified in Table L-4 of Appendix L. Views toward Queen Anne High School are intermittently possible from many locations in the northern portion of Downtown and even further south along certain streets. These landmarks contribute to visual interest and character when viewed by people moving around Downtown, and also contribute to the overall quality of skyline views. Reduction of this sort of view from public streets is inevitable as future development adds more building bulk to Downtown properties. But it is difficult to quantify how much loss of this type of view would be "too much." Many opportunities will remain to glimpse Queen Anne High School from many locations.

The potential landmark view impacts to the Camlin Hotel relate to its existing condition as a structure surrounded by vacant parking lots, and the future possible development of adjacent highrise buildings. By filling all or most of the vacant lots with new buildings, views toward the Camlin from some streets would be obscured by the new buildings, and the bulk and scale of the new buildings would probably change the perception of the Camlin Hotel (refer to Figure 21 in Height, Bulk and Scale). The relative impact would depend upon how the adjacent buildings physically relate to the Camlin. Given historic development patterns, Downtown buildings like the Camlin Hotel that occupy mid-block sites typically would be surrounded by other development and ultimately absorbed as part of a fully-developed blockfront. This inevitably would result in a reduction of the structure's overall visibility.

The diminished prominence of the Rainier Club (on 4th Avenue) and the Terminal Sales Building (on 1st Avenue), and potentially lost views from the Denny Triangle toward the Wintonia Hotel (Pike-Pine vicinity) are also noted as impacts under all alternatives.

Figure 20 (refer to the Height, Bulk and Scale section) illustrates how future development might look in the vicinity of two landmark buildings, the Rainier Club (not depicted) and the nearby Leamington/Pacific Hotel and Apartments on 4th Avenue. Looking south down 4th Avenue at Marion Street, the existing urban environment already is comprised of interesting contrasts in building age and scale. The low scale of the Pacific Hotel and Rainier Club provide an enclave of pedestrian-oriented building scale among the surrounding skyscrapers. The historic low-density structures with the generous setback of the Rainier Club provide a feeling of airiness and welcome sunlight into the commercial core.

Under Alternative 1, future development includes a 22-story office building on a half-block site in the next block to the south. The additional height and bulk of this structure relative to the 18-story building illustrating development under existing conditions would have little added impact on the character of this view and the relationship already established between these landmark structures and surrounding highrise development. In many respects, the presence of these buildings is even more dramatic because of the contrasts they provide in scale and architectural style.

Figure 22 (refer to the Height, Bulk and Scale section) illustrates how future development might look in the vicinity of the Terminal Sales Building. Today, the Terminal Sales Building and One Pacific Tower, its neighbor to the north, stand out as the largest structures in the area. Another landmark, the Moore Theater, is visible on the south side of Virginia Street one block to the east. Future development behind the Terminal Sales Building will likely be significantly taller and bulkier than the landmark structures; roughly ranging between 31 stories in Alternative 1 and 24 stories in Alternatives 2, 3, and 4. Under any of the alternatives, future development would reduce the "open" character of Virginia Street that exists today because of the relatively low scale of development abutting the street. The prominence of the Terminal Sales Building will also diminish as larger structures occupy adjacent sites.

SCENIC ROUTES

Changes to height and density limits in Downtown would affect specific scenic routes differently, depending upon how close the routes are to the study area. In many cases, the changes would affect only the general composition of the skyline as viewed from a distant location. This type of impact is addressed in the public viewpoint and skyline view impact discussions, and is not considered a significant adverse impact. Scenic routes that would experience this limited impact include:

- Harbor Avenue SW
- West Seattle Bridge
- Magnolia Bridge
- 12th Avenue S. (including bridge over I-90)
- Small segments of California Ave, Admiral Way
- I-5 southbound at north end of Ship Canal Bridge
- I-5 southbound near Eastlake on-ramp
- I-5 northbound, S. Spokane St. to S. Jackson St.
- I-5 northbound, near S. Andover St.
- N. Pacific Street (Wallingford)

Several scenic routes approach and enter Downtown. View changes along these routes would primarily involve changes in the skyline and greater presence of denser buildings in the middle ground or background of views. Once in Downtown, the views become more confined to adjacent development and whatever outward views may be possible down intersecting streets. These routes include:

- Dexter Avenue
- Westlake Avenue north of Denny Way
- Fairview Avenue
- I-5 southbound, Lakeview Blvd to Olive Way
- Southbound SR 99 north of Battery Street Tunnel
- Olive Way
- Yesler Way
- I-5 northbound, Yesler Way to Seneca St.

Of these routes, the scenic qualities of Dexter, Westlake and Fairview Avenues, Olive Way, southbound SR 99 and northbound Interstate 5 would not be adversely impacted by future development in the study area. The following scenic route segments were studied in greater detail because of the potential for impact and because they provide perspectives from different approaches to the study area.

Yesler Way

Yesler Way is a scenic route providing views of the Downtown study area from the east and south. As westbound travelers on Yesler Way approach and cross I-5, wide-ranging views are possible on the overpass bridge and descent toward Downtown. Beyond the Smith Tower is an expansive view of the Duwamish lowlands to the south, the southern end of Elliott Bay, West Seattle, the Olympic Mountains and Pioneer Square. To the north of the Smith Tower is an extensive view of office and government buildings in the office core of Downtown, extending to the Two Union Square building. In the foreground of this view are the King County jail and the vacant parcels of "Goat Hill." Future development on this property could obscure some of the foreground views toward the King County Administration Building and King County Jail, but would not block views toward natural features or generate significant adverse

impacts on this scenic route. Similarly, the alternatives would not result in further blocking of views toward Elliott Bay, the Smith Tower or view elements to the south.

I-5 Southbound, Lakeview Blvd to Olive Way

This scenic route segment approaches and passes along the eastern edge of the Denny Triangle, the portion of the study area where the greatest amount of redevelopment is expected to occur. Observers along this route segment are vehicle occupants traveling at high speed, which limits the duration of views. The greatest extent of highest-quality views occurs north of the study area where the existing height of development to the west is relatively low and I-5 is an elevated structure. Vehicle occupants traveling southbound can glimpse a territorial view of Queen Anne Hill, Lake Union and Seattle Center to the west, only briefly interrupted by a few buildings along the I-5 edge of South Lake Union. There is also a prominent view ahead to the south of the large Downtown office core buildings.

Views of Denny Triangle vicinity buildings are possible along the route, but only for brief durations given travel speeds. Approaching Olive Way, the higher elevation of the embankment along the Downtown edge of I-5 limits views west through the Denny Triangle. Also, buildings near I-5 such as the Metropolitan Park towers and the new Marriott SpringHill Suites Hotel block some Denny Triangle vistas from this route. It is likely that the best territorial and skyline views from this route segment north of Denny Way will remain, even if future development occurs in the Denny Triangle.

Scenic Routes Through Downtown

The character of adjacent development would change to some degree along three scenic routes, 5th Avenue, Westlake Avenue and the Alaskan Way Viaduct, all of which run directly through the Downtown. Observers of these views are likely to include pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as motorists and transit riders. The route along Fifth Avenue would experience modest changes due to potential redevelopment on adjacent sites. Views along portions of this route are already impaired by the existing monorail structure. Views along Westlake Avenue would experience somewhat greater change if larger-scale development occurs on several abutting properties north of Stewart Street, creating a stronger sense of enclosure and narrowing the scope of views along this route. The view from the northbound Alaskan Way Viaduct would be modestly altered as available properties in the Western Avenue vicinity or other properties east of First Avenue are redeveloped. However, these additional buildings are not likely to adversely alter the overall quality of the upland views from the Alaskan Way Viaduct. Alaskan Way and Elliott Avenue, the other routes through Downtown, would not likely experience adverse impacts due to their location either along the edge or outside of the study area. Along these routes, the primary view is of Elliott Bay to the west, with adjacent development and the Alaskan Way Viaduct already limiting views toward the study area to the east.

SKYLINE

Future development in the Downtown study area, with or without changes in zoned height and density, will alter the shape, character and extent of the Downtown skyline over time. New towers will be added to the existing clusters of buildings forming the skyline, and taller buildings will appear in areas currently dominated by lower-height development. The interpretation of impacts to skyline views from the north and west uses the examples of Kerry Park on Queen Anne Hill, the Belvedere and Hamilton Viewpoints in West Seattle, and views from a location near I-5 (approximately Melrose Avenue) on Capitol Hill.

Views from the north—Kerry Park. Kerry Park provides views of the Downtown skyline from a relatively high elevation to the north. These views would change over time with future development in Denny Triangle, which would contribute to the eastern foreground of the skyline view (see Figure 28). Future additional Denny Triangle development would contribute to further obscuring of the Cascade

foothills that are in the background of southeastern views from Kerry Park. Numerous existing buildings in the office core and on First Hill have already obscured most of the foothill view. The large mass of Mt. Rainier would not be blocked by future development in the study area, with or without zoning changes. Mt. Rainier is far enough west in the Kerry Park view that future development in the intervening areas is not likely to obscure or infringe upon the mountain. It is interesting to note that some of the newer highrise residential buildings in the Belltown vicinity extend a bit above the local horizon, infringing upon small portions of the foothills visually below (north of) Mt. Rainier. However, this portion of Belltown is not included in areas of possible zoning changes. None of the view impacts to Kerry Park's viewpoint are interpreted to be significant adverse impacts.

The specific impact of Alternative 1 would be to allow 100 additional feet of height and greater density in the Denny Triangle area that is the foreground or middle ground of these views. This is not interpreted to be a significant adverse impact.

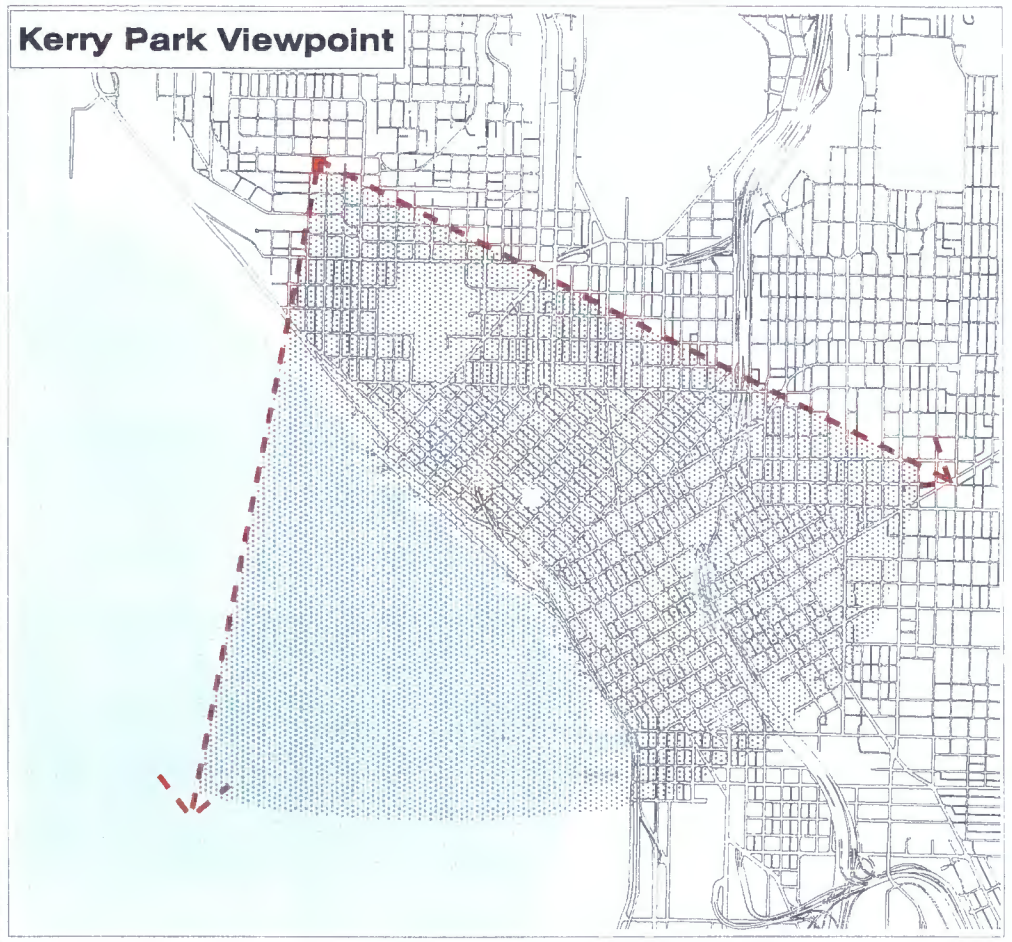
Views from the west—Belvedere and Hamilton Viewpoints. These viewpoints in West Seattle provide views of the skyline from the southwest at a relatively greater distance than Kerry Park, but also from higher elevations. Views from these viewpoints would change in a manner similar to those at Kerry Park. As future development in Denny Triangle extends the skyline further north, views toward the Cascade Mountains in the background would be obscured (see Figure 29). Between the northern edge of the office core and a grouping of taller condominiums in Belltown is a gap in the skyline broken only by the Westin Hotel towers and another office building (the mountain views continue both north and south of the Downtown skyline). Future development in Denny Triangle would tend to fill in this gap with additional buildings, even though the intervening buildings in the retail core vicinity would partially hide the new buildings. Because of the lower elevation of Hamilton Viewpoint, views of the Cascade Mountains are less pronounced than from Belvedere Viewpoint.

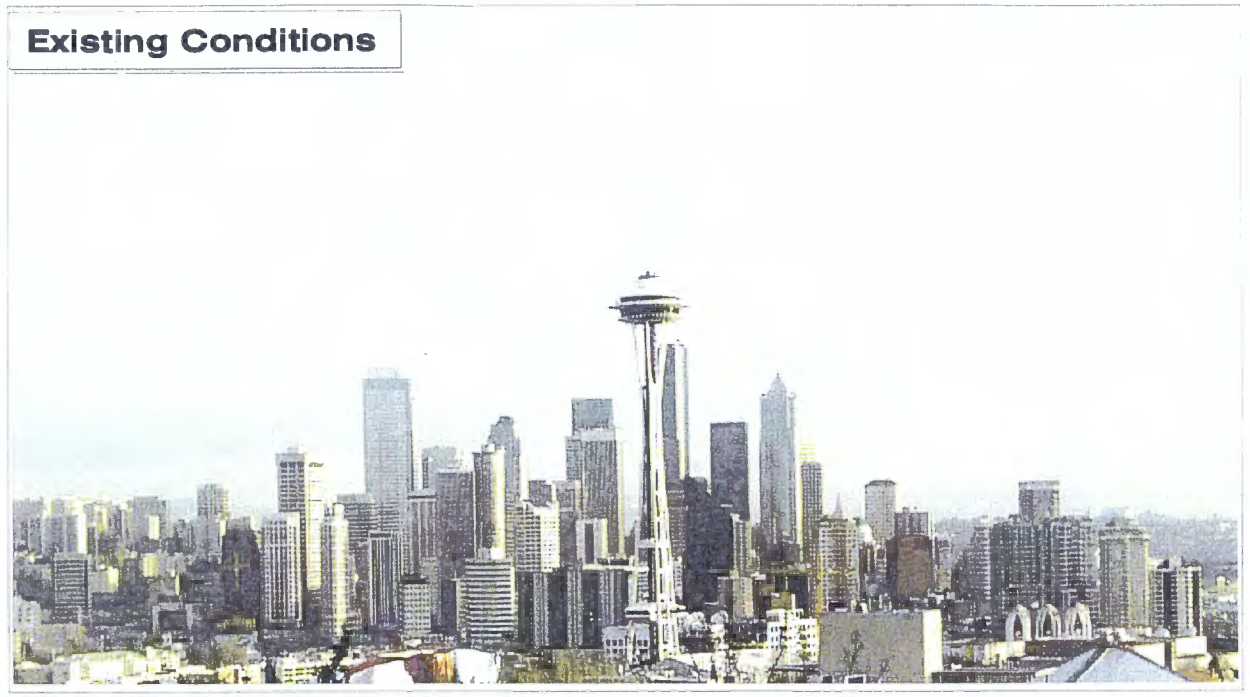
The specific impact of Alternative 1 would be to allow buildings 100 feet higher in this portion of the view, contributing to somewhat greater blockage of views toward the Cascade Mountains. None of the view impacts to either the Belvedere or Hamilton viewpoints are interpreted to be significant adverse impacts.

Views from the south. Skyline views from the south would likely experience less change than views from other directions. Relatively few sites would be subject to future redevelopment. One possible 24-30 story office building near 6th and Yesler (just west of I-5) could be the most prominent change in the skyline view from the south. Nearly all future development north of the office core would not be visible from the south under any alternative.

Views from the east. Skyline views from the east would depend upon the viewer's position in First Hill or Pike-Pine/Capitol Hill. From the southern portion of First Hill, there would be relatively little change in skyline views, because large buildings near I-5 already strongly define the skyline. Locations in Pike-Pine and the western slopes of Capitol Hill would experience a relatively large change in views over time, given the probable concentration of future development in the Denny Triangle area.

New commercial, residential and mixed-use projects built to the maximum height and density limits would contribute to a substantial cluster of development extending north from the existing core. The height of these structures could be relatively uniform, which could create a rather flat type of skyline silhouette. Because of shifts in the orientation of the street grids in adjacent Pike/Pine and Capitol Hill areas, separations between structures provided by streets in the area would be less apparent, potentially contributing to the impression of an uninterrupted mass of development. Because few developments are projected to extend out to the extreme northern and eastern edges of the Denny Triangle over 20 years, development in the foreground may remain relatively low (see Figure 30).





Seattle Urban Design Impact Study

View From Kerry Park

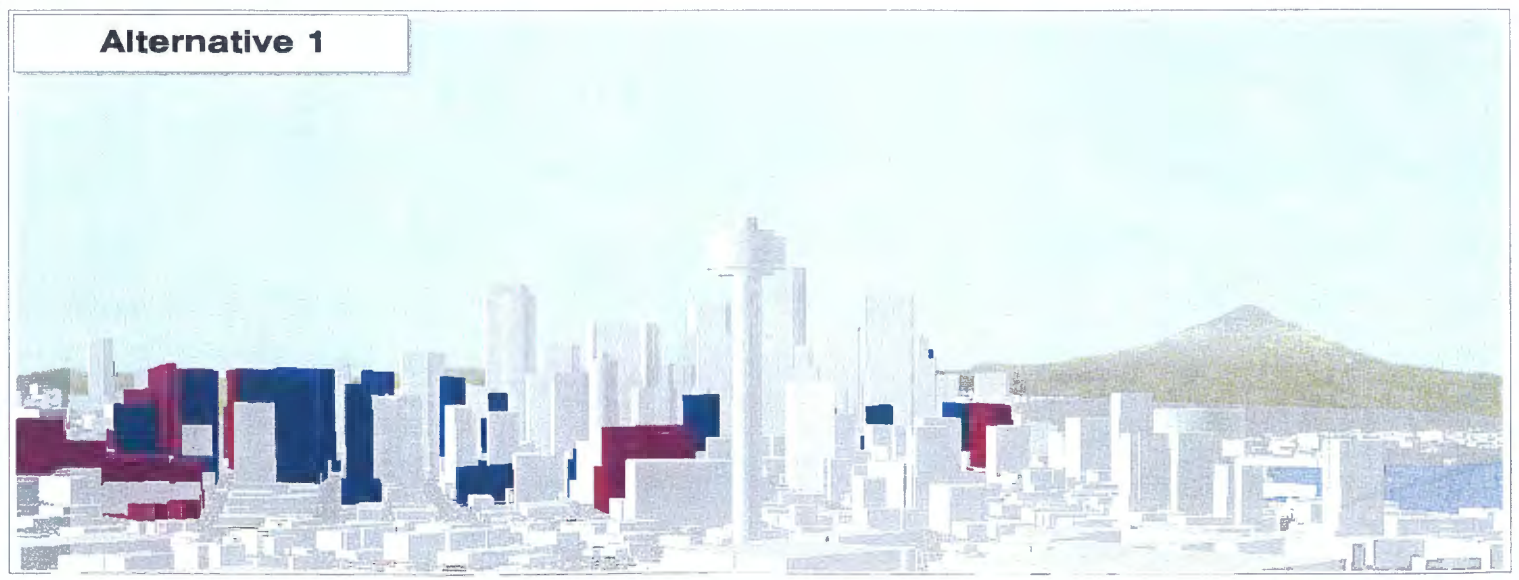
otak

LEGEND

Future Buildings

Existing or Under Construction

10936/gis/3dBase.apr Kerry Park Alt. Presentation Map B&W



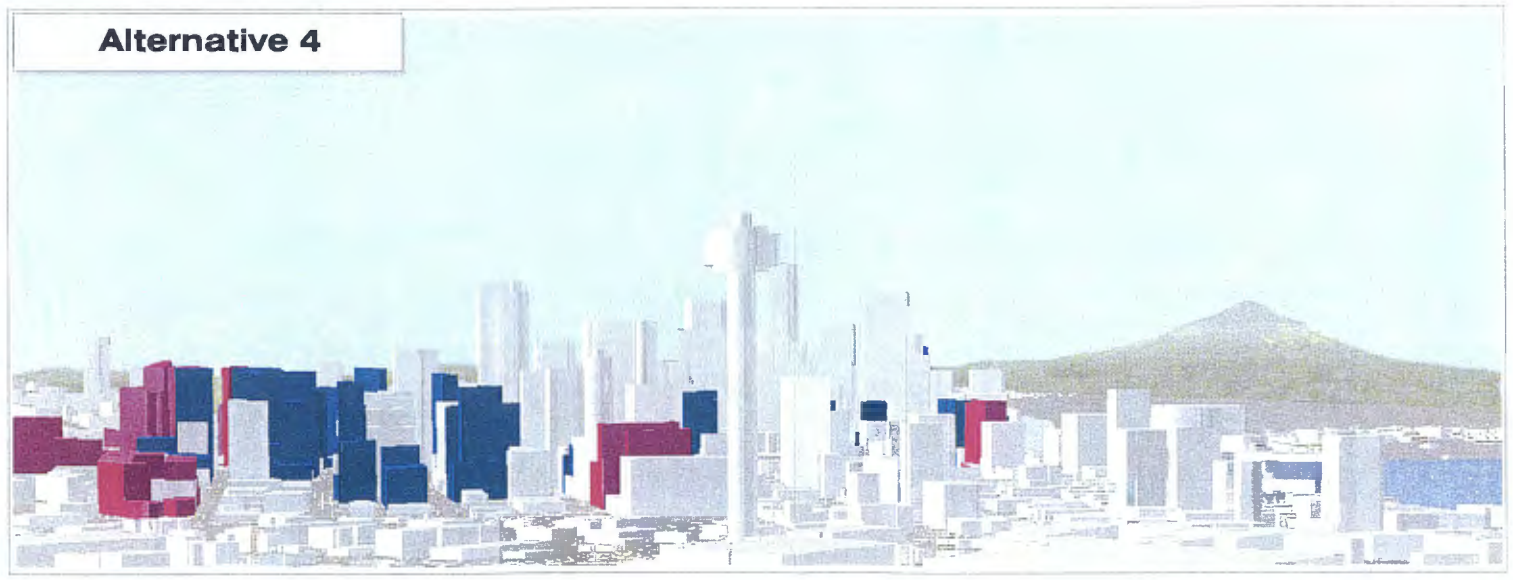
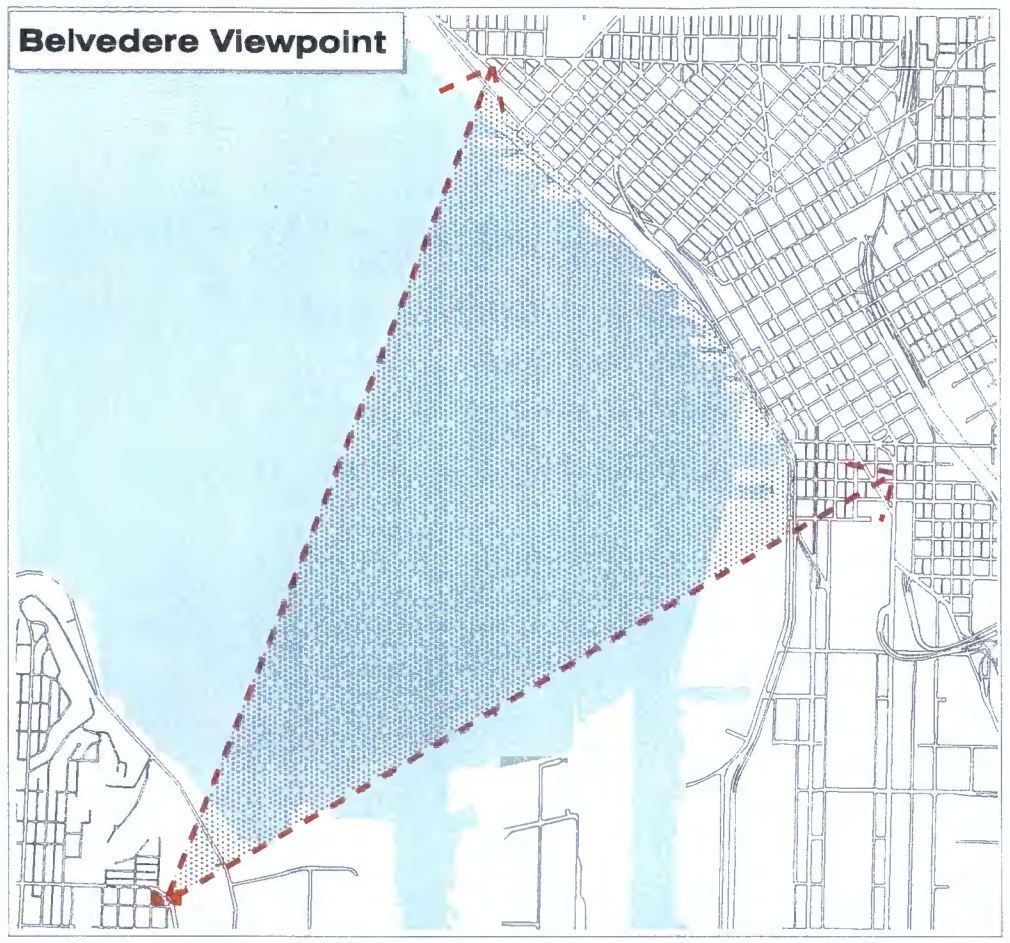


Figure 29



Seattle Urban Design Impact Study

View From Belvedere Park

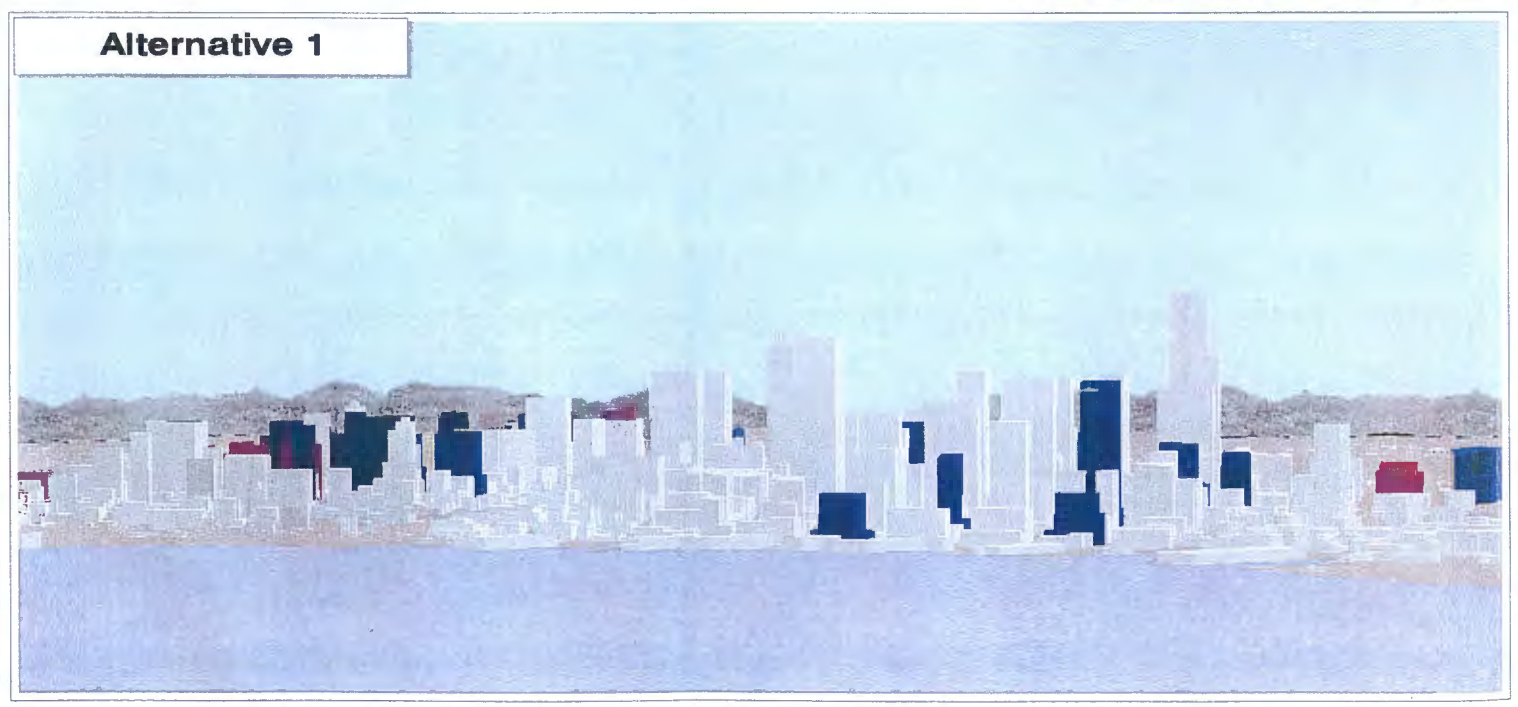
otak

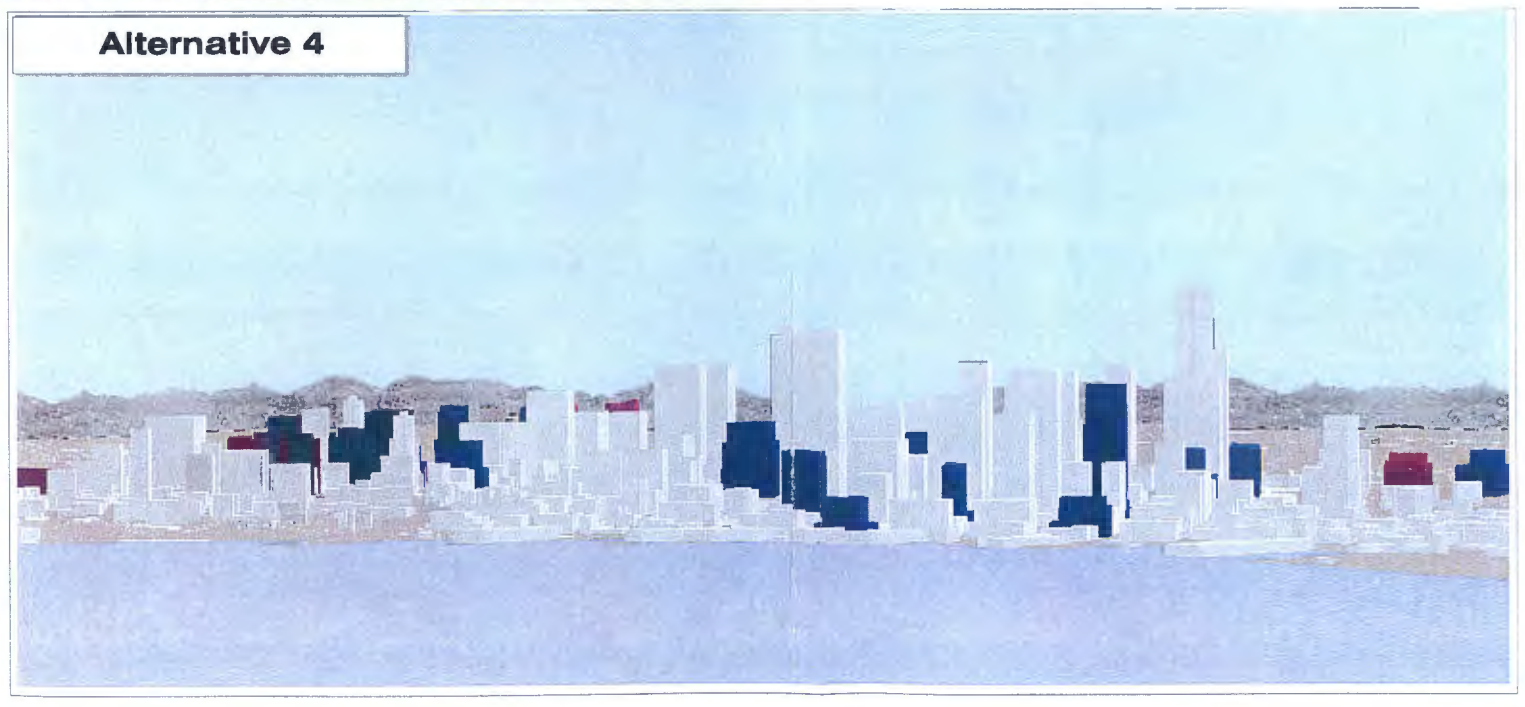
LEGEND

Future Buildings

Existing or Under Construction

10936/gis/3dBase.apr Belvedere Alt. Presentation Map b&W





Seattle Urban Design Impact Study

View From Capitol Hill

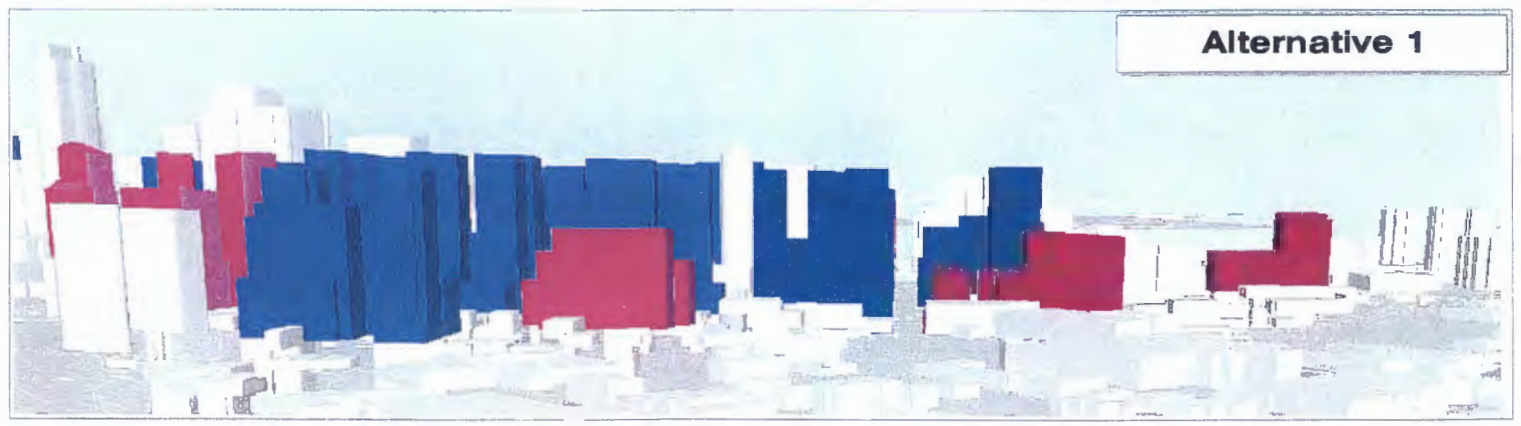
otak

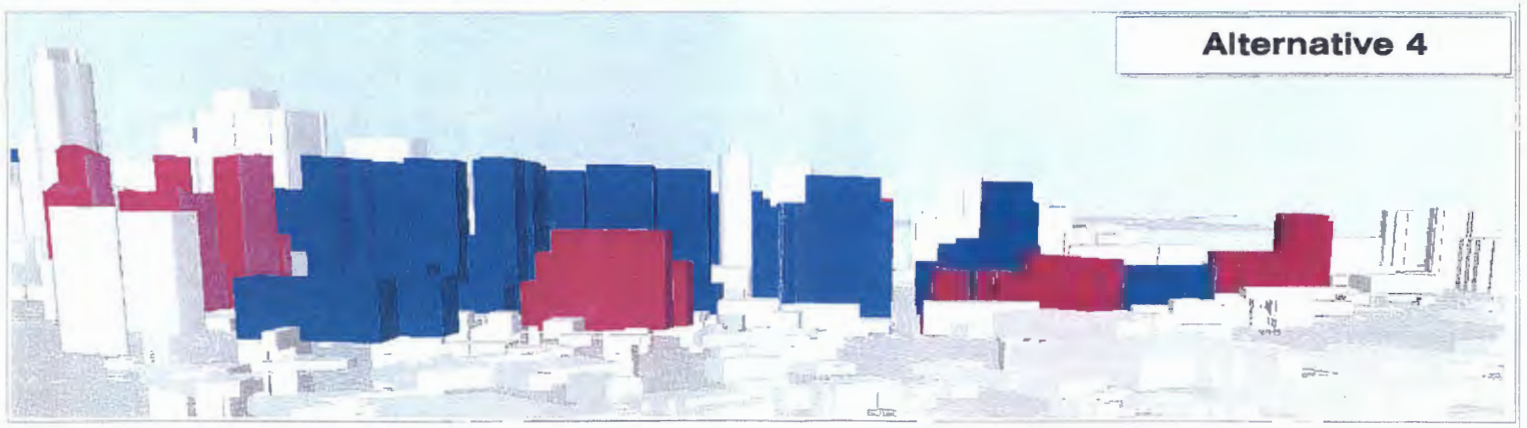
LEGEND

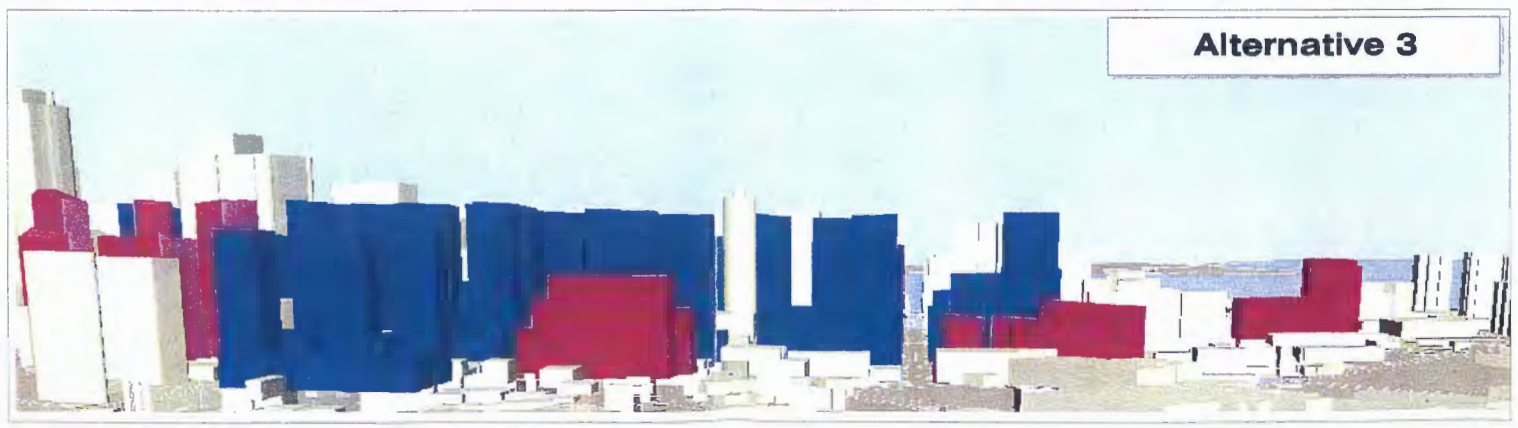
Future Buildings

Existing or Under Construction

10936/gis/3dBase.apr Capitol Hill Alt. Presentation Map







OTHER NON-PROTECTED VIEWS

Alternative 1 and the other alternatives would result in similar impacts on numerous public and private views from areas adjacent to Downtown. From surrounding hillside neighborhoods, the existing conditions may enable observers in many public and private locations to view features (including natural features such as mountains and water) beyond Downtown. For example, views toward portions of Puget Sound and/or the Olympics could be obscured from some portions of Pike/Pine and Capitol Hill.

Another example is Boren Avenue, which on the higher elevations of the Pike/Pine and First Hill neighborhoods provides views northward to Queen Anne Hill across the northeast corner of Downtown and South Lake Union. As higher density development moves into this portion of Downtown over time, such territorial views are increasingly likely to be blocked. Changes in the street grid from neighborhood to neighborhood prevent maintaining continuous views between areas, even along public street rights-of-way. The extent of this type of view impact is not likely to vary appreciably between the alternatives.

Alternative 2 – Concentrated Office Core

Alternative 2 is a subset of the changes proposed in Alternative 1, focusing on the DOC 1 and DOC 2 Downtown office core zones. Alternative 2's visual impacts would be similar to those of Alternative 1, except a somewhat lower skyline form would be maintained in the northern Denny Triangle vicinity and First Avenue/Western Avenue vicinity on the edges of the Commercial Core.

PUBLIC VIEWPOINTS

Alternative 2's impacts on public viewpoints would be similar to impacts of Alternative 1, except with no zoning changes in the Denny Way and 1st/2nd Avenue/Western Avenue vicinities, there would be slightly less change in overall building bulk added to skyline views. Consequently, there could be somewhat less potential than Alternative 1 for impairment of more northerly views from Four Columns Park across the vicinity near I-5 and Denny Way. Alternative 2's zone changes relevant to Harborview Viewpoint would be the same as under Alternative 1, so potential impacts would be the same as Alternative 1. (Kerry Park and West Seattle viewpoints discussed under skylines, below.)

VIEW PROTECTED LANDMARKS

Under Alternative 2, the identified landmarks within Downtown would be subject to the same impacts as Alternative 1, except there would not be any additional height and density increases in the vicinity of the Terminal Sales Building and the 1st Avenue Group of landmark buildings, thus avoiding potential additional impacts. Due to the lack of height and density increases in the northern Denny Triangle and edge of Belltown, there may be slightly less potential for blockage of public street views toward Queen Anne High School than under Alternative 1. However, with changes in the orientation of the street grid, development under any alternatives could potentially block these views (refer to Alternative 1 for further discussion of impacts to view-protected landmarks).

SCENIC ROUTES

With the lack of zone changes in the northern Denny Triangle and 1st /2nd Avenue/Western Avenue vicinities, there would be slightly less potential for impacts to scenic routes than under Alternative 1. The lower height and density limits in these areas would avoid some potential for aesthetic impacts of future development on Alaskan Way, the Viaduct, Westlake Avenue and Fairview Avenue scenic routes.

SKYLINE

Views from the north—Kerry Park. Without zone changes in the northern Denny Triangle vicinity, buildings in the middle ground of views (near Denny Way) would be approximately 100 feet lower than under Alternative 1. This would provide a more gradual visual transition or step-down in the arrangement of building bulk than Alternative 1, which can be interpreted as having lesser visual impacts on the skyline.

Views from the west—Belvedere and Hamilton Viewpoints. Under Alternative 2, the existing pattern of step-down transition toward the waterfront would be retained, avoiding additional permissible building bulk along the front of Downtown in this view. The retained height limits in the Denny Way vicinity would make a minimal difference in views from this location.

Views from the south. Alternative 2's zone changes in the office core south to Yesler Way would be the same as for Alternative 1, and thus the potential skyline impacts are the same as for Alternative 1.

Views from the east. Skyline views from the east would depend upon the viewer's position in First Hill or Pike-Pine/Capitol Hill. From the southern portion of First Hill, the skyline views would be the same as for Alternative 1. Visual changes in the I-5/Melrose Avenue vicinity of Capitol Hill are expected to be similar to those described under Alternative 1. However, over time, as more development pushes into the peripheral DMC areas closer to Denny Way, the lower height limits maintained in this area relative to Alternative 1 should allow for greater variation in the height of structures comprising the skyline, with lower buildings in the foreground. From several locations, the existing Metropolitan Park and Marriott SpringHill Suites Hotel would continue to screen views such that differences in the skyline would be less apparent.

OTHER NON-PROTECTED VIEWS

See discussion under Alternative 1.

Alternative 3 – Residential Emphasis

Alternative 3 is similar to Alternative 1 and 2 in the office core area south of Union Street, but would maintain existing zoning in the Denny Triangle DOC 2 zone east of 8th Avenue and west of 5th Avenue, and maintain height limits in DMC zones in the Denny Way, 1st /2nd Avenue/Western Avenue, and edge of Belltown vicinities. There would be some reduction in permitted bulk in portions of the DMC zones proposed for a more residential-oriented zoning designation, primarily in the north-central portion of the Denny Triangle and the southern edge of Belltown (refer to Chapter 2 for more description).

PUBLIC VIEWPOINTS

Alternative 3's impacts on public viewpoints would be similar to impacts of Alternatives 1 and 2 but with slightly less potential for impacts on views from Four Columns Park and the Harborview viewpoint (see the skyline discussion, below, regarding Kerry Park, Belvedere and Hamilton Viewpoints). This is due in part to maintaining existing heights on the edges of the DOC 2 and DMC zones in the Denny Triangle and greater bulk restrictions on development in areas proposed for a more residential-oriented designation on the edges of Belltown and the Denny Triangle.

Four Columns Park. Under Alternative 3, retaining existing conditions in the DOC 2 zone east of 8th Avenue and the changes proposed in the Denny Way vicinity would mean slightly less allowable building height and bulk than under Alternatives 1 and 2, which could be marginally more beneficial to views from Four Columns Park. However, the potential for impairment of views toward Queen Anne High School and the Olympics would still be present, as under existing conditions.

Harborview Viewpoint. Alternative 3's zone changes relevant to this viewpoint would be the same as under Alternatives 1 and 2.

VIEW PROTECTED LANDMARKS

Under Alternative 3, the identified landmarks within Downtown would be subject to similar impacts as Alternative 1, except zone changes would be relatively comparable to existing conditions near the Terminal Sales Building and the 1st Avenue Group of landmark buildings, and there would be no changes to the zoning on properties adjacent to the Times Square Building. This means the potential for impacts to view-protected landmarks is slightly less than for Alternatives 1 and 2. The proposed pattern of zone changes would also mean slightly less potential for blockage of public street views toward Queen Anne High School than under Alternatives 1 and 2.

SCENIC ROUTES

With the limited changes to DMC zones in the northern Denny Triangle, 1st /2nd Avenue/Western Avenue and edge of Belltown vicinities, there would be slightly less potential for impacts to scenic routes than under Alternative 1. The lesser potential for additional building bulk and height in these areas would avoid some potential for aesthetic impacts of future development on the Alaskan Way, Viaduct, Westlake and Fairview Avenue scenic routes.

SKYLINE

Views from the north—Kerry Park. With Alternative 3's zone changes in the northern Denny Triangle, 1st /2nd Avenue/Western Avenue and edge of Belltown vicinities, development in these areas would have lower heights than under Alternative 1, and in some areas reductions in permitted bulk, generally providing a transition in building scale to adjacent areas. This means Alternative 3 has slightly less potential for adverse view impacts than Alternatives 1 and 2 at this location.

Views from the west--Belvedere and Hamilton Viewpoints. With Alternative 3's zone changes, the potential impacts on these skyline views would be slightly less than for Alternatives 1 and 2.

Views from the south. With Alternative 3's proposed zone changes, the potential skyline impacts would be marginally less than for Alternatives 1 and 2.

Views from the east. Skyline views from the east would depend upon the viewer's position in First Hill, Pike-Pine or Capitol Hill. From the southern portion of First Hill, the skyline views would be the same as for Alternatives 1 and 2. With Alternative 3's zone changes in the Denny Way vicinity, retained step-downs in height limits would continue to provide a more gradual visual transition in building bulk generally similar to Alternatives 2 and 4. With retained zoning in a portion of the Denny Triangle DOC 2 zone east of 8th Avenue, the potential for large buildings significantly altering the skyline nearest the Pike-Pine vicinity would be similar to existing zoning. This could be interpreted as a positive attribute of Alternative 3 in that the bulk of buildings nearest the adjacent neighborhoods would be less visually dominant than under Alternatives 1 or 2. In several locations, existing development like the Metropolitan Park towers and Marriott SpringHill Suites hotel would continue to screen views such that differences in the skyline would be less apparent.

OTHER NON-PROTECTED VIEWS

See discussion under Alternative 1.

Alternative 4 – No Action

PUBLIC VIEWPOINTS

Selecting the No Action Alternative would result in no change from current regulatory conditions and therefore no additional impacts. However, in this case it should be noted that the existing zoned height and densities allow for future development that may obscure existing views over time at Four Columns Park and to a lesser extent at the Harborview Viewpoint. In general, Alternative 4 would have less potential for overall change in views at these locations than Alternatives 1 or 2. In areas where additional bulk limits apply, Alternative 3 would potentially have less overall impacts on these views than Alternative 4. Future project-specific review would afford the opportunity to review specific development proposals and conditioning of projects if warranted.

VIEW PROTECTED LANDMARKS

Selecting the No Action Alternative would result in no change from current regulatory conditions and therefore no additional impacts. However, as noted in the first paragraph of the view-protected landmarks discussion for Alternative 1, the potential for view impacts on landmarks from future development is generally similar under any alternative.

SCENIC ROUTES

Selecting the No Action Alternative would result in no change from current regulatory conditions and therefore no additional impacts. Over time, future development would add building bulk that would change the aesthetic qualities of the designated scenic routes relevant to Downtown.

SKYLINE

Selecting the No Action Alternative would result in no change from current regulatory conditions and therefore no additional impacts. However, it should be noted that existing regulations afford opportunities in the Denny Triangle to increase building heights by up to 30 percent more than mapped height limits, and by 10 to 20 percent in DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones throughout Downtown, if certain conditions are met. Over time, future development would change the skyline views in generally similar ways under any alternative.

OTHER NON-PROTECTED VIEWS

See discussion under Alternative 1.