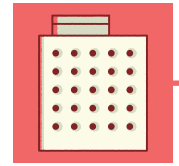


3.4 Land Use: Patterns, Compatibility, Height, Bulk and Scale



This section focuses on physical land use patterns, height, bulk and scale of potential development patterns and implications for land use compatibility that may occur if the City adopts housing and employment growth strategies that follow the policy directions described under each alternative. For a review of land use policies, please see Section 3.5 on page 3.5-1, Relationship to Plans and Policies.

3.4.1 Affected Environment

This section addresses land use patterns and development character and form in the City of Seattle. This review—on a citywide scale, as well as in the City’s urban villages—provides a baseline for analyzing the impacts of land use and development of the four alternative growth scenarios.

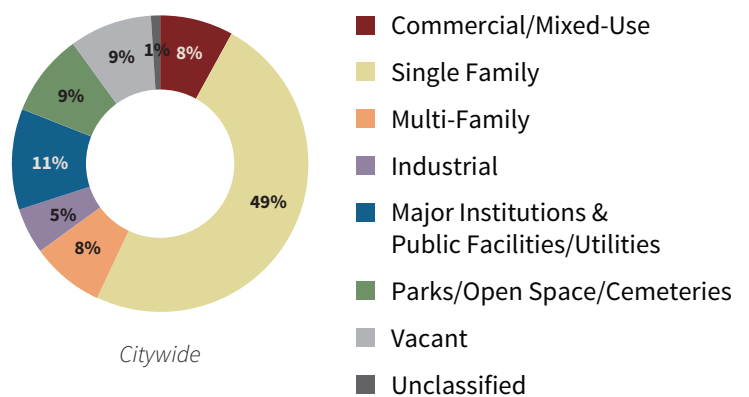
Current Land Use

CITY OF SEATTLE

The City of Seattle encompasses approximately 83 square miles (53,182 acres). Excluding water bodies and public right-of-way, the city contains approximately 38,728 acres of buildable lands. The largest land use category is single family residential, which comprises about 49 percent of current land use in the city. Major institutions and public facilities and utilities account for about 11 percent of Seattle’s land use. Vacant, parks and open space, commercial/mixed-use and multi-family land uses comprise 8 to 9 percent each of total land use in Seattle (see Figure 3.4-1).

The highest concentrations of commercial and mixed-use development are in the four urban centers that constitute the area sometimes called the “center city” (Downtown, First/Capitol Hill, South Lake Union and Uptown). Other urban centers, urban villages and smaller nodes around the city also contain varying levels of commercial and mixed-use development.

Figure 3.4-1
Existing land use distribution—citywide



3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Single-family residential neighborhoods fill the intervening areas, along with parks, open space and major institutional uses. Industrial development is concentrated in the Greater Duwamish Manufacturing/Industrial Center (MIC) in south central Seattle and in the Ballard-Interbay-Northend MIC, located northwest of Downtown. Figure 3.4–2 shows existing land use distribution across the city.

URBAN CENTERS, VILLAGES AND MANUFACTURING/INDUSTRIAL CENTERS

The Urban Village Element of Seattle’s Comprehensive Plan establishes a strategy for accommodating future growth in the city by creating areas of concentrated development that maximize efficient use of infrastructure and services. Urban centers and manufacturing/industrial centers (MICs) are regionally-designated dense centers that serve as economic engines for Seattle and surrounding communities. Urban villages are City-designated areas, most of which are smaller and less dense than urban centers, that provide a mix of residential and employment uses that serve more localized areas. Combined, these areas comprise the City’s Urban Village Strategy. Each center/village type serves a particular purpose, and they are distinguished by differences in land use composition, spatial patterns and development types and character. Figure 3.4–3 illustrates the unique characteristics of each type of urban center and urban village, using typical neighborhoods of each type.

Urban centers and villages are described in more detail in the following sections.

Urban Centers

Seattle contains six designated urban centers: Downtown, First/Capitol Hill, the University District, Northgate, South Lake Union and Uptown. Urban centers are characterized by their high percentage of commercial and mixed-use development, which accounts for over half of the land use in each urban center. The predominant residential typology in urban centers is multi-family, and single family residential usually makes up a very small percentage of the land use mix. Citywide, urban centers consist of 47 percent commercial/mixed-use, 21 percent multi-family residential, 19 percent major institution or public facility and 3 percent industrial land use. None of Seattle’s urban centers are truly “average,” however, as each is home to its own unique character and mix of uses. For example, both the Downtown and First/Capitol Hill urban centers share the density, development intensity and mixed-use character that typify urban centers, but Downtown is more heavily commercial. By contrast, the University District contains a mix of commercial, residential and industrial uses, but it is dominated by the presence of the University of Washington campus, and it contains the greatest proportion of public facility and institutional uses of all the city’s urban centers.

The Seattle Comprehensive Plan divides larger urban centers into urban center villages to recognize neighborhoods within urban centers with distinct characteristics. The Downtown Urban Center is divided into five villages, the First/Capitol Hill Urban Center is divided into four villages and the University District is divided into three villages. Urban center villages represent the variability present within the primarily commercial urban centers. For example, the Capitol Hill Urban Center Village is much more heavily residential than the Pike/Pine

Urban centers are the densest neighborhoods in the city and are both regional centers and neighborhoods that provide a diverse mix of uses, housing, and employment opportunities. Larger urban centers are divided into urban center villages to recognize the distinct character of different neighborhoods within them.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Figure 3.4-3 Urban center and village development patterns

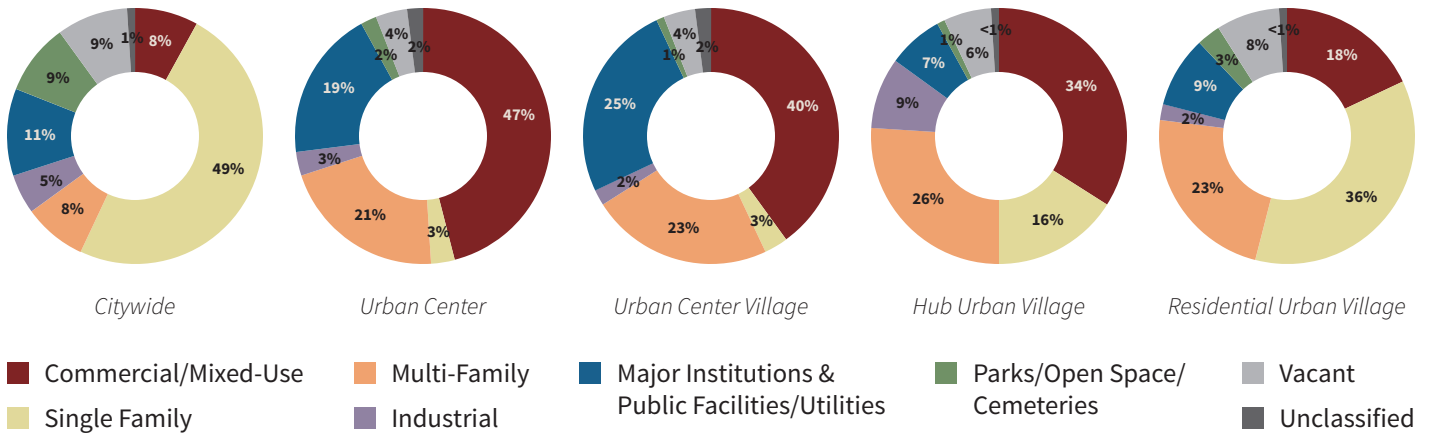
- Commercial/Mixed-Use
- Single Family
- Multi-Family
- Industrial
- Major Institutions & Public Facilities/Utilities
- Parks/Open Space/Cemeteries
- Vacant
- Unclassified

	Current Land Use Composition	Current Land Use Pattern	Building Typology
Urban Center	Example: Downtown 		<p>Source: Seattle 2035 Background Report</p>
Urban Center Village	Example: Pike/Pine 		<p>Source: Pike/Pine Urban Design Guidelines, 2010</p>
Hub Urban Village	Example: Ballard 		<p>Source: Ballard Urban Design Framework Existing Conditions Report</p>
Residential Urban Village	Example: Columbia City 		<p>Source: Columbia City Business Association</p>

Urban Center Village immediately to the south, and both have fewer institutional uses than the First Hill or 12th Avenue urban center villages, through all are part of the larger First/Capitol Hill Urban Center. Urban center villages generally contain less commercial development and more residential uses than urban centers as a whole. On average, urban center villages contain 40 percent commercial/mixed-use, 23 percent multi-family residential, 25 percent major institution or public facility and 2 percent industrial land use. Figure 3.4-4 shows a

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Figure 3.4-4 Existing land use distribution—urban centers and villages



comparison of the average land use composition of urban centers, urban center villages and urban villages.

Urban Villages

Seattle’s six **hub urban villages** account for about 1,232 acres of land in Seattle (3.2 percent). They are Ballard, Bitter Lake, Fremont, Lake City, Mount Baker and West Seattle Junction

The main land use types in hub urban villages are commercial/mixed-use, multi-family residential and single family residential. On average, about 34 percent of land in hub urban villages is in commercial and mixed land uses, 26 percent in multi-family residential land use and 16 percent in single family residential land use. Hub urban villages exhibit a range of variation among their land use patterns. Commercial/mixed-use land use varies from 25 percent of land use in Mount Baker to about 47 percent in Bitter Lake. Multi-family residential land use ranges from 41 percent of land use in Ballard to only 13 percent in Mount Baker. Single family residential use ranges from 27 percent in Mount Baker and West Seattle Junction to just 5 percent in Bitter Lake and Lake City.

Seattle’s 18 **residential urban villages** account for 2,631 acres of land (6.8 percent) in Seattle. They include 23rd & Union-Jackson, Admiral, Aurora-Licton Springs, Columbia City, Crown Hill, Eastlake, Green Lake, Greenwood-Phinney Ridge, Madison-Miller, Morgan Junction, North Beacon Hill, Othello, Upper Queen Anne, Rainier Beach, Roosevelt, South Park, Wallingford and Westwood-Highland Park.

On average, the main land use types in residential urban villages are single family residential (36 percent), multi-family residential (23 percent) and commercial/mixed-use (18 percent). Residential urban villages exhibit a range of variation among their land use patterns. For example, commercial/mixed-use accounts for just 7 percent of land use in South Park but accounts for approximately 63 percent of land use in Greenwood-Phinney Ridge. Single family residential makes up about 63 percent of land use in South Park, but just 4 percent of land use in Upper Queen Anne.

Hub urban villages are communities that provide a balance of housing & employment, generally at densities lower than those found in urban centers. These areas provide a focus of goods, services & employment to communities that are not close to urban centers.

Residential urban villages provide a focus of goods & services for residents & surrounding communities but may not provide a concentration of employment.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Manufacturing/Industrial Centers

Manufacturing/industrial Centers (MICs) are regionally-designated centers identified by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) as target areas for employment growth as the Puget Sound region continues to grow.

Seattle has two MICs, the Greater Duwamish MIC in south-central Seattle, and the Ballard-Interbay-Northend MIC northwest of Downtown. At over 5,000 acres in size, the Greater Duwamish MIC is the second largest MIC designated by PSRC and is one of the largest industrial and manufacturing areas anywhere in the Pacific Northwest. The Greater Duwamish MIC serves as Seattle's primary terminal for marine shipping, and multi-modal facilities in the area allow for easy transfer of goods between air, rail, land and water transportation networks. Land uses in the Greater Duwamish MIC are overwhelmingly industrial in nature (85 percent), and, according to PSRC, the MIC accounts for nearly 13 percent of Seattle's total employment (PSRC 2013).

In contrast, the Ballard-Interbay-Northend MIC is one of the smallest regional MICs, covering approximately 971 acres. Compared to other MICs, however, it is developed at a density roughly twice the average, and it accounts for 3 percent of Seattle's employment. Like other MICs, Ballard-Interbay-Northend is mostly industrial in nature, and serves as the home of the North Pacific Fishing Fleet, providing substantial moorage on Salmon Bay (PSRC 2013).

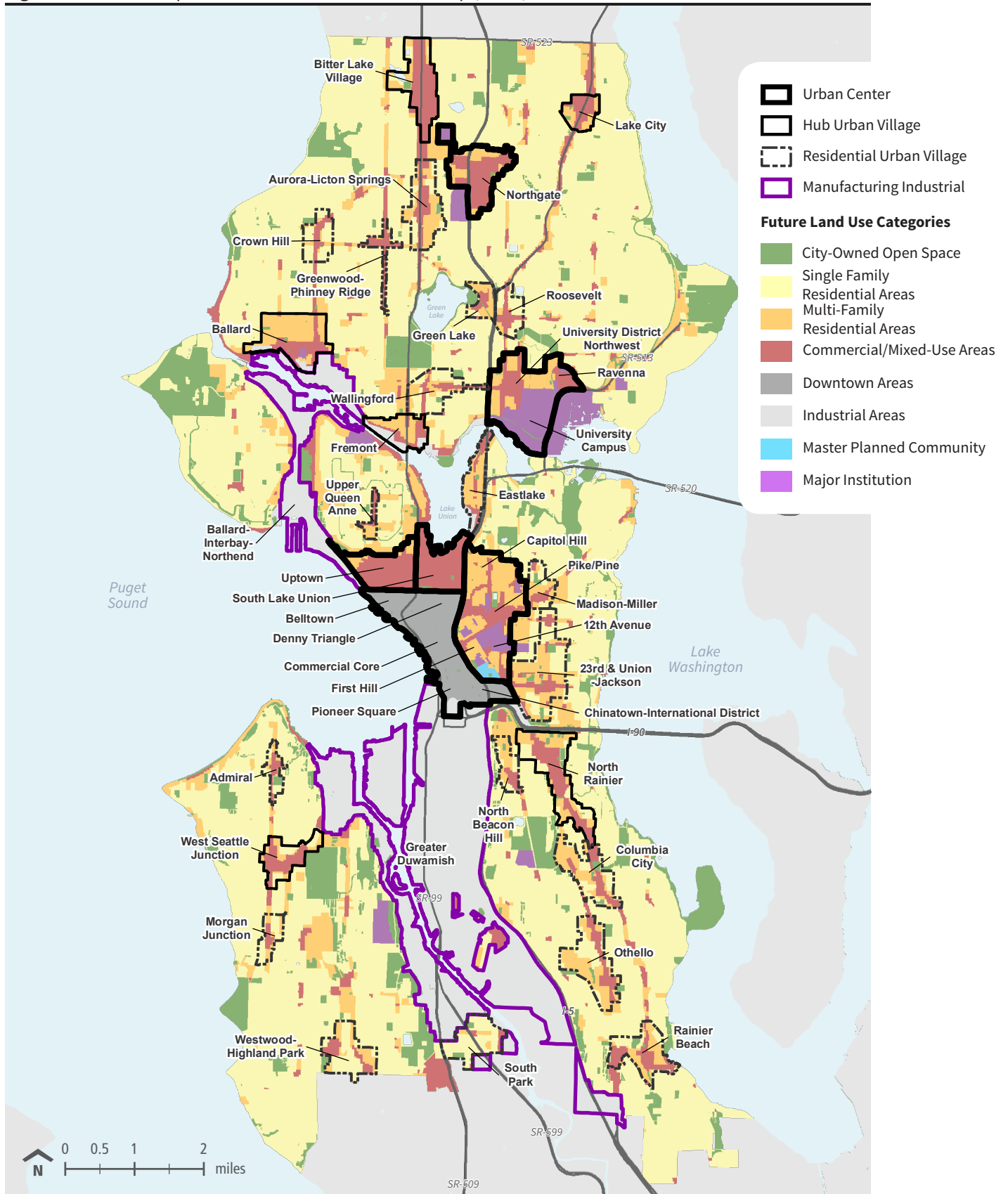
Future Land Use Designations and Zoning

CITY OF SEATTLE

The City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map (FLUM) establishes future land use designations to guide development within the city. These designations are implemented by a corresponding range of zoning districts, which are established in Title 23 of the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC). Adopted aggregate Future Land Use designations in Seattle are mapped in Figure 3.4-5. A detailed discussion of the adopted comprehensive plan and zoning regulations is contained in Section 3.5 on page 3.5-1, Relationship to Plans and Policies.

Similar to existing land use, the largest future land use designation category is single-family residential, accounting for 55 percent of the city's land base. Industrial lands and public open space account for a further 12 percent each, multifamily residential encompasses approximately 10 percent and commercial/mixed-use accounts for approximately 7 percent. Most of the areas designated and zoned for commercial/mixed use or multi-family residential uses are located in urban centers or villages. Most of the area outside urban center or urban village boundaries is zoned for single-family residential use, with the exception of land located in the Greater Duwamish or Ballard-Interbay-Northend MICs. Commercial and multifamily zoning outside urban centers or villages tends to be concentrated around major arterials.

Figure 3.4-5 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM)



Source: City of Seattle, 2014.

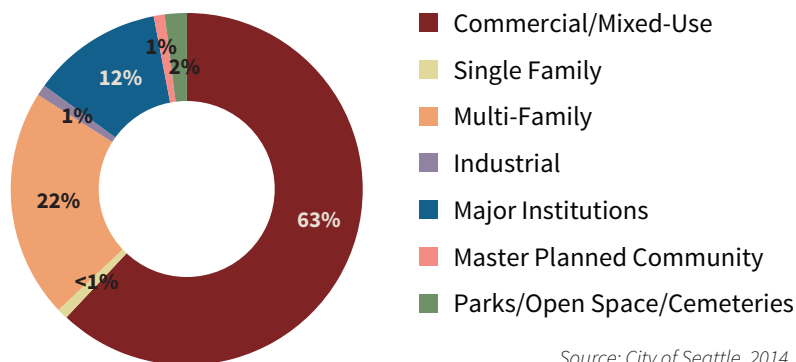
3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

URBAN CENTERS, VILLAGES AND MANUFACTURING/INDUSTRIAL CENTERS

Urban Centers

Similar to existing land use conditions, FLUM urban centers are designated primarily for commercial and mixed-use development. While the individual centers’ precise distribution of land use designations and zoning vary, urban centers’ zoning composition averages approximately 63 percent in commercial/mixed-use zones, 22 percent in multifamily residential zones and 12 percent in major institutions zoning and public facilities designations (including for parks). On average, open space, industrial and single-family residential designations each comprise 2 percent or less of the land area in urban centers. Figure 3.4–6 shows the average distribution of land use designations for urban centers.

Figure 3.4–6 Urban centers—land use designations

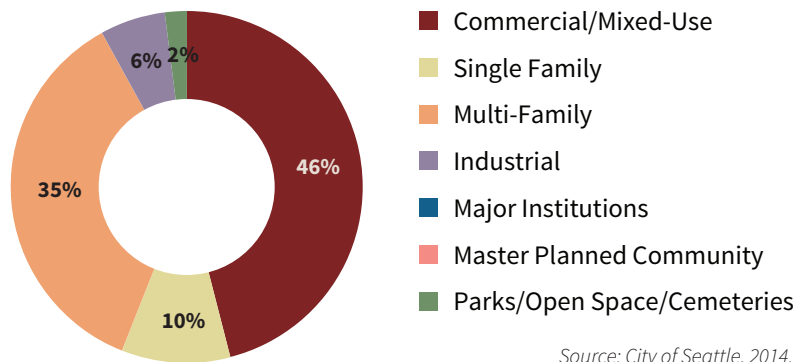
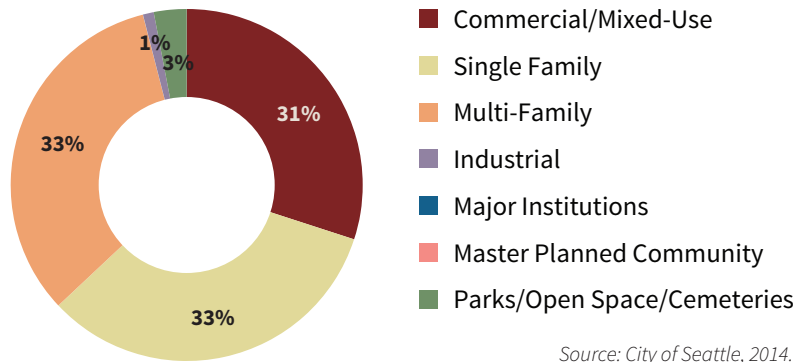


Source: City of Seattle, 2014.

Urban Villages

Hub Urban Villages. The FLUM’s designations within the six hub urban villages result in a zoning composition that is on average 46 percent in commercial mixed use zones and 35 percent in multi-family residential zones. However, there is considerable variation. For example, commercial and mixed use zoning ranges from 30 percent of land area in Ballard to 70 percent of land area in Bitter Lake. Conversely, multi-family zoning ranges from 17 percent of land in Bitter Lake to 58 percent in Ballard. The Ballard and Fremont hub urban villages contain no single family residential zoning, which ranges up to about 24 percent of land area in the West Seattle Junction hub village. Figure 3.4–7 shows the average distribution of land use designations for hub urban villages.

Residential Urban Villages. On average, residential urban villages are designated and zoned with a balanced mix of commercial/mixed use (31 percent), multi-family residential (33 percent) and single family residential (33 percent) zones. As with hub urban villages, land use designations and zoning vary between individual residential urban villages. Commercial/mixed use zoning within residential urban villages ranges from 10 percent in South Park up to 88 percent in Greenwood-Phinney Ridge. Multi-family residential zoning ranges from about 9 percent in South Park to 63 percent in Green Lake. Single family residential zoning ranges from 1 percent in Greenwood-Phinney Ridge to 62 percent in Crown Hill. Figure 3.4–8 shows the average distribution of land use designations for residential urban villages.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility**Figure 3.4-7** Hub urban villages—land use designations**Figure 3.4-8** Residential urban villages—land use designations**MANUFACTURING/INDUSTRIAL CENTERS**

MICs are regionally-designated centers that drive economic growth for entire Puget Sound region. While the MICs are recognized by PSRC, they are designated by local jurisdictions that also enact future land use designations and zoning for these areas to facilitate industrial-type employment development, while discouraging uses incompatible with the industrial purpose, such as residential or large commercial uses. Both the Greater Duwamish and Ballard-Interbay-Northend MICs are zoned almost entirely for industrial uses, with some small areas zoned for industrial-commercial uses.

Height, Bulk, and Scale

As described previously, development in the City of Seattle is guided by Future Land Use Map designations and implemented by zoning and development regulations. Development regulations govern what uses are permitted, as well as the physical form (such as heights and setbacks) of development, which influences urban character. This section describes existing regulations regarding the height, bulk and scale of urban development, as well as the design review process and policies and regulations regarding protection of significant views.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

CITY OF SEATTLE

The height, bulk, scale and character of development vary considerably across Seattle. Seattle’s zoning regulations include limits on building height, as well as other characteristics, including density, floor area ratio (FAR), minimum setbacks and maximum lot coverage. All of these qualities contribute to the overall intensity of development at any given location. Building height and FAR limits are two of the most important code elements that directly influence how intense a development feels in a given location. FAR is the ratio of a building’s floor area to the size of the lot where it is located. For most zoning districts, the City of Seattle has established both a maximum allowed height and a maximum allowed FAR. The relationship between building height and FAR can be viewed as a shorthand for assessing the “bulkiness” of building. For example, a tall building with a low FAR will take up a smaller proportion of its building site than a relatively short building with a higher FAR (see Figure 3.4–9).

Figure 3.4–9 Zoning envelopes and floor area ratios

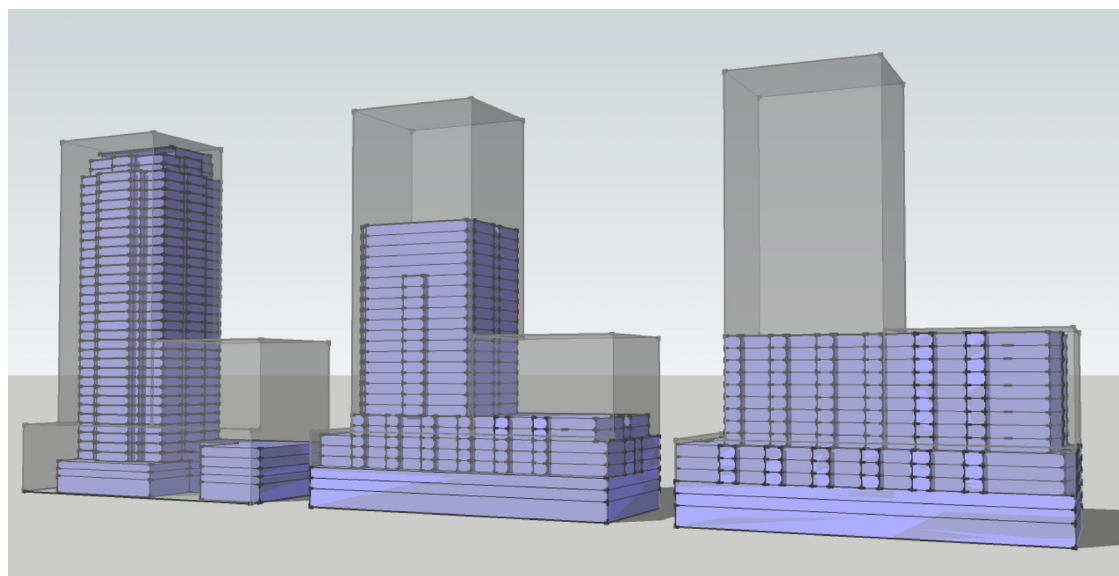
Gray: hypothetical “zoning envelopes” established by setbacks, height limits, tower floorplate limits, minimum tower separation and other development standards.

Blue: possible building configurations within the allowed zoning envelope, limited by a floor area ratio (FAR) of 12. All three buildings have the same amount of floor area but they configure the space differently.

A floor plate is the horizontal plane of the floor of a building, measured to the inside surface of exterior walls.

Floor area ratio is the ratio of the total square feet of a building to the total square feet of the property on which it is located.

$$\frac{\text{Building floor area}}{\text{Lot size}} = \text{Floor Area Ratio}$$

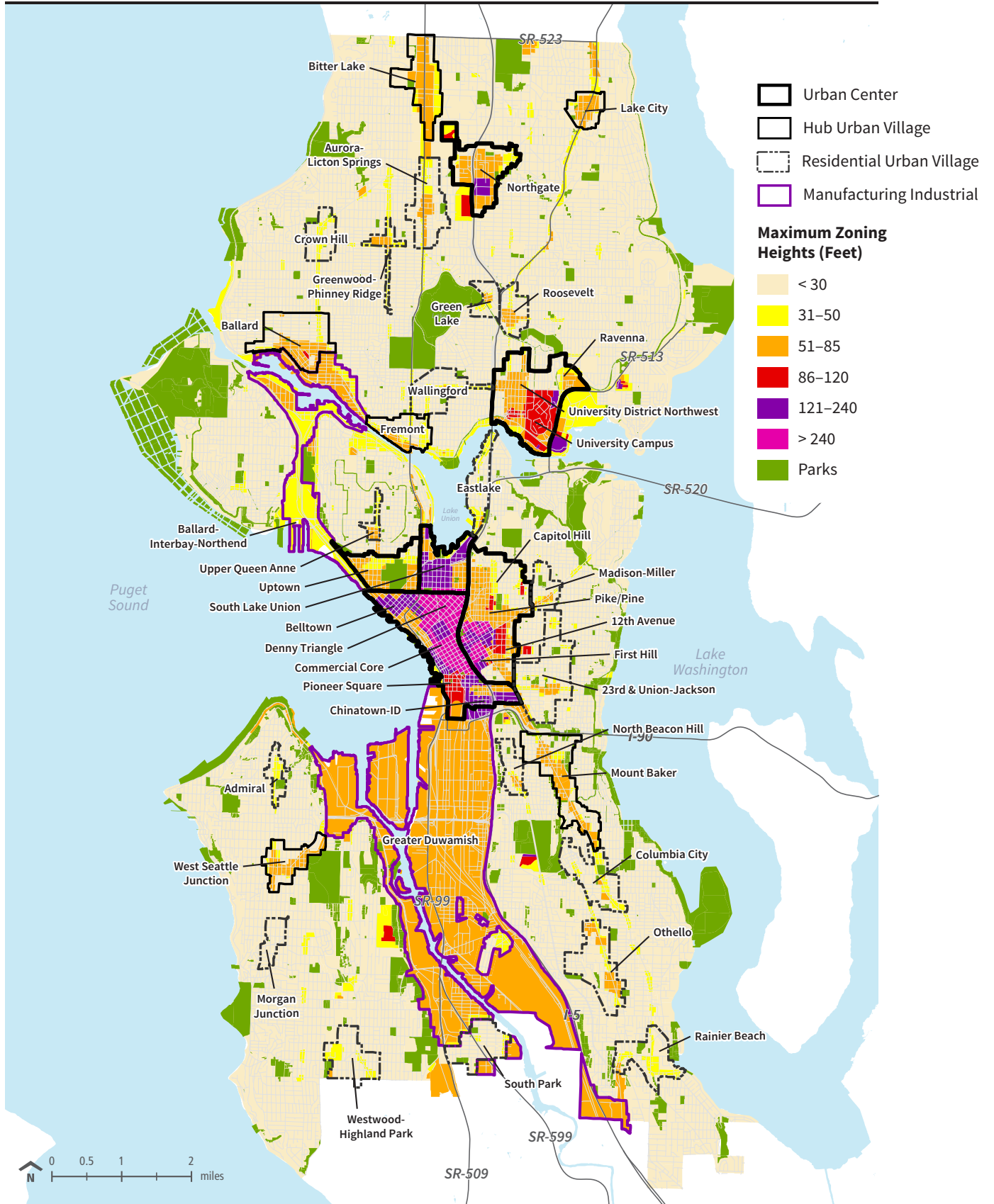


Source: City of Seattle, 2013.

Figure 3.4–10 maps the maximum allowed height across Seattle, providing a general representation of where higher development intensities are allowed under current development regulations. As shown in the figure, most of Seattle is limited to relatively low heights (30–40 feet). Greater allowed heights are generally concentrated in urban centers and urban villages, as described in the following sections.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Figure 3.4-10 Citywide allowed height



Source: City of Seattle, 2014; BERK, 2014.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

URBAN CENTERS, VILLAGES AND MANUFACTURING/INDUSTRIAL CENTERS

Urban Centers

As shown on Figure 3.4–10, Downtown and South Lake Union have greater allowances for building height than the other four urban centers. Allowed heights in Downtown can reach up to 400 feet in north Downtown (through the use of incentive zoning) and is unlimited in the commercial core, and allowed FAR—while generally under 3.0 in the Belltown area and along portions of the waterfront—can go as high as 20.0 in the commercial core. Portions of Pioneer Square, while restricted to comparatively low heights, actually have no limit on FAR. In South Lake Union, maximum heights range from 55–up to 400 feet, and maximum FAR limits range up to 7.

The First/Capitol Hill, University District, Northgate and Uptown urban centers are less intensely zoned. Maximum heights are predominantly 125 feet or lower, and the maximum allowed FAR ranges from 3.0-6.0. The high-rise multifamily zone in First/Capitol Hill allows heights up to 300 feet. The City is currently considering a proposal to increase the allowable height and FAR in a portion of the University District Urban Center.

Urban Villages

Many urban villages, especially residential urban villages, are mostly residential in character, organized around a typically compact commercial/mixed-use node or corridor. As shown on Figure 3.4–10, many urban villages have similar height allowances inside their boundaries as the areas immediately surrounding them. However, there are exceptions—including the Bitter Lake, Lake City and Greenwood-Phinney Ridge urban villages—where there is a higher degree of commercial, mixed-use and multifamily residential development, and where most of their area is zoned for a maximum FAR of 3.0 or greater.

Manufacturing/Industrial Centers

Seattle’s two MICs are almost entirely industrial in nature, encompassing the majority of the city’s industrial, shipping and manufacturing land uses. Zoning in the MICs generally allows for development heights in the range of 45–85 feet with high levels of allowed lot coverage, though structure height limits apply primarily to structures containing commercial uses. This provides for development of moderate height, high lot coverage and high intensity land uses.

Viewsheds

Seattle’s Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Code establish policies and regulations for the protection of public views of important landmarks and natural features, as well as views from specific designated viewpoints within the city and scenic qualities along mapped scenic routes. The following sections provide an overview of relevant policies and regulations.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES

The Land Use Element of the current Comprehensive Plan establishes the importance of public view preservation:

Policy LU48 *Seek to preserve views through:*

- *Land use regulations that address view impacts with height, bulk, scale, view corridor and design review provisions;*
- *Zoning policy that considers the effect of zone designations on views, with special emphasis on protection of views related to shoreline areas; and*
- *Application of adopted environmental policy to protect public views, including views of mountains, major bodies of water, designated landmarks and the Downtown skyline, in review of development projects.*

The Land Use Element also encourages the protection of views through policies related to building height limits, minimization of building bulk and the creation of access to views and waterways.

The Comprehensive Plan lists the following as important landmarks for public views:

- Downtown skyline
- Major bodies of water
- Shoreline areas
- Elliott Bay
- West Seattle
- Mount Rainier
- Olympic Mountains
- Space Needle
- Puget Sound
- Lake Washington
- Lake Union
- Portage Bay

SEATTLE MUNICIPAL CODE

The Seattle Municipal Code (25.05.675.P) establishes environmental review policies for public view protection, specifically the following:

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... [a lengthy list of] specified viewpoints, parks, scenic routes, and view corridors....

In Downtown, there are also view corridors to be protected through upper-level building setbacks in future development along the following streets (SMC 23.49.024):

- Broad, Clay, Vine, Wall, Battery and Bell Streets west of First Avenue; and
- University, Seneca, Spring, Madison and Marion Streets west of Third Avenue.

While the Comprehensive Plan and the municipal code establish the importance of view corridors and view preservation, the precise requirements for individual development proj-

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

ects are not strictly defined in the development regulations, and protection of public views is deferred to consideration during project reviews and the design review process.

3.4.2 Impacts

Impacts Common to All Alternatives

LAND USE PATTERNS

Under all alternatives, Seattle would likely continue to experience housing and employment growth over the long term, consistent with the planning growth estimates described in Chapter 2, resulting in additional development activity. The primary differences between the alternatives lie in the distribution and intensity of growth across the city and the land use patterns that are projected to result, influenced in part by the implementation of comprehensive plan policies, related regulations and actions and by decisions made by individual property owners and developers.

In general, all alternatives would focus the majority of future growth into urban centers and urban villages, which are characterized by higher densities and a more diverse mix of uses than other areas of the city. By focusing most future growth into urban centers and villages, all alternatives would reinforce the existing citywide range and distribution of land use patterns, though the precise mix of uses and the locations of development would vary by alternative. What this means is that Seattle's land use patterns, broadly defined, would continue to emphasize:

- Growth leading to a denser and more continuous pattern of intensive land uses in its geographic center (Downtown plus the surrounding neighborhood districts including Uptown, South Lake Union, Capitol Hill and First Hill);
- Growth in two north Seattle urban centers (University District and Northgate);
- Business and port-related activity and employment growth within two central Port and industrial-use centers (Greater Duwamish and Ballard-Interbay-Northend MIC); and
- Growth in a wide range of other mixed-use urban villages such as Ballard, Columbia City and West Seattle Junction distributed through the various sectors of the city, including urban villages located along major transportation corridors (such as Aurora Avenue, Lake City Way, MLK Jr. Way, Rainier Avenue and California Avenue) that radiate through the various geographic sectors and industrial-use centers.

Most other areas of the city outside of the urban centers and villages would continue to be comprised of low-density predominantly single-family residential uses plus a wide range of parks and vegetated spaces, all shaped by hilly topography and bounded by the shorelines of multiple water bodies. Figure 3.4–11 and Figure 3.4–12 illustrate the increases in housing and employment density projected to occur in urban centers and villages under each alternative.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility**LAND USE COMPATIBILITY**

Future growth within the planning horizon under all alternatives is likely to increase the frequency of different land use types locating close to one another, and similarly likely to increase the frequency of land use patterns that contain mixes of land uses with differing levels of intensity, both within urban centers and villages and, to a lesser extent, in other areas of the city. Mixing uses in urban centers and villages is a goal of the current Plan because having a variety of uses, including housing, near one another makes it possible for people to conduct more of their daily business without driving; however, some adjacencies could potentially cause adverse compatibility impacts on less intense uses. Over time, infill development and redevelopment would occur in urban centers and villages to accommodate increased growth, gradually increasing the intensity of development in portions of the centers and villages that are not currently developed to their full capacity.

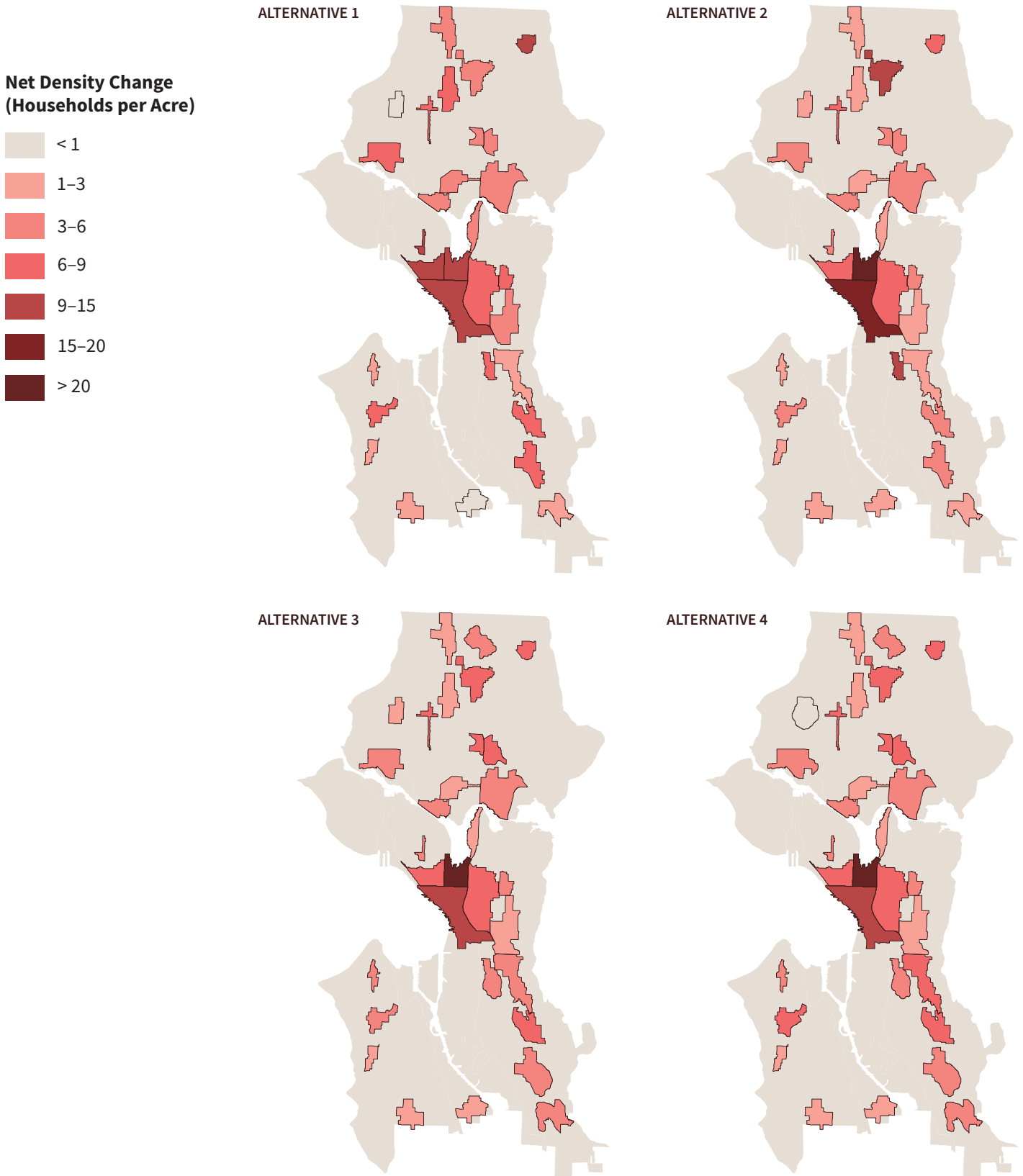
In addition, as mixed-use growth occurs in urban centers and villages, new uses may be introduced to areas originally developed under single-use zoning. This could occur in places where zoning has already changed since the original construction, or could potentially change under any alternative if rezones to mixed-use zones occur in the future. If such transitions toward increased mixing of uses occur, there is a greater likelihood that localized adverse spillover effects could occur, such as residential or commercial activities that might lead to increased noise. These compatibility challenges would not be an uncommon or new phenomenon within Seattle's urbanized context, but they would represent a potential adverse land use impact of future growth under any alternative. This potential adverse impact would be avoided to a degree by continuing to implement land use policies and zoning patterns that consider the potential for land use incompatibilities and avoid them through use of transitions in intensity, use restrictions and/or avoiding proximity of certain kinds of zones. As well, complaint-based enforcement of the City's applicable regulations pertaining to noise, nuisance and public safety would continue to provide protection against some of these potential impacts.

Areas outside urban centers and villages would receive a minority share of future growth under all alternatives, resulting in a limited potential for adversely-impacting changes in land use and development intensity or mix in these areas under any alternatives.

With respect to future employment growth in MICs, there is only a minor potential that land uses and activities associated with such growth would generate adverse impacts upon residential uses. Most edges of port facilities and industrial areas are well-buffered by distance, greenbelts, natural slopes, and other factors that limit instances where there are residential neighborhoods. There are, however, a few exceptions, such as in the Ballard-Interbay-Northend MIC edges near Ballard, or at the east edge of the Admiral neighborhood at Harbor Ave SW near Harbor Island. The conclusion of minor impact potential above must factor in the City's policy guidance that emphasizes the importance of the MICs as employment centers that are significant economic drivers for Seattle and the region. This acknowledges a general preference for industrial and industrial-commercial uses in such areas that tends

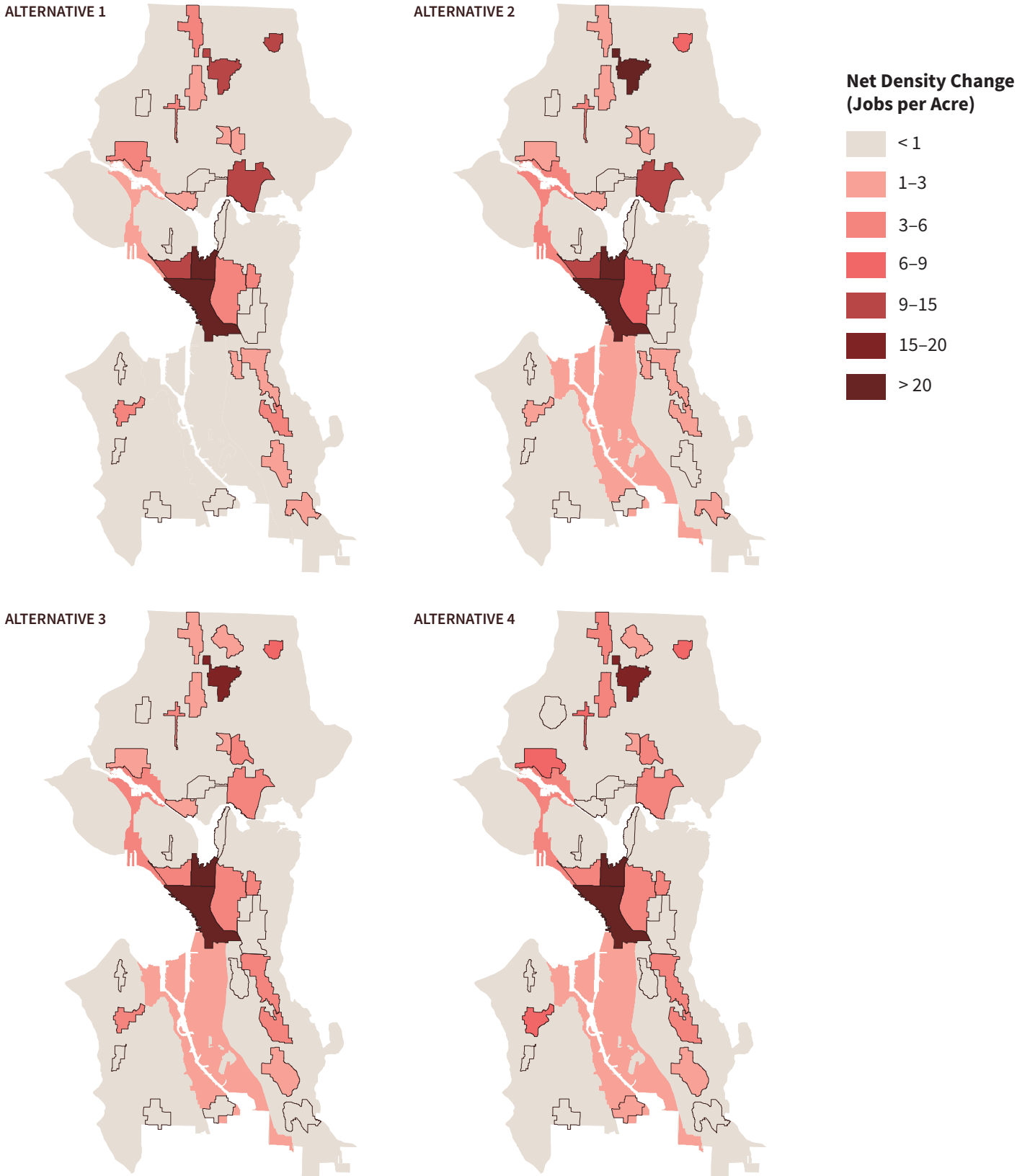
3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Figure 3.4-11 Projected increase in housing density in urban centers and villages under each alternative



3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Figure 3.4-12 Projected increase in employment density in urban centers and villages under each alternative



Source: City of Seattle, 2014; BERK, 2014.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

to outweigh most land use compatibility concerns potentially present in immediate edge areas near MICs, such as residential uses' potential sensitivities to impacts like excess noise, odor and light/glare.

HEIGHT, BULK AND SCALE

The intent of Seattle's SEPA policies for height, bulk and scale is to provide for smooth transitions between areas of different use type, which helps to maintain the overall character of neighborhoods and avoid unusually abrupt transitions between buildings of different scales. Such conditions can occur due to many factors, which can include the effects of local topography in a given development site vicinity. For example, this might occur if a residence is located to the rear of a more intensively zoned property that sits higher on sloping topography. Abrupt transitions might also occur temporarily, due to the incremental nature of the development process, in which not all properties take advantage of their full zoning potential at the same time.

Growth under all alternatives would result in increased residential and non-residential density and overall development intensity, primarily in the designated urban centers and urban villages, though the precise levels and locations would vary by alternative. The greatest potential for increased height, bulk and scale in future development would be in urban centers and villages, which contain the most intensive zoned areas on average, and are projected to receive the majority of growth under all alternatives.

The future construction of buildings would in many cases add building bulk (e.g., physical mass and presence) as properties are redeveloped, that would exceed the size of buildings present today. Such construction also would likely expand the geographic extent of buildings and use patterns with increased building scale (e.g., differences in height and overall proportions) compared to typical existing building sizes within urban villages and centers as those areas experience infill development. This conclusion is based on an existing typical condition in many local districts where buildings are low-scaled and relatively few approach the maximum zoned height limit. Such increases in building bulk and scale could also occur on properties near urban village or urban center boundaries, where it is more likely that lower-intensity zones and uses (such as single-family homes) could be present. As an "impact common to all alternatives," the future addition of building bulk within neighborhoods and a probable increase in average building scale represent adverse land use impacts. Such impacts would be moderated to a degree by continuing to implement land use policies and zoning patterns that encourage transitions between zones as an important principle in setting limits on land use development patterns. See the discussion of alternative-specific impacts below.

VIEWS

Under all alternatives, additional future development would result in localized increases in building height and development intensity over existing conditions. As development height

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

and bulk increase, there would be an increased potential for interference with the defined and protected view corridors and scenic routes, as well as private views in these areas. Private views are not protected to the extent that public view corridors are, though view conditions on specific development sites are considered as part of the City's design review process. The greatest potential for increased effects on such view corridors and scenic routes due to future development would be in urban centers and villages, which contain the most intensive zoned areas and are projected to receive the majority of growth under all alternatives. However, it is also noted that there is only a moderate degree of overlap between the mapped scenic routes and urban centers and villages, most notably in places such as Uptown, South Lake Union, Downtown and Capitol Hill. See the alternative-specific discussions below.

SEPA INFILL EXEMPTION PROVISIONS (RCW 43.21C.229)—FUTURE POSSIBLE ACTION

The City's current Code exempts projects below certain sizes from review under the provisions the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). SEPA allows jurisdictions to set higher than standard exemption levels under certain conditions including the preparation of an environmental impact statement to analyze the impacts of the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan. The impact analyses in this EIS help Seattle fulfill that requirement to enable setting categorical exemptions using the "infill development" provisions in RCW 43.21C.229. This could define the sizes of development (residential and non-residential uses) above which SEPA review would be required, at levels higher than the maximum exemption limits that would otherwise apply per WAC 197-11-800(1)(c) and (d). Per RCW 43.21C.229, higher exemption limits are possible as long as development would not lead to exceeding levels of density or intensity of use called for in the comprehensive plan. As already previously defined in Seattle per Ordinances 122670 and 12939 (2008 and 2012, respectively), development review has occurred without a project-specific SEPA environmental review process required for projects in urban centers or urban villages containing up to 200 dwelling units and up to 30,000 square feet of non-residential space in mixed-use developments in certain urban centers and urban villages.¹ For the current proposal, the City anticipates that categorical exemption levels could be set as high as defined above, and that levels of density and intensity of use would be stated in the Comprehensive Plan. Such definitions of density and intensity of use could be defined in different ways, depending on other policy choices to be decided at a later date, and so the density/intensity limits are not precisely defined at this time. However, they would be stated in terms that would allow for ongoing monitoring of density/intensity outcomes in the urban centers and urban villages where applicable.

Development at those previously defined categorical exemption levels recognizes the ameliorating effects of the City's codes and programs in preventing or otherwise reducing the potential for adverse effects. These include but are not limited to the following kinds: Land

¹ As has been noted in Seattle Department of Planning and Development Director's Rule 3-2014, those exemptions also have been subject to downward adjustments as residential density levels in certain urban centers or urban villages have approached or exceeded levels related to growth targets for individual urban centers or urban villages in the Comprehensive Plan.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Use Code and zoning, design review program, environmental critical area rules, historic and cultural resource protections, use of incentive zoning (or similar tools) that address housing impacts and transportation concurrency and impact mitigation methods in SMC Chapter 23.52. Practically, this means that there is not likely to be a need for SEPA-based mitigation strategies to be identified because other City programs, rules and requirements will be sufficient to avoid significant adverse impacts occurring for development projects below the SEPA thresholds.

For any of the specific alternatives considered, this EIS analysis concludes that the use of SEPA infill exemption provisions at levels comparable to those previously defined in Ordinance 123939, accompanied by the application of the range of relevant City programs and codes, would likely encourage future growth and development patterns that would be consistent with the City's comprehensive plan. This conclusion is based on a reasonable assumption that defining higher SEPA categorical exemptions within growth areas such as urban centers would encourage future development to occur there in amounts and sizes that would contribute toward the fulfillment of preferred growth strategies for urban centers and urban villages. This also would be important at the citywide level because growth that supports the growth patterns defined in the Comprehensive Plan would help fulfill overall planning purposes and objectives relating to growth management, natural environmental protection, housing, land use and management and operation of major infrastructure such as transportation systems and utilities.

At the same time, the City's range of codes and programs would be likely to:

- Reasonably provide protections that would likely help avoid significant adverse environmental impacts from occurring, cumulatively, and for individual developments that would be below the categorical exemption levels; and
- Require SEPA environmental review for development at levels where such adverse impacts are reasonably interpreted as possible.

Alternative 1: Continue Current Trends (No Action)

LAND USE PATTERNS

Alternative 1 would continue the strategy of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan to encourage future growth primarily in urban centers and villages, with a projected growth distribution outcome that would be comparable to the outcome of growth trends over the last 20 years. This Alternative is projected to lead to approximately 77 percent of both future housing and job growth to urban centers and villages; the remaining 23 percent of growth would occur throughout the rest of the city. Compared to the other alternatives, Alternative 1 is projected to lead to the greatest amount of housing and job growth in areas outside urban centers or villages. This would tend to spread the potential disruptions of growth and change across more areas, likely closer to more residents, but typically with a lower severity of change due to what is permissible to build in most areas outside urban centers and villages.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

To the extent that a wider-spread pattern of growth and change occurs, housing and job growth outside the centers and villages would take a different form than growth occurring in urban centers and villages, in keeping with zoning regulations and prevailing development patterns. Housing development, for example, would likely occur at lower densities and could consist of more single-family homes or lower-density multifamily forms than the probable higher-density pattern of multifamily and mixed-use housing that is likely to occur in urban centers and villages.

As the No Action Alternative, Alternative 1 represents the least amount of difference from past growth patterns in its projected future growth and likely change in land use patterns, compared to the other EIS alternatives. It represents a kind of “future baseline” condition where growth in Seattle would be distributed across the city in generally the same proportions the city has seen over the past 20 years.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Growth under Alternative 1 would be consistent with recent urban development trends in Seattle. Impacts to land use compatibility under Alternative 1, the No Action Alternative, would be similar to those described under Impacts Common to All Alternatives. This means there is the potential for mixing of new and existing uses to generate adverse localized incompatibilities, either within urban centers and urban villages, or at their periphery, where more intense development inside a center or village could occur adjacent to low-intensity uses outside the center or village. However, the City’s adopted development regulations contain provisions meant to reduce impacts associated with future land use adjacencies and transitions. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated with respect to land use compatibility under Alternative 1 (No Action).

HEIGHT, BULK AND SCALE

Impacts to height, bulk and scale under Alternative 1 would be similar to those described under Impacts Common to All Alternatives. As growth is directed into existing urban centers and villages, a moderate amount of additional height and bulk would result from future development in these commercial and mixed-use nodes. The overall height, bulk and scale implications from such future development would likely be consistent with that experienced during growth over the last twenty years, because Alternative 1 does not anticipate or require changing land use codes, zones or development standards. The City’s existing development regulations and design review process are anticipated to be sufficient to reduce impacts to height, bulk and scale to less than significant levels.

VIEWS

Impacts to views under Alternative 1 would be similar to those described under Impacts Common to All Alternatives. As future development creates additional building height and bulk in urban centers and villages, there is a minor but recognized potential for localized adverse disruption of protected views. This is evaluated as minor because most, although

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

not all, SEPA-protected public viewpoints are located away from urban centers and urban villages, capturing scenic views at edges of hillsides, parks and schools. In a slightly different manner, views from defined scenic routes are less generalizable, but are often views down corridors to distant features (such as Mount Rainier or the Seattle skyline) and/or are episodic in nature, meaning only certain places along the routes have the best scenic qualities that might be adversely affected by future development. The precise nature and degree of potential future view disruptions along scenic routes would depend upon specific locational view qualities and individual project designs. As applicable, individual project-level review would include detailed evaluation and opportunities to define mitigation during future land use permit application and design review processes.

Alternative 2: Guide Growth to Urban Centers

LAND USE PATTERNS

As described in Chapter 2, Alternative 2 focuses the majority of future growth in urban centers, most notably in Downtown, First/Capitol Hill and South Lake Union. In total, Alternative 2 would direct 87 percent of future housing and 93 percent of future employment to existing urban centers, villages or MICs, resulting in the most concentrated development pattern of the four alternatives. The majority of this development would be directed to urban centers, which are allocated 66 percent of future housing and 72 percent of future employment. This represents the largest proportion of future growth directed toward urban centers of any alternative. Growth in urban centers is likely to follow existing development patterns, resulting in the construction of more mid-rise and high-rise commercial and mixed-use buildings in urban centers. The overall effect on the citywide land use pattern would be an intensification of both employment and residential uses in Downtown and the immediately adjacent areas, as well more intense growth expected in Northgate and the University District urban centers, with modest growth in urban villages.

As a result of this concentrated development pattern, Alternative 2 would have lesser potential for effects on land use patterns outside urban centers or villages. Some growth would continue to occur in single-family neighborhoods and local commercial nodes, but this growth would be minor compared with what is projected for the urban centers and villages.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Under Alternative 2, the majority of future development would occur in existing urban centers, primarily in Downtown, First/Capitol Hill and South Lake Union. Development in these areas would intensify and become denser. Due to the already developed and relatively dense land use patterns of Downtown and these other urban centers, future development would most likely be relatively compatible with existing forms and uses. The South Lake Union Urban Center and the urban center villages of Capitol Hill, Pike/Pine and First Hill have experienced an increased pace and degree of redevelopment over the past 10 years in keeping with zoned development capabilities, and new infill development associated with

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

this Alternative going forward would likely be similar in use and scale to recent development trends. This comparability in use patterns may limit the potential for adverse land use incompatibilities and abrupt transitions in form, although such impacts could be possible at peripheral edges next to lower-density zones.

The Northgate and University District urban centers are also likely to see a higher rate and more intense type of infill development within their boundaries under this alternative. Because these centers still contain areas of varying scale use patterns, including relatively low-intensity development, there would be increased potential for adverse compatibility impacts if developments of differing use and character to occur in close proximity to one another.

As described under Land Use Patterns, Alternative 2 is the alternative with the smallest portions of housing and job growth allocated to urban villages. As a result, Alternative 2 has a relatively smaller potential for instances of adverse incompatible uses or scale differences due to future development in urban villages. However, there would still be some potential for adverse compatibility impacts to arise, such as at the periphery of urban villages where there can be differences in scale of development permitted by existing zoning.

HEIGHT, BULK AND SCALE

Under Alternative 2, additional growth in urban centers would result in increased average building height and bulk. In urban centers, this is likely to take the form of mid- and high-rise buildings, both for housing and employment uses. As shown on Figure 3.4–10, current zoning in urban centers allows the greatest building heights and FARs, particularly Downtown and South Lake Union, which would receive the greatest share of growth under Alternative 2. As such, additional moderate-scale or higher-scaled development in these areas would tend to be consistent with established development and regulatory patterns, which would help limit and diminish the adverse effects of increased height and bulk due to future development.

As similarly described in the discussion of Land Use Compatibility above, increased height and bulk through future development in urban centers could potentially impact surrounding areas by creating more abrupt transitions between taller, more intense development within centers and less intense development outside them. However, greater building size and intensity in urban centers is an established feature of the city's land use pattern. The urban centers to which the most growth has been allocated (Downtown, First/Capitol Hill and South Lake Union) are bordered only relatively rarely by low-density development. As with land use incompatibilities, the City could review applicable development regulations and zoning requirements for peripheral portions of urban centers to consider methods of accomplishing more gradual transitions in building height and bulk and thereby further reduce the potential for adverse effects on surrounding neighborhoods.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

EFFECTS OF OTHER POLICY CHANGES

Alternative 2 would also remove two policies (LU59 and LU60) from the Comprehensive Plan that establish very detailed criteria for when it is appropriate to upzone land included in a single-family land use designation. The Land Use Code contains regulations that are very similar to these policies. Removal of these policies from the Comprehensive Plan does not remove any of the procedures or steps required to change designated zoning of a given area, especially if the code provisions remain. However, by removing approval criteria, it would provide more flexibility for zoning in single-family areas and multifamily areas nearby, potentially allowing a greater variety of residential uses in and near single-family areas. While this could lead to a small increase in conversion of uses and location of differing development intensities in close proximity, as described in the previous sections, the practical effects of this change are anticipated to be minor. Proponents of future upzones would be expected to show compatibility with the comprehensive plan and Land Use Code requirements for any given area. Also, the revised comprehensive plan would include policies to reinforce the need for gradual transitions, so drastic changes in use or intensity are not likely to occur as a result of this policy change.

VIEWS

Impacts to views under Alternative 2 would be similar to those described under Impacts Common to All Alternatives. As future development adds more tall buildings in urban centers, there is a minor but recognized potential for localized adverse disruption of protected views. Because the greatest share of development would occur in urban centers under Alternative 2, the greatest potential for disruption of views would occur in these areas. The precise nature and degree of potential future view disruptions along scenic routes or from particular SEPA-protected public viewpoints would depend upon the specific locational qualities and designs of individual projects. As applicable, individual project-level review would include detailed evaluation and opportunities to define mitigation during future land use permit application and design review processes.

Alternative 3: Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Light Rail

LAND USE PATTERNS

As described in Chapter 2, Alternative 3 would focus future growth in urban centers and also in urban villages containing current and planned light rail stations. This alternative would also include expansions to several urban villages' boundaries to encompass certain areas that are within an approximate 10 minute walking distance from the transportation intensive light rail nodes: Green Lake, Roosevelt, North Beacon Hill, Columbia City, Othello and Rainier Beach. Overall, Alternative 3 would distribute growth to more locations than alternatives 1 or 2, creating a citywide land use pattern focused on relatively small residential and commercial/mixed-use nodes with access to light rail. Alternative 3 places less emphasis on urban centers than alternatives 1 or 2, directing a larger share of employment to

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

residential urban villages and the Greater Duwamish and Ballard-Interbay-Northend MICs, as well as areas outside centers or villages. This focus on distributed nodes is more likely to result in construction of a mix of low and mid-rise development types, with more intense development concentrated near light rail station areas.

In addition, Alternative 3 would create a new urban village around the NE 130th Street transit station and amend the boundaries of the of the Mount Baker and 23rd & Union-Jackson urban villages to focus future development on the area surrounding the planned I-90 East-link light rail station. The expanded urban village areas and the new NE 130th Street urban village are shown on Figure 2-12 and Figure 2-13. These expansion areas consist primarily of single-family residential areas. Over time, these areas would gradually be converted to denser multifamily residential use patterns.

Under Alternative 3, approximately 88 percent of new residential growth would be anticipated to occur within urban villages, divided between 49 percent in urban centers, 26 percent in hub urban villages and 12 percent in residential urban villages. This is a residential growth distribution more heavily weighted toward hub and residential villages than under alternatives 1 or 2. In addition, only 51 percent of future job growth would be directed to urban centers under Alternative 3—the lowest of any alternatives. Hub and residential urban villages would receive 6 percent and 9 percent of citywide employment growth, respectively. This represents more combined urban village job growth than either Alternative 1 or Alternative 2, but less than what would be allocated under Alternative 4. The Greater Duwamish and Ballard-Interbay-Northend MICs are projected to receive 13 percent of anticipated job growth.

Overall, Alternative 3 would distribute growth to more locations than alternatives 1 or 2, contributing more than the other alternatives to a growth of a citywide land use pattern of residential and commercial/mixed-use nodes with access to light rail. This focus on distributed nodes is likely to result in construction of more low-to moderately scaled building types, with the highest density of development likely to be concentrated near light rail station areas.

Under Alternative 3, areas outside urban centers and villages would receive a minority share of future household growth at 12 percent—nearly the same as Alternative 2 and twice the amount of Alternative 4. Areas outside urban centers and villages would be anticipated to receive 22 percent of expected employment growth, nearly the same as the No Action alternative and the highest among the action alternatives. As a result, land use patterns in areas outside urban villages would be expected to be similar to development trends experienced through the last twenty years: predominantly residential uses with scattered small-scale office or commercial development.

The possible creation of a new residential urban village at NE 130th Street, if it occurs and is followed by rezones, would likely result in gradual conversion of existing single-family residential and limited low-intensity commercial uses to higher-intensity multifamily or mixed uses over time. The proposed village area contains two existing limited nodes of commer-

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

cial and multifamily development at N 135th Street/Roosevelt Way N and N 125th Street/Roosevelt Way NE.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Under Alternative 3, future housing and job growth would be focused in urban villages and centers where existing or planned light rail stations are located. This would have the potential to result in localized use compatibility issues as existing, lower intensity uses in these areas transition to higher-density development forms. Specifically, those areas closest to existing and planned light rail station would experience the most rapid and extensive levels of infill redevelopment. However, many of these urban village cores already contain a mix of uses at various intensities. In contrast, in the areas where the urban villages would be expanded, or where new urban villages would be created, the predominantly single-family residential character would make them more sensitive to changes in development intensity and scale. For example, such areas could experience more occurrences of slightly sharper transitions in urban form if new, more intensive forms, such as multi-family apartments, are built alongside or across the street from existing single family homes. Where new villages are created, the effect could be adversely greater if denser commercial and mixed uses develop over time near the planned light rail stations.

Although Alternative 3 more directly impacts residential urban villages, adverse land use compatibility impacts to a lesser degree could also arise in those urban centers and urban center villages containing existing or planned light rail stations, including Chinatown/ID, Pioneer Square, Capitol Hill, Northgate and the University District Northwest. The lesser degree of potential impact is concluded based on the comparative density and intensity of use that already exists in most of those areas.

HEIGHT, BULK AND SCALE

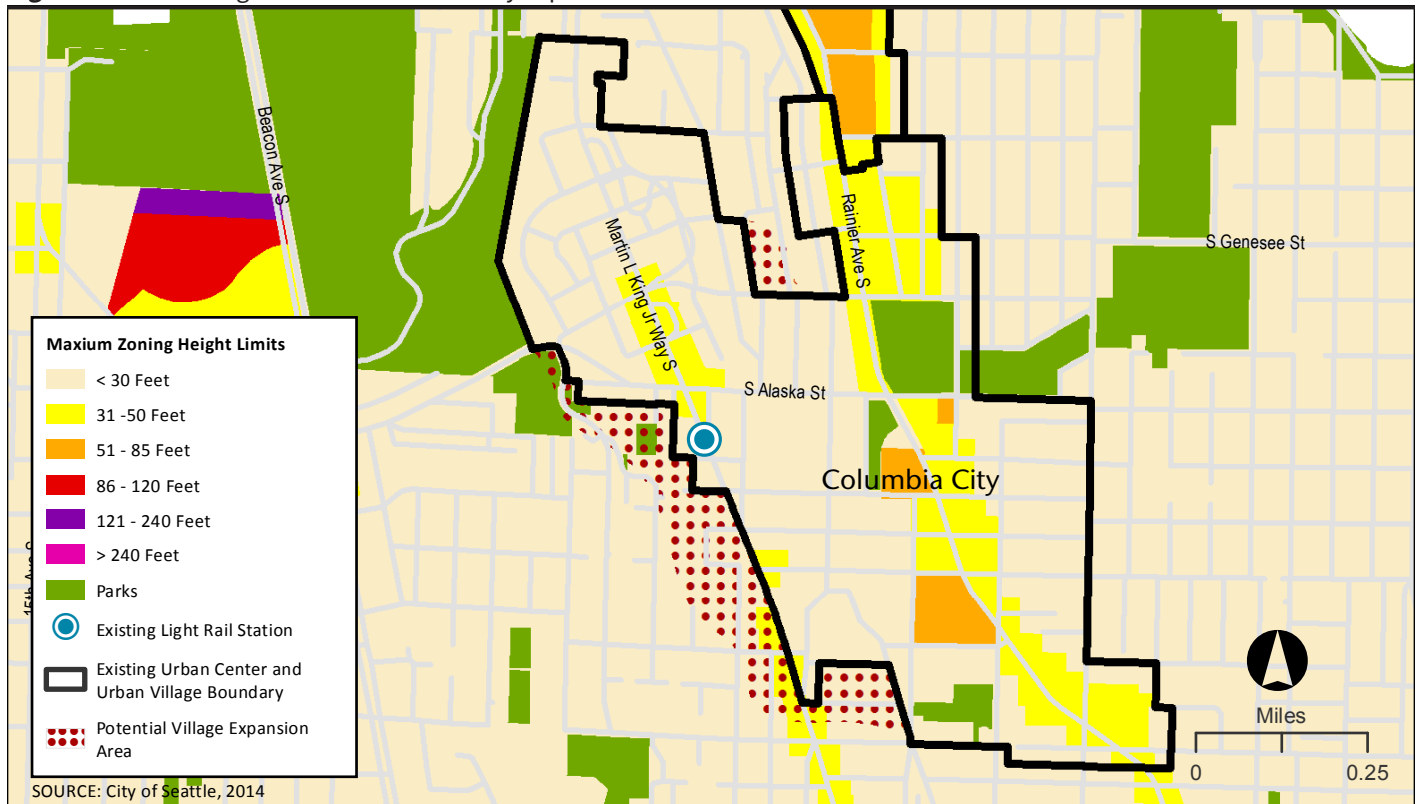
As described under Impacts Common to All Alternatives, additional growth in urban centers and villages would result in increased building bulk, height and scale. Alternative 3 would additionally include expansions to several urban villages to accommodate growth focused along light rail corridors, as well as the creation of a new urban village surrounding the proposed NE 130th Street light rail station. Figure 3.4–13 through Figure 3.4–19 illustrate the current maximum allowed height in each of the potential urban village expansion areas. As these figures show, the areas to be added to the existing urban villages are characterized by relatively low building heights. Over time, overall building height and bulk in these areas would likely increase with additional development, and localized conflicts could occur as the areas transition to a more intense development pattern with development expected to be the densest near light rail stations.

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

EFFECTS OF OTHER POLICY CHANGES

Alternative 3 would also remove two policies (LU59 and LU60) from the Comprehensive Plan that establish detailed criteria for when it is appropriate to upzone land included in a single-family land use designation. The Land Use Code contains regulations that are very similar to these policies. Removal of these policies from the Comprehensive Plan does not remove any of the procedures or steps required to change designated zoning of a given area, especially if the code provisions remain. However, by removing approval criteria, it would provide more flexibility for future possible zoning choices in single-family areas and multifamily areas nearby, potentially allowing a greater variety of residential uses in and near single-family areas. While this could lead to an increase in the conversion of uses and the location of differing development intensities in close proximity, the actual effects of this change upon the environment are anticipated to be minor. Future potential upzone analyses would be expected to show compatibility with comprehensive plan and Land Use Code guidance. Also, the revised comprehensive plan would include policies to reinforce the need for gradual transitions in building scale and use, so drastic changes in use or intensity are not likely to occur as a result of this policy change.

Figure 3.4-13 Height limits—Columbia City expansion area



3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Figure 3.4-14 Height limits—North Beacon Hill expansion area

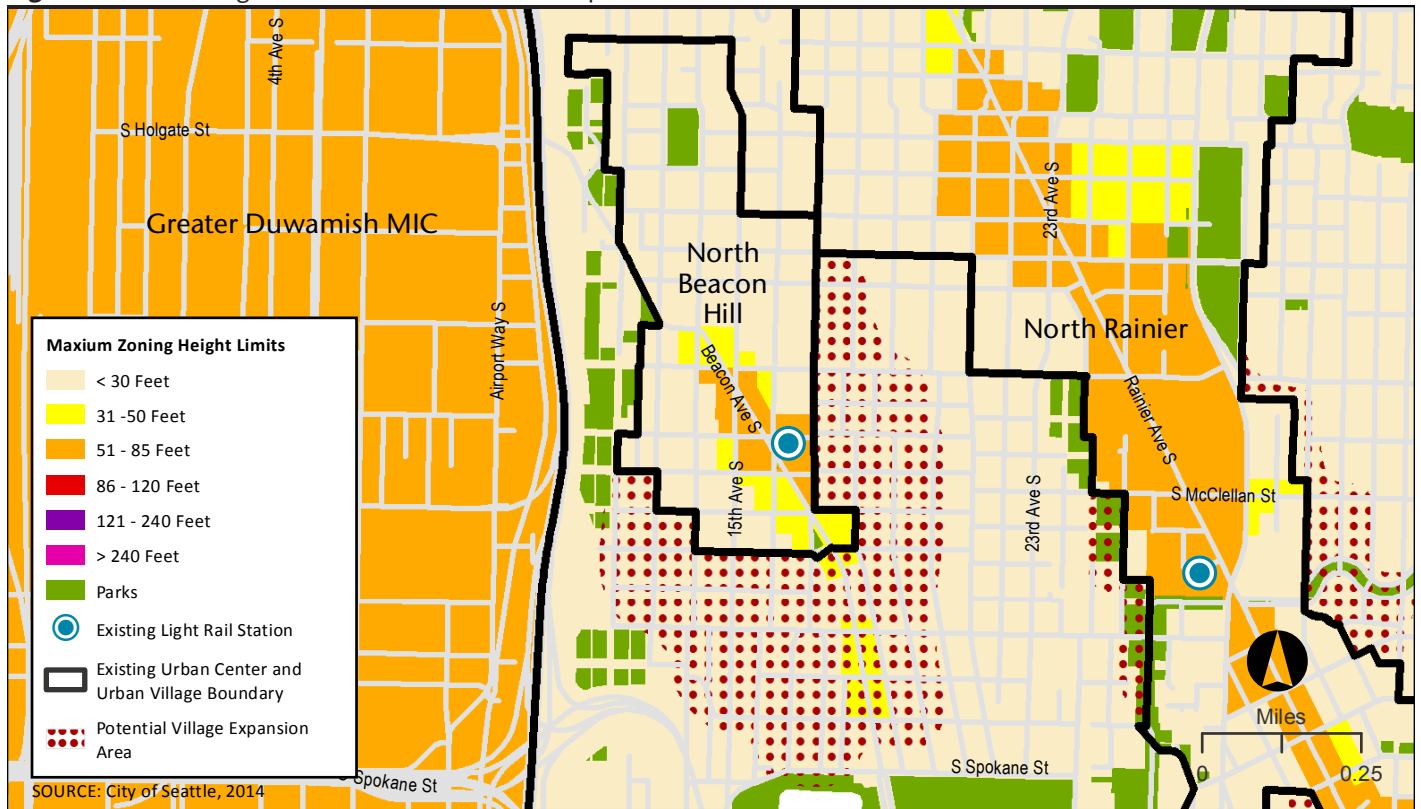
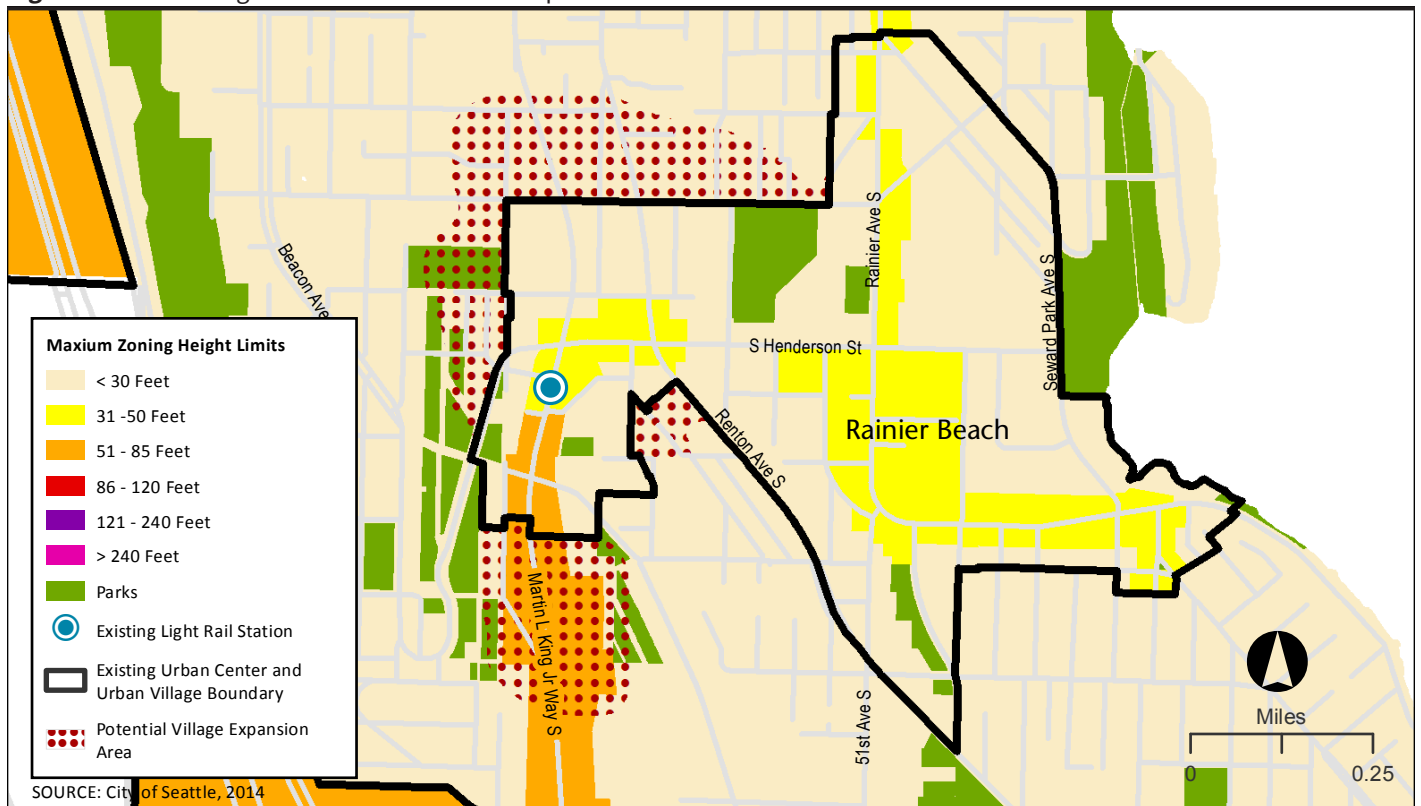


Figure 3.4-15 Height limits—Rainier Beach expansion area



3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Figure 3.4-16 Height limits—Roosevelt expansion area

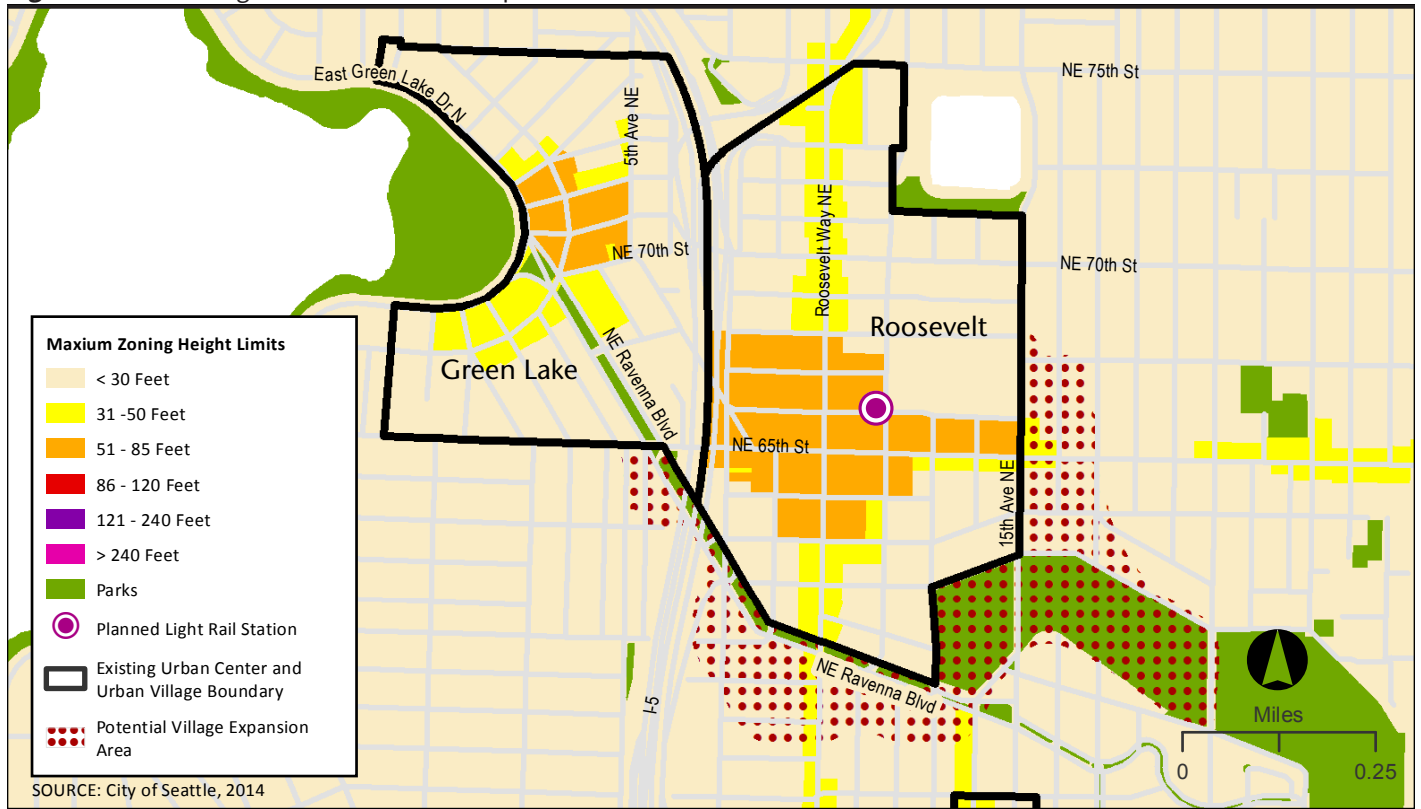
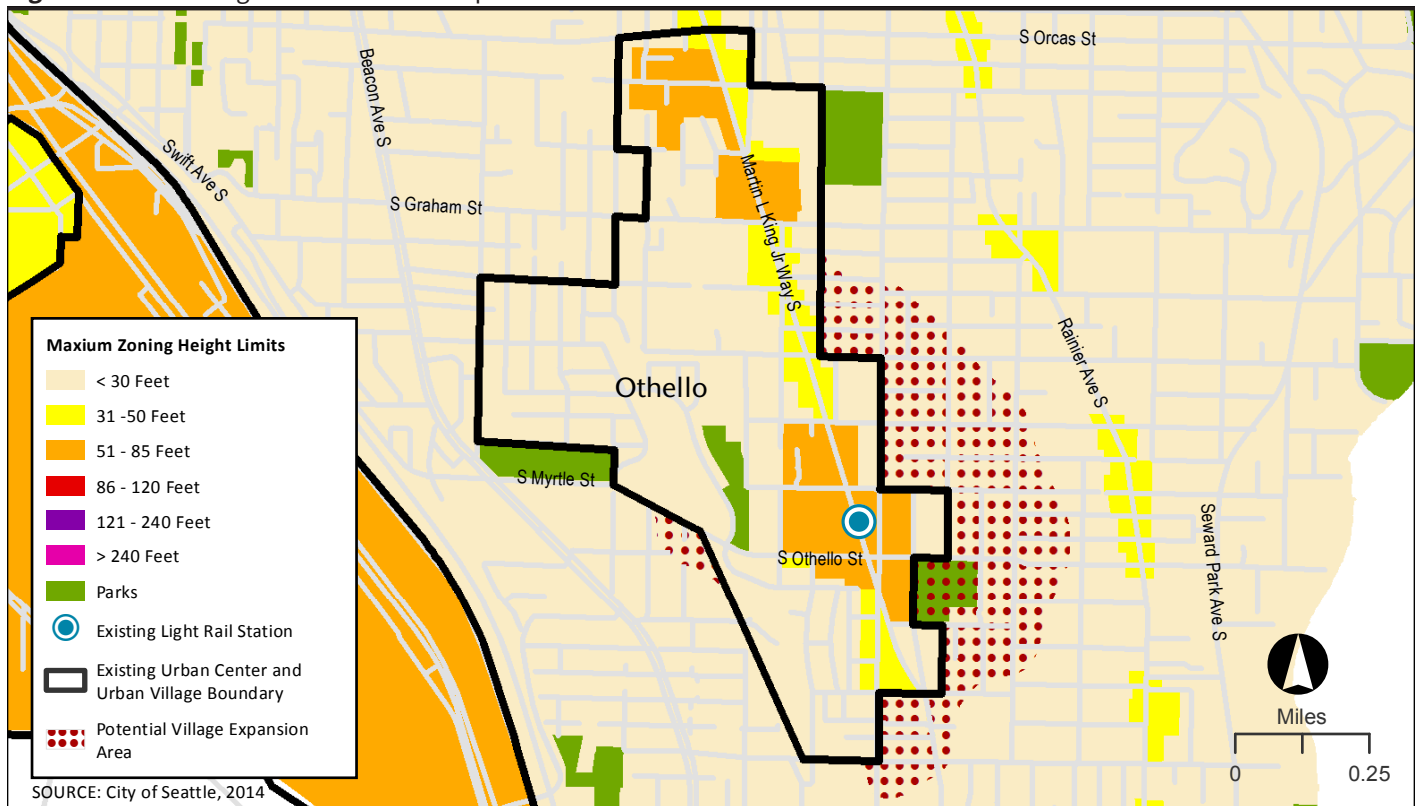


Figure 3.4-17 Height limits—Othello expansion area



3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Figure 3.4-18 Height limits—NE 130th Street new urban village

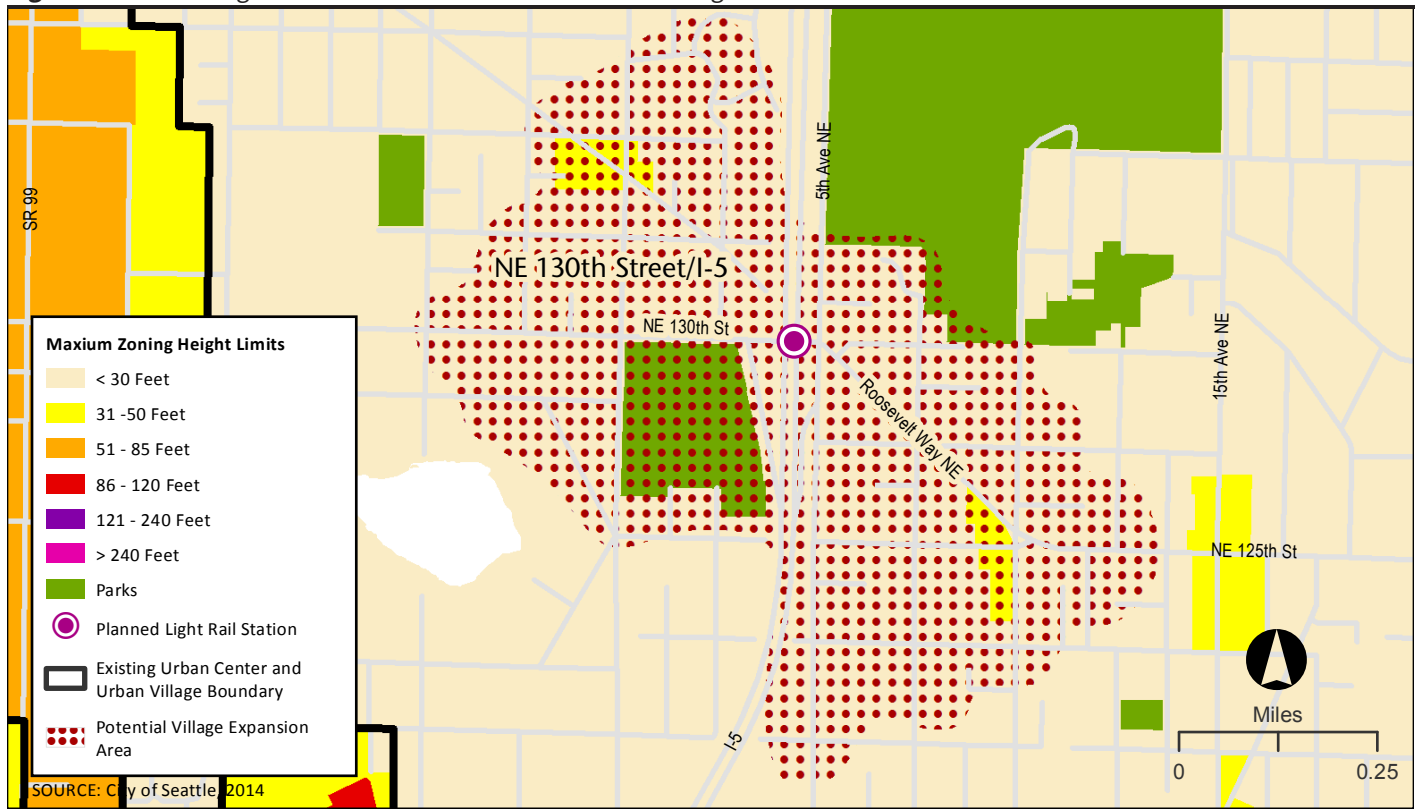
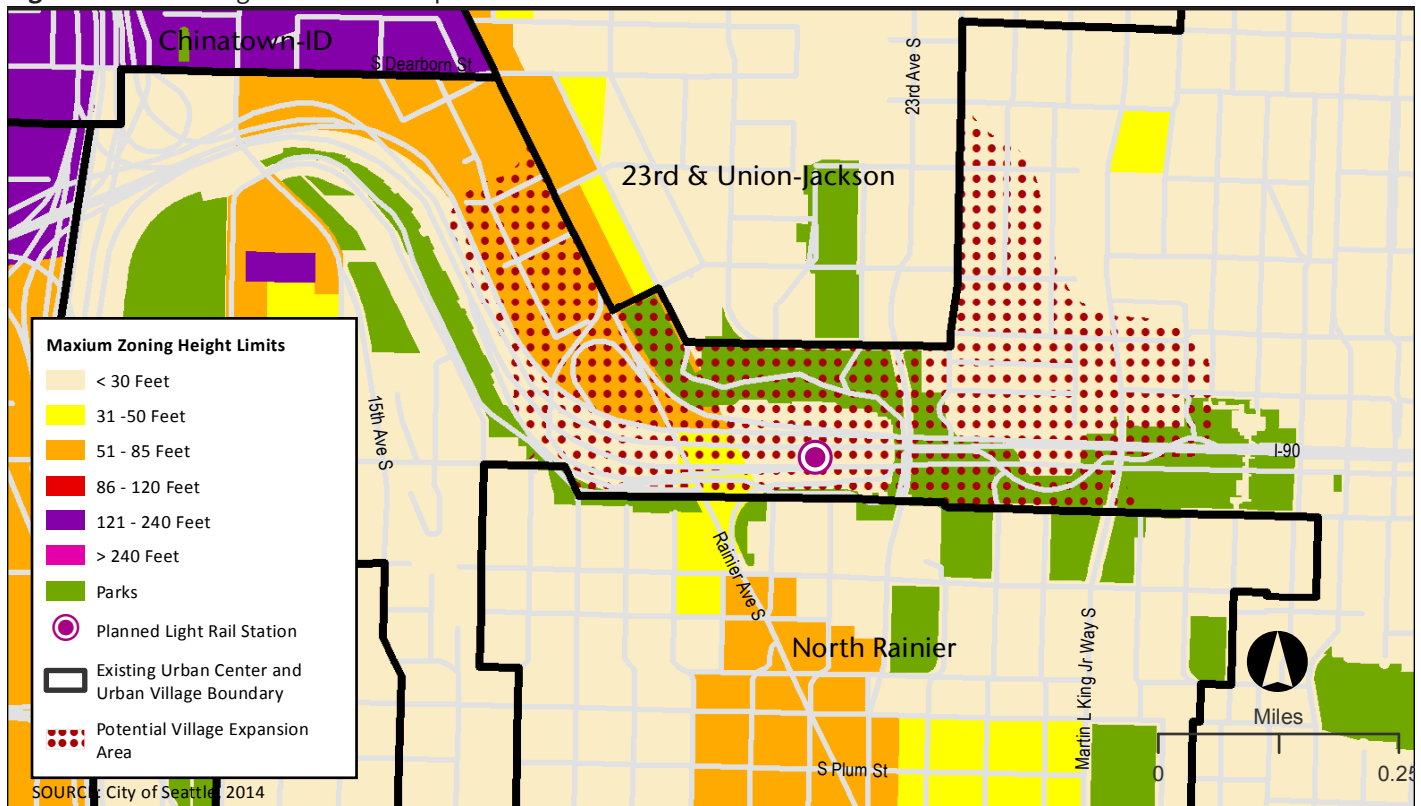


Figure 3.4-19 Height limits—I-90 expansion area



3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Alternative 3 also proposes to change how urban villages are depicted on the Future Land Use Map. This proposed change would show each type of urban village (Center, Hub and Residential) as a unique color on the map with accompanying policies that would describe the types and intensities of uses allowed in each type of village instead of the current mapping of individual land use designations within respective urban village boundaries that closely align with zoning categories. This would provide a generalized indication of preferable types and patterns of future development in the respective villages (i.e. urban center, urban center village, hub urban village and residential urban village), but would provide a greater degree of flexibility in future land planning while still indicating some limits to the most intense types of growth. In practice, this policy would be likely to facilitate more timely processes of selecting and deciding upon land use designation changes, which could accommodate a faster pace of new development within mapped urban centers and urban villages. This could be helpful to aid in production of housing sooner, for example. Under the current system, any future proposed zoning changes for a given property or area must be consistent with the associated comprehensive land use designation. This limits potential changes in land use type and intensity to a relatively narrow spectrum; more substantial zoning changes first require an amendment to the comprehensive plan land use map. Under Alternative 3, future zoning changes would instead be required to be consistent with the appropriate policies for that type of urban village.

VIEWS

Impacts to views under Alternative 3 would be similar to those described under Alternative 1. In addition, the expansion of existing urban villages and the creation of new villages would direct growth to a larger geographic area than Alternative 1. As future development creates additional building height and bulk in urban centers and villages, there is a minor but recognized potential for localized adverse disruption of protected views. The precise nature and degree of potential future view disruptions along scenic routes or from particular SEPA-protected public viewpoints would depend upon specific locational qualities and individual project designs. As applicable, individual project-level review would include detailed evaluation and opportunities to define mitigation during future land use permit application and design review processes.

Alternative 4: Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Transit**LAND USE PATTERNS**

As described in Chapter 2, Alternative 4 would focus future growth in urban villages around light rail stations and also along priority transit corridors. In addition to the residential urban village expansions described in Alternative 3, Alternative 4 would include additional expansions in the following urban villages: Ballard, Fremont, West Seattle Junction and Crown Hill. The expansion of the villages above would reflect a ten-minute walkshed to well-served bus service. Similar to Alternative 3, a new residential urban village could be

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

created around the NE 130th Street transit station, and the boundaries of the Mount Baker and 23rd & Union-Jackson urban villages are proposed to be amended to encourage future development in the area near the planned I-90 East Link light rail station as shown in Figure 2-15 and Figure 2-16.

In general, probable changes to land use patterns under Alternative 4 would be similar to Alternative 3, except that Alternative would distribute future growth to a greater number of villages. Under Alternative 4 about 94 percent of new household growth would be directed toward urban centers and urban villages—the highest concentration of any alternative under consideration. Of that amount, 49 percent is projected to be in urban centers, 28 percent in hub urban villages and 18 percent in residential urban villages. This allotted growth in hub and residential urban villages represents a full 46 percent of future household growth and is the highest in urban villages among all the alternatives. Under Alternative 4, about 53 percent of future employment growth is projected to occur in urban centers, 12 percent in hub urban villages and 10 percent in residential urban villages. Under Alternative 4, the combined future employment growth of 22 percent in hub and residential urban villages is the largest among all the alternatives.

Overall, Alternative 4 distributes growth to a greater number of locations than any other alternative, which is likely to result in a citywide land use pattern more focused on residential and commercial/mixed-use nodes with access either to light rail or frequent bus service. The focus on more distributed transportation nodes is likely to result in the construction of more moderate-density, moderate-height development types with a combination of multi-family, mixed-use and commercial uses over time.

Areas outside urban centers and villages would receive the lowest share of future household growth of any alternative at only 6 percent. Corresponding job growth in areas outside urban villages would be 18 percent. This is relatively fewer jobs than under alternatives 1 or 3, but more than double the amount under Alternative 2. As a result, there would likely be fewer expected changes to the largely residential pattern of land use in areas outside urban villages and centers.

Similar to Alternative 3, the possible creation of a new residential urban village at NE 130th Street, if it occurs and is followed by rezones, would likely result in gradual conversion of existing single-family residential and limited low-intensity commercial uses to higher-intensity multifamily or mixed uses over time.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Impacts to land use compatibility under Alternative 4 would be similar to those under Alternative 3. However, the impacts would be more geographically widespread due to the expansion of additional urban villages than those already identified in Alternative 3. Similar to Alternative 3, this would create a potential to result in localized adverse but relatively minor compatibility issues as existing, lower intensity uses in these urban villages transition to higher-density development forms. Specifically, those areas closest to existing and planned

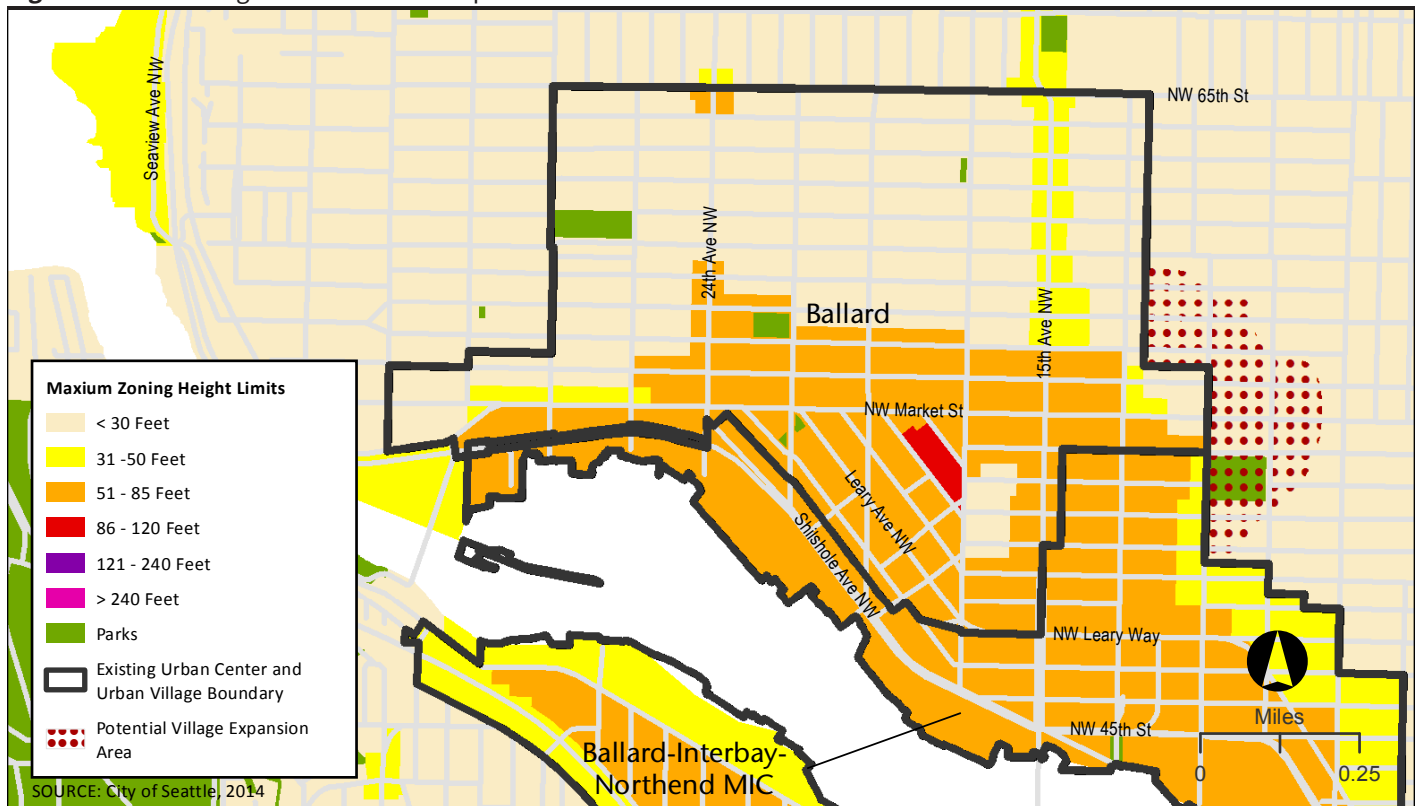
3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

light rail and transit station would likely experience the most redevelopment. However, many of these urban village cores already contain a mix of uses at various intensities. In contrast, areas where the urban villages would be expanded, or where new urban villages would be created, are predominantly single-family residential in character, making them more sensitive to changes in development intensity and scale. For example, these areas may experience more occurrences of slightly sharper transitions in urban form as new, more intensive forms, such as townhomes and multi-family apartments, could be built alongside existing single family homes and properties. Comparing villages whose expansion areas are related to light rail with those villages whose expansion areas are related to enhanced bus service, it is expected that those with light rail stations would redevelop more intensively and quickly under this alternative; most villages identified for frequent bus service are already served by bus transit and have experienced some amount of increased development intensity near transit nodes.

HEIGHT, BULK AND SCALE

Potential adverse impacts of height, bulk and scale under Alternative 4 would be similar to those under Alternative 3. Impacts would also occur in the additional urban villages identified for expansion as previously described. Figure 3.4-20 through Figure 3.4-22 illustrate the current maximum allowed height in each of the potential urban village expansion areas.

Figure 3.4-20 Height limits—Ballard expansion area



3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

Figure 3.4-21 Height limits—West Seattle Junction expansion area

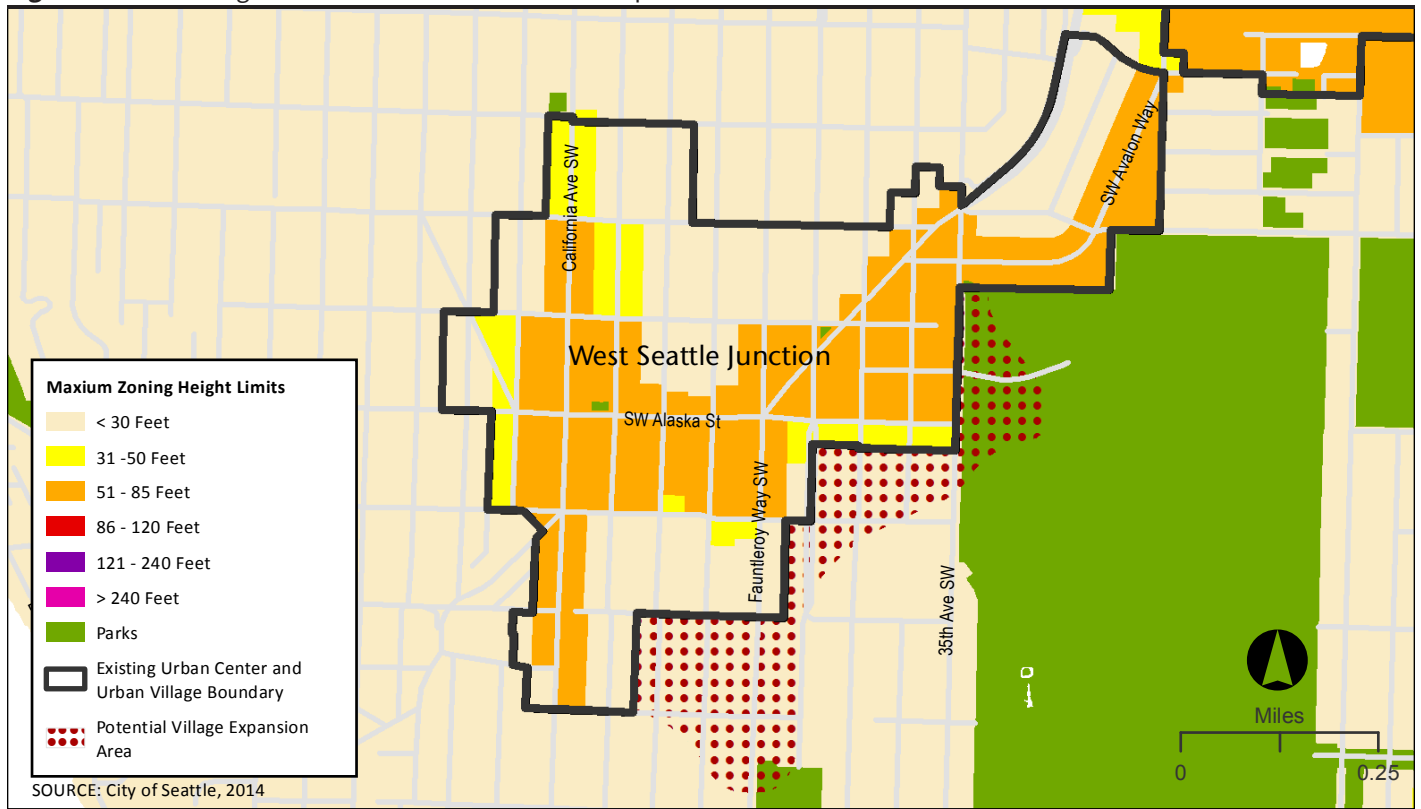
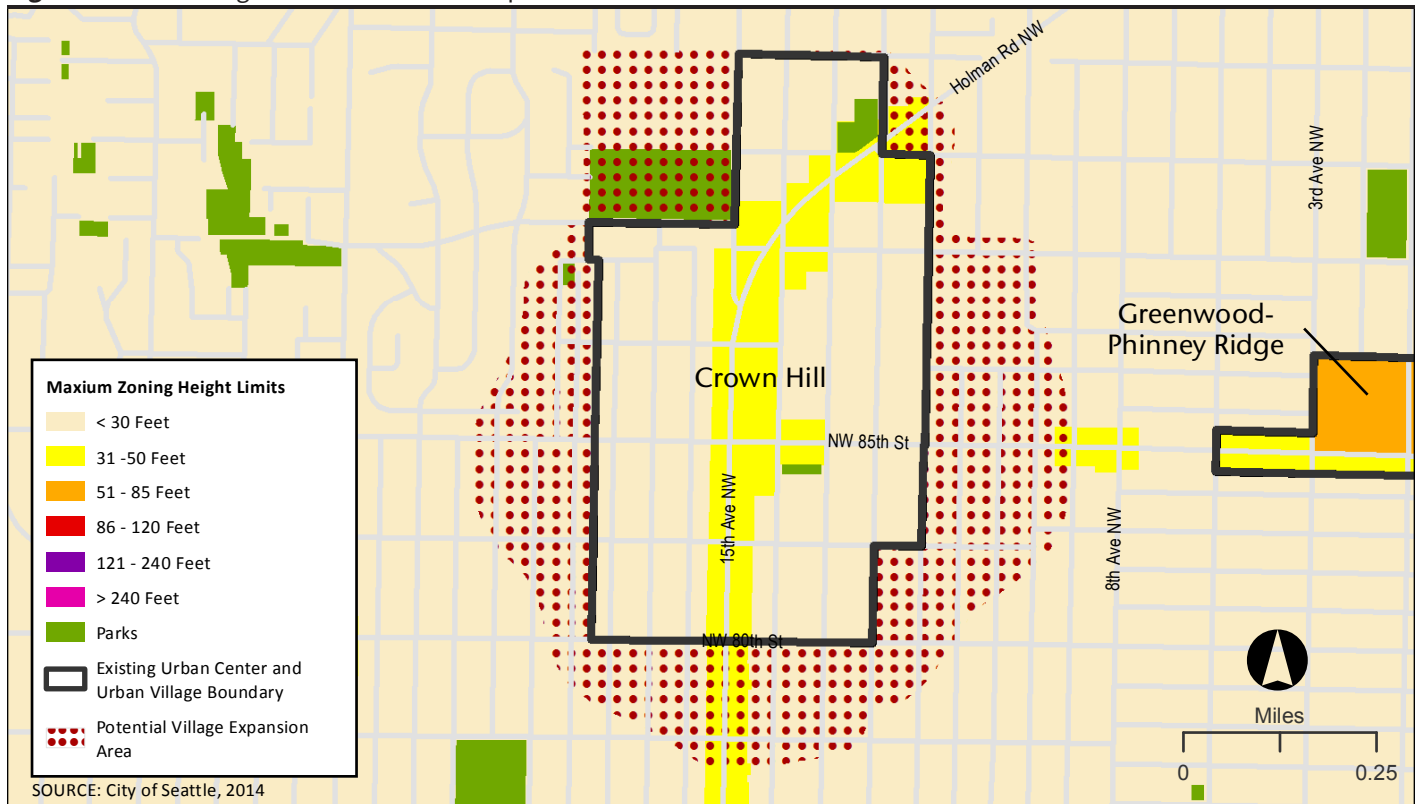


Figure 3.4-22 Height limits—Crown Hill expansion area



3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

As these figures show, the areas to be added to the existing urban villages are characterized by relatively low building heights and low FAR limits. Over time, height and bulk in these areas would increase with additional development, and localized conflicts could occur as the area transitions to a more intense development pattern.

EFFECTS OF OTHER POLICY CHANGES

Alternative 4 would include the same policy amendments related to single-family rezoning and urban village comprehensive plan land use designations as Alternative 3. The effects on land use patterns and compatibility under Alternative 4 would be similar to Alternative 3, with the exception that effects related to urban village comprehensive plan land use designations would have the potential to occur in more locations due to the larger number of possible urban village expansions under Alternative 4.

VIEWS

Impacts to views under Alternative 4 would be similar to those described under Alternative 3. In addition, the expansion of additional urban villages would direct growth to a larger geographic area than Alternative 3. As future development creates additional building height and bulk in urban centers and villages, there is a minor but recognized potential for localized disruption of protected views. The precise nature and degree of potential future view disruptions along scenic routes or from particular SEPA-protected public viewpoints would depend upon specific locational qualities and individual project designs. As applicable, individual project-level review would include detailed evaluation and opportunities to define mitigation during future land use permit application and design review processes.

3.4.3 Mitigation Strategies

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS AND COMMITMENTS

The analysis in this section identifies a range of adverse land use related impacts, but it does not identify these as probable significant adverse impacts, meaning no mitigation strategies need to be defined. The City would continue to rely upon use of regulations in its municipal code, including Land Use Code (Title 23), SEPA rules and policies (Title 25), the design review program (SMC 23.41 and related guidelines), and documents such as Urban Design Frameworks that address design intent in various subareas.

Other Potential Mitigation Strategies

Although not required to address identified impacts, the City could pursue the following kinds of actions if it wishes to address standards or guidelines for addressing possible future conditions:

3.4 Land Use: Height, Bulk, Scale, Compatibility

- Consider amendments to zoning regulations in existing and future urban centers and villages to more directly address transitions to surrounding areas.
- Consider addressing transitions between urban centers/villages and surrounding areas as part of ongoing neighborhood planning efforts.
- Consider additional station area planning efforts in locations where new urban villages could be created, such as NE 130th Street, or where substantial expansion of existing villages could occur. The primary goal of such efforts would be to establish policies, design guidelines and development regulation mechanisms to manage the transition of such areas from their current low-intensity, predominantly single-family character to a more intense, mixed-use pattern that characterizes urban villages. Policies, guidelines and regulations could focus on defining guidance and standards for transitions between development types and mitigating differences of development scale.

3.4.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Under all alternatives, additional growth would occur in Seattle, leading to a generalized increase in building height and bulk and development intensity over time, as well as the gradual conversion of low-intensity uses to higher-intensity development patterns. This transition would be unavoidable and is an expected characteristic of urban population and employment growth.

In addition, future growth is likely to create localized land use compatibility issues as development occurs. However, the City's adopted development regulations, zoning requirements and design guidelines are anticipated to sufficiently mitigate these impacts. Therefore, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts to land use are anticipated.