

# 2.0 Description of the Proposal and Alternatives

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter of the Final EIS contains the description of the proposal and alternatives as found in the Draft EIS. In addition, this updated chapter includes new information in Section 2.3 describing the Preferred Alternative and assumptions made for another optionally-included growth related analysis. New information and other corrections and revisions to this chapter since issuance of the Draft EIS, are described in cross-out (for deleted text) and underline (for new text) format.

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

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

*Toward a Sustainable Seattle* was originally adopted in 1994 and has been updated over time. As required by the Washington Growth Management Act, ~~in 2015 the City is updating~~ updated citywide growth projections in 2015 to address the 2015–2035 planning period. Through the alternatives considered in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the City is considering alternative approaches to managing future growth patterns, all within the framework of the urban village strategy. The City has initiated this EIS to study the potential impacts of ~~four~~ five different alternative growth strategies, including:

- ~~a~~ A no action alternative (Alternative 1) that anticipates a continuation of the urban village strategy’s implementation in ways similar to current practices and with similar growth distribution patterns as has occurred in the last twenty years; and
- ~~The three~~ Four action alternatives including the Preferred Alternative which represent a range of possible growth distributions, each of which emphasizes a different pattern of growth and could lead to different implementing actions. For example, actions, such as rezones, development standards, infrastructure investment and others, could vary depending on the City’s policy preferences to

**2.1 Introduction**

more strongly favor compact growth in some or all urban villages, and in transit-served areas well-served by transit. ~~or a combination of these approaches.~~ The balance of this chapter focuses on a description of these alternatives.

## Proposal Overview

The City is considering text and map amendments to the Seattle Comprehensive Plan that would influence the manner and distribution of projected growth of 70,000 housing units and 115,000 jobs in Seattle through 2035, and that would influence the manner in which the City conducts its operations to promote and achieve other goals such as those related to public health, safety, welfare, service delivery, environmental sustainability and equity. The Growth Management Act requires the City's Comprehensive Plan to plan for the amount of population and employment growth that has been allocated to the City by the Washington State Office of Financial Management. This EIS evaluates the potential environmental impacts of alternative distributions of that growth throughout the city.

All Most Comprehensive Plan elements have been ~~will be~~ reviewed and updated as part of the proposal. In many cases, proposed policy amendments reflect changes to state and regional guidance, incorporate language and editorial changes to policies to increase readability, clarify direction and remove redundancies; and add new or updated information since adoption of the current Comprehensive Plan. Other policy changes are intended to reflect evolving city policy. No changes are proposed to the adopted Neighborhood Plans in the Comprehensive Plan, nor the Container Port and Shoreline Management elements.<sup>1</sup>

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

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GROWTH PATTERNS AND LAND USE MAP AMENDMENTS

**Pattern of Growth.** Establish an updated preferred distribution of growth within the urban village framework. Alternatives analyzed in this EIS provide a basis for comparison of ~~four~~ five different growth scenarios, including a scenario that would generally continue current trends (identified as the No Action Alternative in this EIS), and a fifth alternative added to this Final EIS that is designated as the "Preferred Alternative."

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

<sup>1</sup> Although the Shoreline Management Element is a new Element in the Comprehensive Plan, it consists entirely of policies that were in the Land Use Element, and the policies are not proposed to be changed at all with this Plan Update.

**2.1 Introduction**

**Growth Estimates.** Determine whether to eliminate or redefine how growth estimates are made for smaller urban villages, recognizing that rates of growth can vary greatly at the smaller urban village scale. The existing methods that define citywide and urban center growth estimates would be retained without change. The proposal for urban villages is to define growth estimates in percentage-increase terms from a 2015 baseline, for housing growth and employment growth as applicable. There are different growth estimates for hub urban villages versus residential urban villages, and differences relating to the village's access to transit, and relating to Equity Analysis conclusions (see Table 2-1 below).

- Hub urban villages are expected to grow more than residential villages, and villages with very good transit are expected to grow more than other villages in the same category. Assigning growth estimates to urban villages in this way reinforces the concept of building upon the mobility advantages provided by proximity to transit.

**Table 2-1** Proposed growth estimate terms for different urban village types (for the Preferred Alternative)

	Expected Housing Growth Rate*	Expected Job Growth Rate*
<b>Hub Urban Villages (HUVs)</b>		
<b>HUVs</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>50%</b>
<i>Fremont</i>		
<i>Lake City</i>		
<b>HUVs w/Very Good Transit Service</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>50%</b>
<i>Ballard</i>		
<i>Mount Baker</i>		
<i>West Seattle Junction</i>		
<b>HUVs w/High Displacement Risk &amp; Low Access to Opportunity, Regardless of Level of Transit Service</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>50%</b>
<i>Bitter Lake</i>		
<b>Residential Urban Villages (RUVs)</b>		
<b>RUVs</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<i>Admiral</i>		
<i>Eastlake</i>		
<i>Greenwood-Phinney Ridge</i>		
<i>Madison-Miller</i>		
<i>Morgan Junction</i>		
<i>Upper Queen Anne</i>		
<i>Wallingford</i>		
<b>RUVs w/Very Good Transit Service</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<i>23rd &amp; Union-Jackson</i>		
<i>Aurora-Licton Springs</i>		
<i>Columbia City</i>		
<i>Crown Hill</i>		
<i>Green Lake</i>		
<i>North Beacon Hill</i>		
<i>Roosevelt</i>		
<b>RUVs w/High Displacement Risk &amp; Low Access to Opportunity, Regardless of Level of Transit Service</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<i>Othello</i>		
<i>Rainier Beach</i>		
<i>South Park</i>		
<i>Westwood-Highland Park</i>		

\* Percentage growth above the actual number of housing units or jobs in 2015, except as limited by zoning capacity.

**2.1 Introduction**

- In urban villages that the Equity Analysis identified as having both a high risk of displacement and low access to opportunity, the urban village would be expected to grow at the lower rate for its category, even if it has very good transit service. Growth estimates are assigned accordingly. “Very good transit service” for this purpose means the presence of either a light rail station or a Rapid Ride line plus at least one other frequently-served bus route.

This proposal would define growth estimates applicable to urban villages, which would help to fulfill minimum requirements for use of the SEPA Infill Exemption (see Section 2.4 of this Chapter for more information on this exemption). See Table 2-3 and Table 2-4 on page 2-28 for the application of these growth estimate terms to the urban villages for the Preferred Alternative.

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

**POLICY AND TEXT AMENDMENTS**

**Revise Single Family Land Use Goals (LUG8, LUG9, LUG10) and Policies Addressing Rezone Criteria (LU59, LU60).** Update the wording of LUG8, 9 and 10 with a new proposed LUG8 that does not refer to preserving and protecting low-density single-family character, but supports low height, bulk and scale, and opportunities for housing serving a broad range of households and income levels. Also, pPotentially eliminate Comprehensive Plan land use policies (e.g., existing policies LU59 and LU60) that establish detailed and strict criteria about when it is appropriate to change zoning from a single-family designation. This is the only zoning category that is addressed this way in the Plan and is at a level of detail that is more appropriate for the Land Use Code where similar language can currently be found.

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

**Affordable Housing**

- Consider adding affordable housing as an appropriate use of City surplus land, along with some guidance for how to select among the various possible uses of surplus property. Under Housing Goal 2 (address regional housing needs for all economic and demographic groups), a proposed policy: “Identify publicly owned sites suitable for housing, and prioritize use of sites, where appropriate, for rent/income-restricted housing for lower-income households” (see proposed Housing Element policy H2.2).

**2.1 Introduction**

- Potentially incorporate new policies that emerge from the City’s Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda. October 2015 amendments added language supporting mandatory affordable housing programs for development projects.

**Travel Modes Adoption of Mode-Share Based Level of Service Standard.** Develop a system for identifying the priority travel mode for particular streets. The City is required to have a system that measures performance of the transportation system. As a replacement to the current “screenline”-based system that measures the road network’s performance level by using traffic across several defined lines in the PM peak hour, the recommended Plan would set target levels of single-occupant vehicle (SOV) travel as a percent of the total trips being taken by persons of all travel modes (including transit, walking, bicycling, etc.). The target levels would be set differently for eight different sectors of the city, with SOV mode share objectives set to lower mode share levels than they are today (an improvement in efficiency). This is proposed as a practical response to the need to maintain the efficiency of the city’s transportation network even as more growth occurs. Reduction in levels of SOV travel over time will help preserve effective capacity by reducing road-space use per-capita, meaning that passengers using transit and other mode choices will consume less road space than vehicles driven by one person. See more information in Appendix B.3.

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

**Parks and Open Space Goals.** Proposed revisions would discontinue the quantitatively-expressed goals for parks/open space in the current Urban Village Appendix, and replace them with a more general commitment to expand open space to meet the needs of the community, with additional details about goals and commitments to be defined at a later date by the *Park Development Plan*. Priorities and indications about standards to be based in the City’s *Park Development Plan* are mentioned in the following sample of revised policies. Approximately thirty other policy statements also provide additional guidance in the proposed new Park, Recreation and Open Space Element.

*P1.1 Continue to expand the City’s park holdings and open space opportunities, with special emphasis on serving urban centers and urban villages that are home to marginalized populations and areas that have been traditionally underserved.*

*P1.2 Provide a variety of parks and open space to serve the city’s growing population consistent with the priorities and level-of-service standards identified in the City’s *Park Development Plan*.*

**Guidance for Prioritizing Use of Rights-of-Way Transition Spaces.** The Transportation Element includes new guidance for making choices in use of spaces within rights-of-way, for use serving mobility purposes (such as bicycle lanes) or other uses such as loading goods or people, greening, storage or utility functions.

**2.1 Introduction**

**EQUITY**

There is a focus on equity throughout the Plan. Each element includes background equity data points, goals and policies that speak explicitly about equity, including engagement of marginalized communities.

Through Executive Order 2014-02, Race and Social Justice Initiative, the City of Seattle states that "...equity is a cornerstone of a thriving democracy and the internal actions of local government that contribute to the health and well-being of everyone in our city." The City's Equitable Development Initiative is specifically focused on clear policy guidance for equitable growth and development that will be incorporated throughout the Comprehensive Plan. Additional discussion of equity in the context of the Comprehensive Plan and future growth and development can be found in a separate document, the Growth and Equity Analysis, available at [www.http://2035.seattle.gov/resourcespdf](http://2035.seattle.gov/resourcespdf). This document has been updated since issuance of the Draft EIS.

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

**ALTERNATIVES OVERVIEW**

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

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

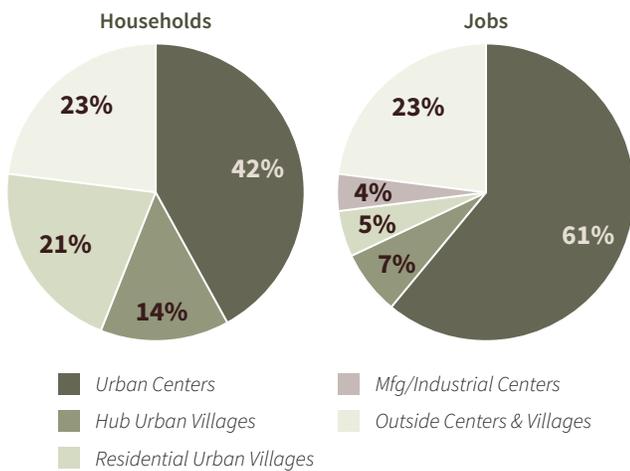
Each alternative is described more fully in Section 2.3.

**Figure 2-1** Summary of alternatives

## Alternative 1

### Continue Current Trends (No Action)

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

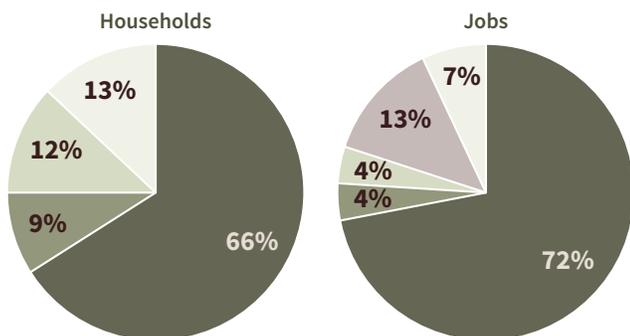


- No change in the number, designation or size of urban villages.
- Greater residential growth emphasis in hub urban villages, in selected residential urban villages and more growth outside of urban villages.
  - Hub urban village emphases: Ballard, Bitter Lake, Lake City and West Seattle Junction.
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

## Alternative 2

### Guide Growth to Urban Centers

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



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

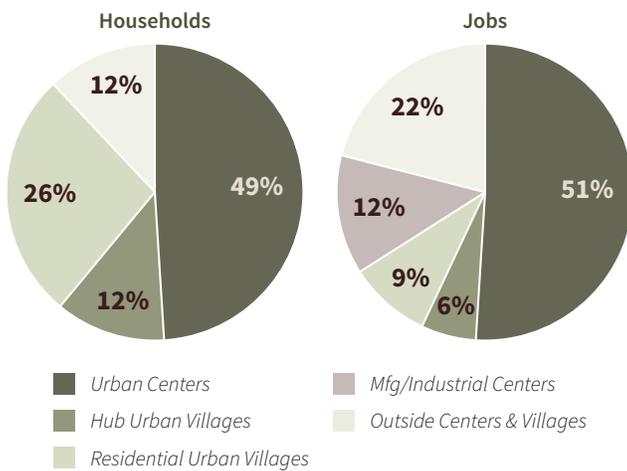
**2.1 Introduction**

**Figure 2-1** Summary of alternatives (cont.)

**Alternative 3**

**Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Light Rail**

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

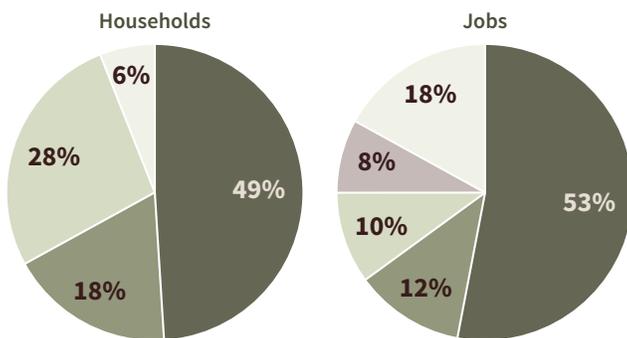


- Larger share of growth and expanded urban village boundaries near light rail stations (Mount Baker, Columbia City, North Beacon Hill, Othello, Rainier Beach, Roosevelt).
- Possible new residential urban village around the North Link 130th Street Station and possible reconfiguration of the Mount Baker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

**Alternative 4**

**Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Transit**

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



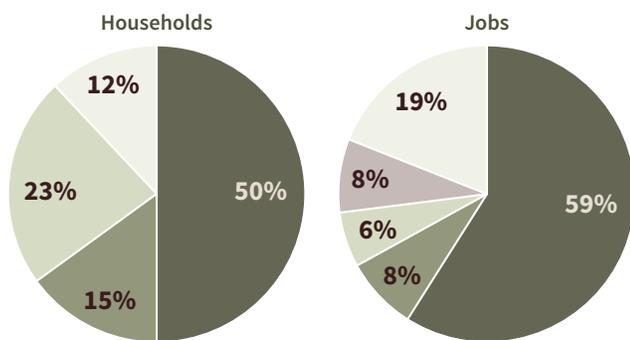
- Includes the higher-growth assumptions and expanded urban village boundaries of Alternative 3 (to capture 10-minute walksheds), and the addition of other selected areas that have very good bus service. These include areas are located in the western half of the city (Ballard, Fremont, West Seattle Junction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

**Figure 2-1** Summary of alternatives (cont.)

## Alternative 5, Preferred Alternative

### Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Transit

Similar to Alternative 4, growth would be guided toward urban villages with light rail transit stations and very good bus service and the greatest number of transit-oriented places are preferred for growth. Compared to Alternative 4, relatively less residential growth would be guided toward urban villages, but some urban village boundaries would be expanded to encompass a ten-minute walk-shed from light rail stations or bus transit nodes.



- Includes the same expanded urban village boundaries of Alternative 4 except omission of the Fremont expansion area.
- Compared to the other alternatives, intermediate amount of residential growth guided within and outside of the urban centers and villages.
- Guides more employment growth to the urban centers than alternatives 3 and 4 and an intermediate amount of growth to the urban villages, relative to the other alternatives.

## Planning Area

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

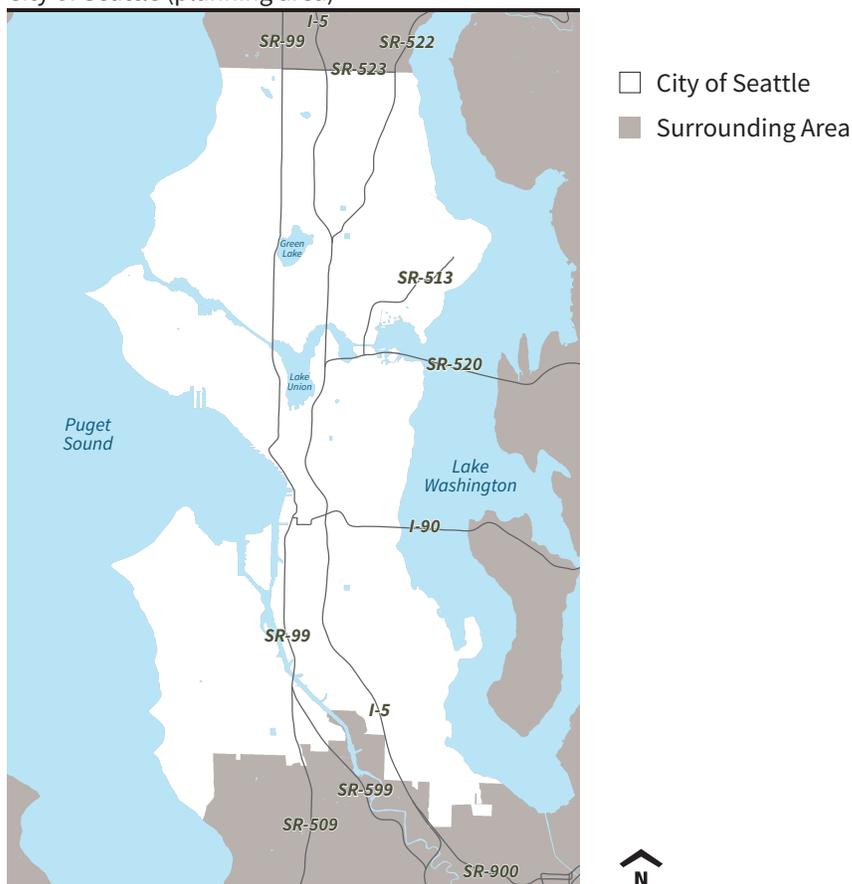
## Objectives of the Proposal

The City's objectives for this proposal include:

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

**2.1 Introduction**

**Figure 2-2**  
 City of Seattle (planning area)



## 2.2 Planning Context

### Seattle Comprehensive Plan

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

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

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

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

All Many of these elements will be reviewed and updated as part of the proposal, in order to promote achievement of the City's overall Comprehensive Plan objectives. Note that no changes are proposed to the Container Port and Shoreline Management elements. The latter would be moved from its current place in the Land Use Element into its own new element.

#### URBAN VILLAGES

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

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

**2.2 Planning Context**

**Figure 2-3** 2015 Seattle housing units and jobs in urban centers and villages

**Urban Centers**

*Regionally designated growth areas with planning estimates/growth targets for households and jobs*

24% of housing units  
57% of jobs  
7% of land area

**Hub Urban Villages**

*Locally designated growth areas with planning estimates for households and jobs*

7% of housing units  
5% of jobs  
3% of land area

**Residential Urban Villages**

*Locally designated growth areas with planning estimates for households*

13% of housing units  
7% of jobs  
7% of land area

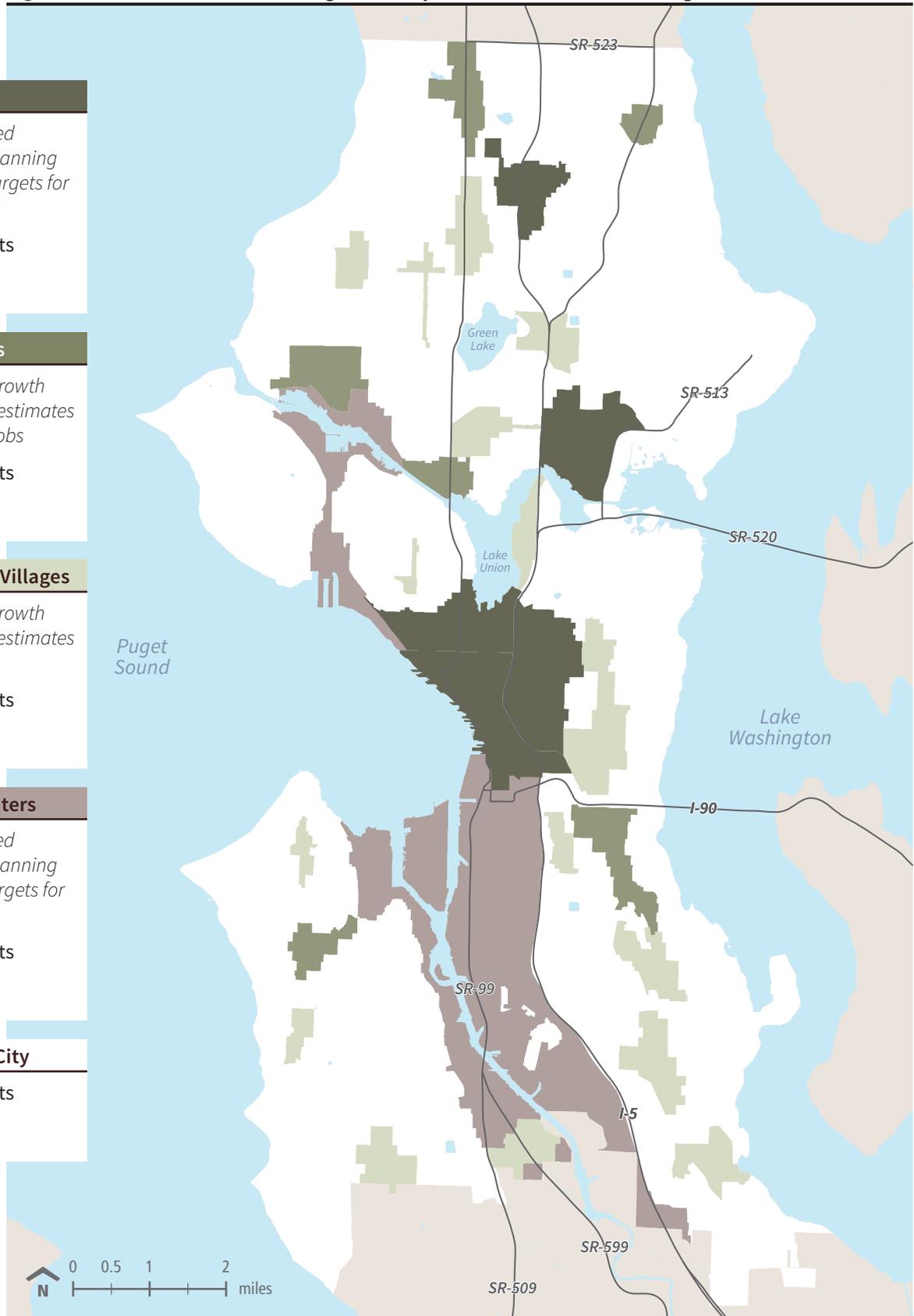
**Mfg/Industrial Centers**

*Regionally designated growth areas with planning estimates/growth targets for jobs*

<1% of housing units  
15% of jobs  
11% of land area

**Remainder of the City**

56% of housing units  
16% of jobs  
72% of land area



2.2 Planning Context

**FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

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

**PLANNING ESTIMATES FOR GROWTH**

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

**DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY**

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

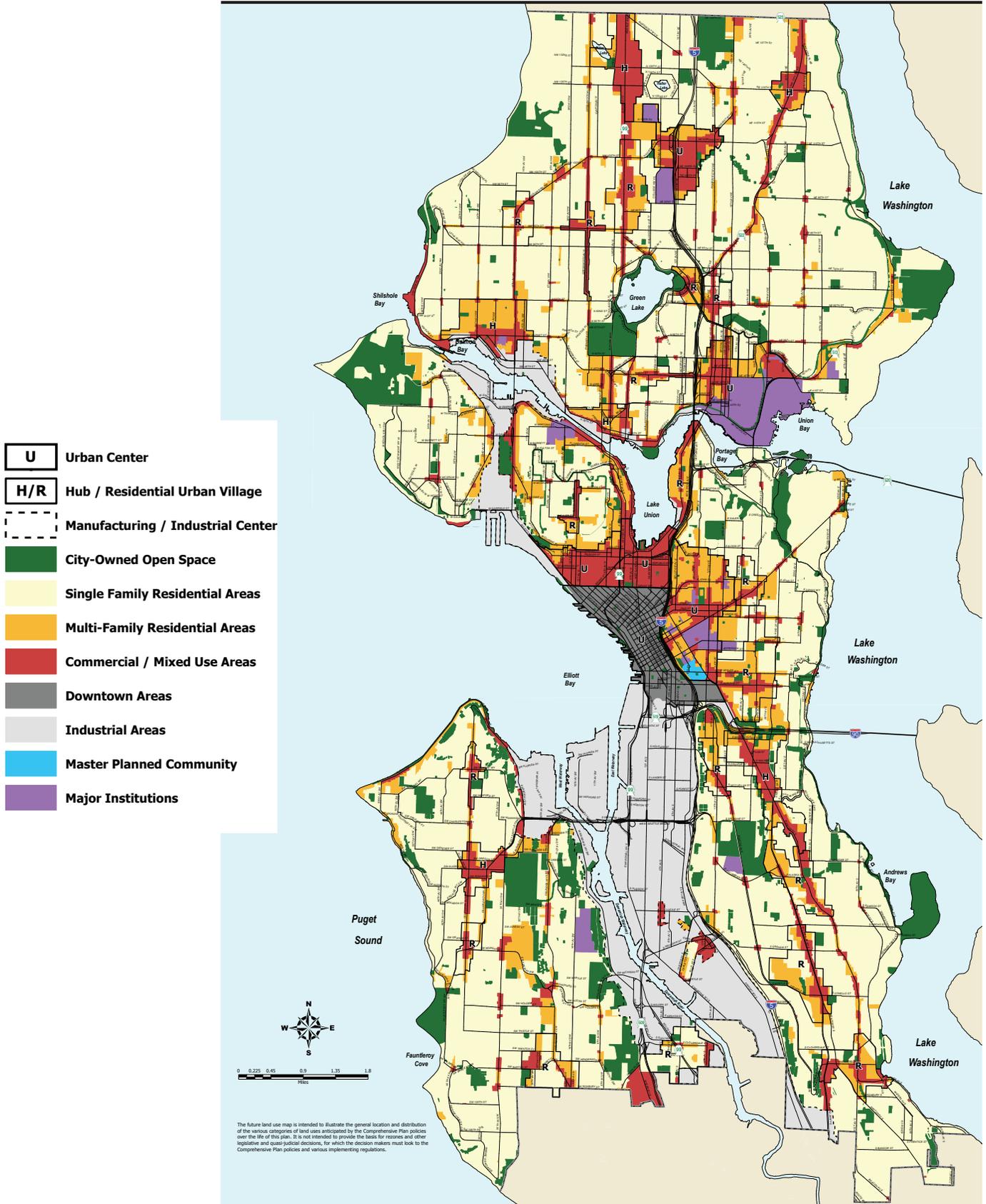
As shown in Table 2–2 on the following page, the existing urban centers, urban villages and manufacturing/industrial centers collectively have development capacity for 172,475 housing units and 217,172 jobs. Other capacity also exists outside these areas.

**Figure 2–4**  
 Planning estimates for growth



**2.2 Planning Context**

**Figure 2-5** Current Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map



**Table 2-2** Urban village development capacity

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

Source: City of Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development, 2014.

**2.2 Planning Context**

## Existing Zoning

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

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

See the existing Zoning Map, Figure 2-6.

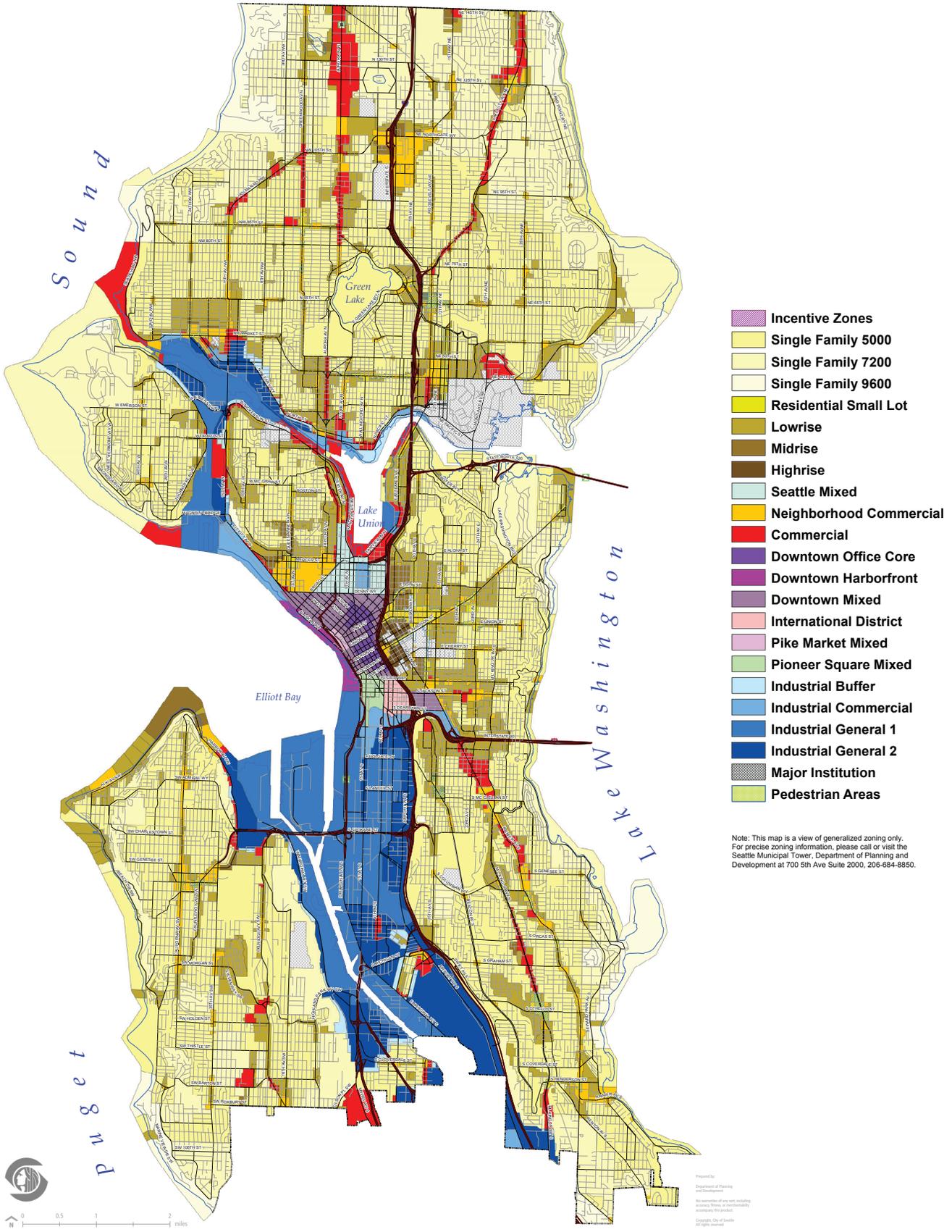
## Public Outreach

The City's public outreach effort for the ~~2015~~ 2016 Comprehensive Plan update is intended to build awareness of the project, identify issues that people are concerned about, highlight key decisions to be made and collect feedback on the different patterns of growth that are being studied. As described in the *Community Engagement Progress Report (February 2016)* ~~2013-2014~~, the City's early public engagement efforts have focused on both in-person and online strategies. Some of these are briefly summarized below:

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

2.2 Planning Context

**Figure 2-6** City of Seattle generalized zoning



Note: This map is a view of generalized zoning only. For precise zoning information, please call or visit the Seattle Municipal Tower, Department of Planning and Development at 700 5th Ave Suite 2000, 206-684-8850.

Prepared by:  
 Department of Planning  
 and Development  
 No warranty of any kind, including  
 accuracy, is made by the  
 City of Seattle.

**2.2 Planning Context**



*Interactive Seattle 2035 display.*

Following release of the Draft EIS (May 2015), outreach efforts focused on building awareness of the Draft EIS, sharing key findings and inviting comments. Major activities included:

- Information tables and materials at 13 major Seattle events, community meetings and neighborhood centers.
- Draft EIS open house and public hearing, including broadcast by the Seattle Channel on television and online.
- Seattle 2035 online open house and online survey, which presented key pieces of the Draft EIS and invited formal comment on the Draft EIS as well as more informal comment through the online survey
- Social media outreach through Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, and NextDoor to provide broad public awareness of the Draft EIS availability and how to provide comments.
- Email updates and notifications through the Seattle2035 listserv and Key Connectors from the Seattle 2035 project inbox
- Updates to the Seattle 2035 website providing information about the Draft EIS, upcoming events and links to the online open house

With release of the Draft Comprehensive Plan in July 2015, outreach efforts focused primarily on building awareness of the Draft Plan and public comment period, sharing information about key elements of the Draft Plan and inviting online and in-person comments. Key activities included:

- Five public open houses located throughout the City in the Capitol Hill, Ballard, West Seattle, Rainier Valley and Northgate neighborhoods.
- Online engagement through Consider.IT and continued outreach through social media platforms.
- Email updates and notifications to the Seattle 2035 listserv and Key Connectors from the Seattle2035 project inbox.
- Use of the Seattle 2035 website as a clearinghouse for Draft Plan information.

Active public outreach will continue to be an integral part of the comprehensive plan update planning process. Additional information about public outreach may be found in the *Seattle 2035 Community Engagement Progress Report* (February 2016 ~~January 2015~~), and at <http://2035.seattle.gov/resources/>.



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



- What Does Seattle 2035 Mean For...**
-  Housing
  -  Jobs
  -  Transportation
  -  Quality of Life
  -  Environment

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING**

Specific to this EIS, the City requested public comment on the topics to be addressed in this EIS through a formal public scoping process. A scoping notice was issued on October 17, 2013 and the public comment period continued through April 7, 2014. During this period an informational meeting to describe the EIS process, including proposed topics for analysis, and to ask for comments on issues that should be considered in the EIS was held. Following issuance of the Draft EIS, a public comment period and public hearing will be held to invite comment on the document a 45-day public comment period extended from May 4, 2015 through June 17, 2015. A Draft EIS public hearing was held on May 27, 2015 and an online open house was conducted during the entire 45-day comment period.

**2.2 Planning Context**

## 2.3 Proposed Action and Alternatives

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

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

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

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

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

The boundaries of the existing urban villages would remain unchanged under both alternatives 1 and 2. Alternatives 3 and 4 and the Preferred Alternative evaluate would result in expansions to some urban village boundaries and the possible designation of one new urban village (at NE 130th Street/Interstate 5) in order to encompass a 10-minute walkshed around existing/planned future light rail stations and priority areas with very good transit service routes. “Very good transit service” for this purpose means the presence of either a light rail station or a Rapid Ride line plus at least one other frequently-served bus route.

### PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

For this Final EIS, the City has identified a Preferred Alternative. Compared to the Draft EIS Alternatives, the Preferred Alternative is most similar to Alternative 4 in that it guides growth toward urban villages and centers with light rail stations and to places with very good transit service. The Preferred Alternative also seeks to address the equity and displacement issues identified in public comment and the Growth and Equity Analysis. In order to reduce the potential for displacement, the Preferred Alternative reduces the amount of

growth proposed to be guided toward several of the urban villages where the equity analysis showed a high risk of displacement and low access to opportunity, and distributes this growth to other urban villages and to the area outside of the urban villages. Compared to Alternative 4 (the most similar alternative), the Preferred Alternative would:

- Guide less residential growth to the urban villages, with the Mount Baker, West Seattle Junction, Columbia City, Crown Hill, Othello, North Beacon Hill, Rainier Beach and Roosevelt urban villages proposed for the greatest reductions in residential growth.
- Guide more employment growth to some urban centers and less employment to several urban villages, including Ballard, Mount Baker, Othello and Roosevelt.
- Have the same urban village expansion areas as Alternative 4, except that the Fremont expansion area in Alternative 4 is omitted in the Preferred Alternative.

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

## **Alternative 1: Continue Current Trends (No Action)**

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

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

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

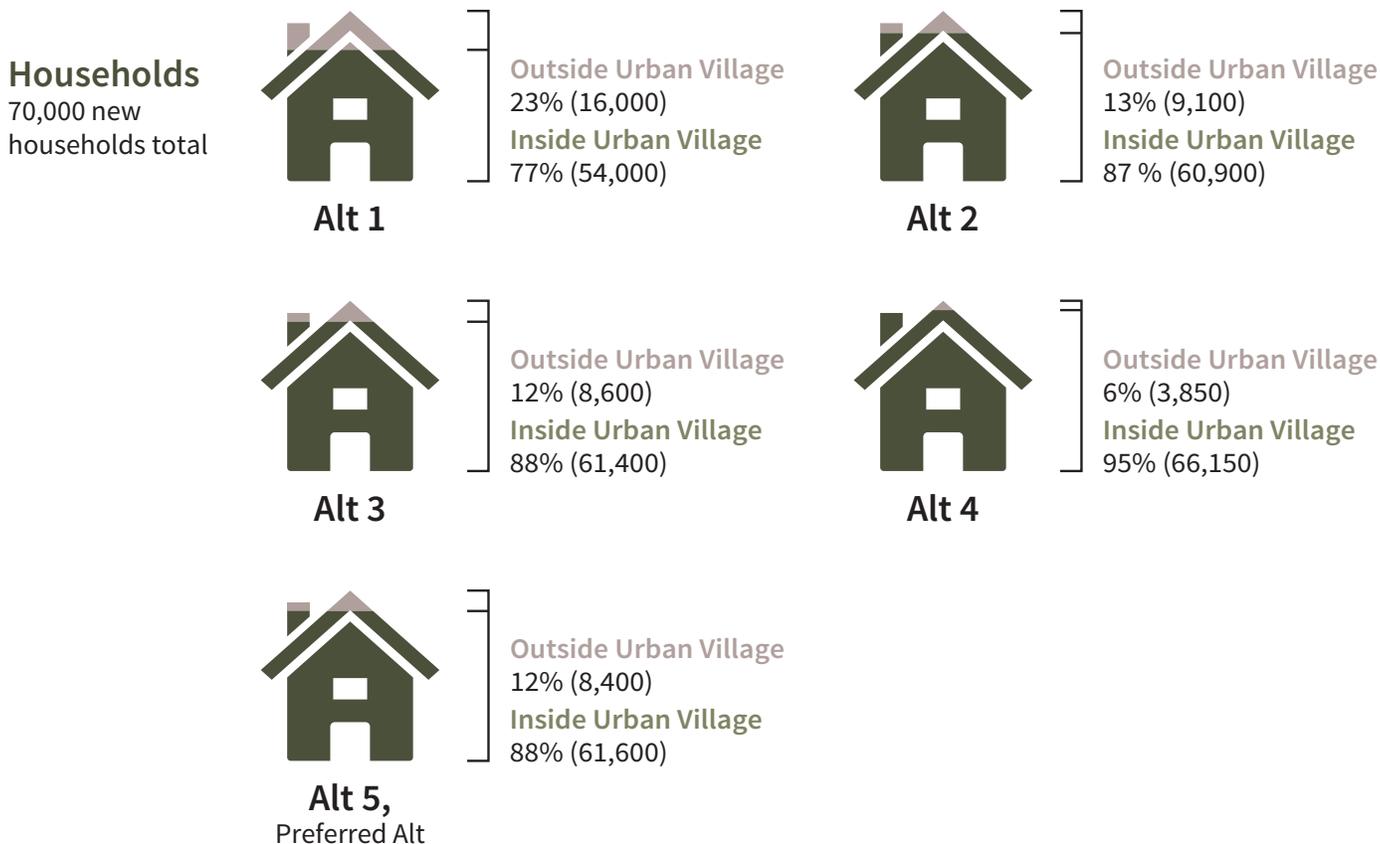
Alternative 1 planning estimates of residential and employment growth for each of the designated urban centers and urban villages are shown in Table 2–3 (housing) and Table 2–4 (employment).

### **DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER**

Under Alternative 1, the types, character and relative geographic distribution of future development are expected to occur in ways similar to that experienced over the past 20

**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**

**Figure 2-7** Growth inside and outside of urban villages



years. Over time, residential and non-residential densities and intensities would continue to increase in the urban centers and urban villages. Outside of the urban centers and urban villages, growth and development would also continue, consistent with past growth patterns.

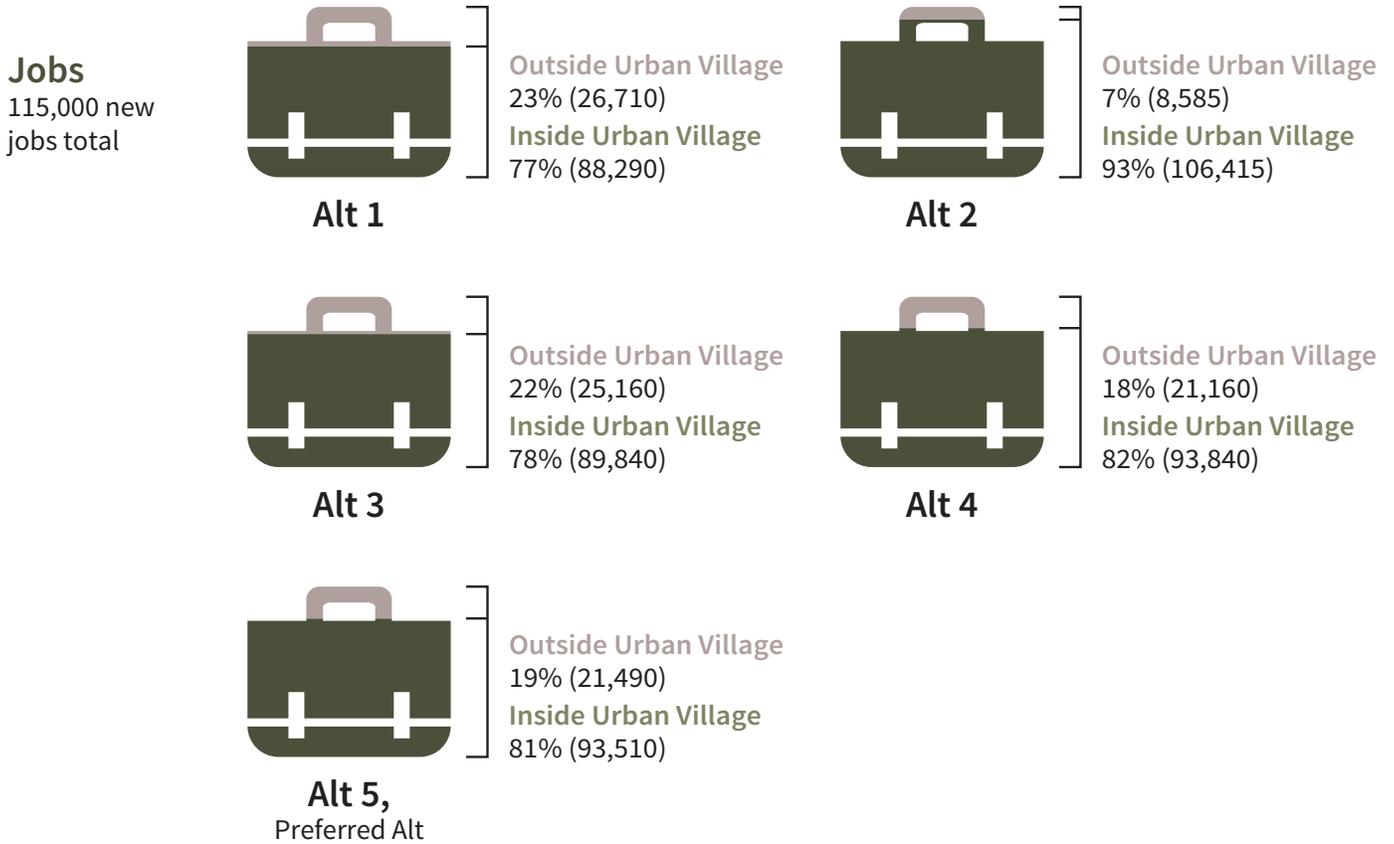
**FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

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

**POLICY AND REGULATORY AMENDMENTS**

As shown in Table 2-5 on page 2-40, no amendments to the Land Use Code or other regulations are required to implement Alternative 1.

**Figure 2-7** Growth inside and outside of urban villages (cont.)



### Alternative 2: Guide Growth to Urban Centers

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

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

**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**

**DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER**

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

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

**FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

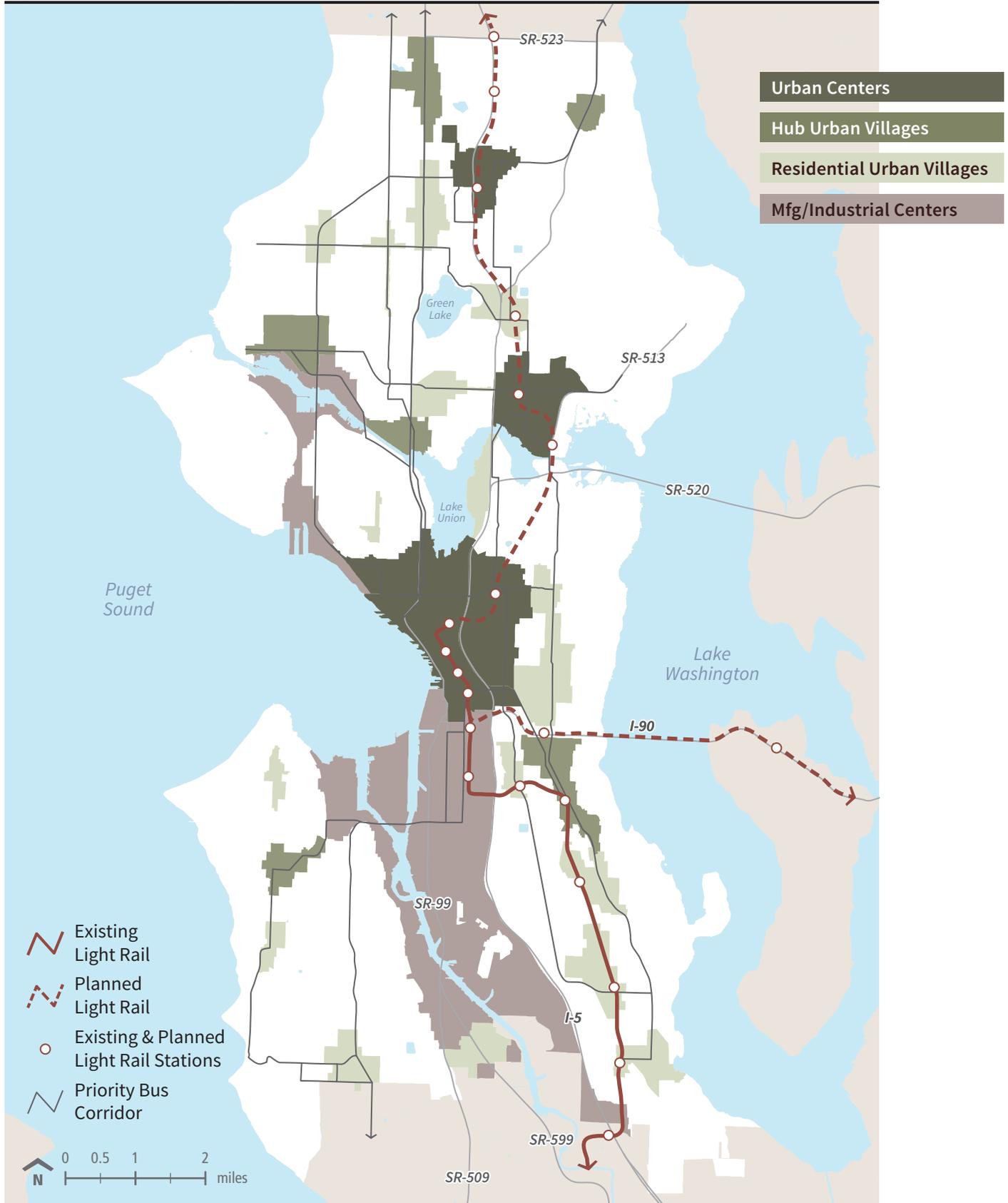
No changes to Future Land Use Map boundaries are proposed (as noted previously and shown in Figure 2-8, Figure 2-9 and Figure 2-10).

**POLICY AND REGULATORY AMENDMENTS**

As shown in Table 2-5 on page 2-40, implementing actions under Alternative 2 to encourage focused growth in urban centers may include increased zoning flexibility and development incentives and focused public investments to support increased livability.

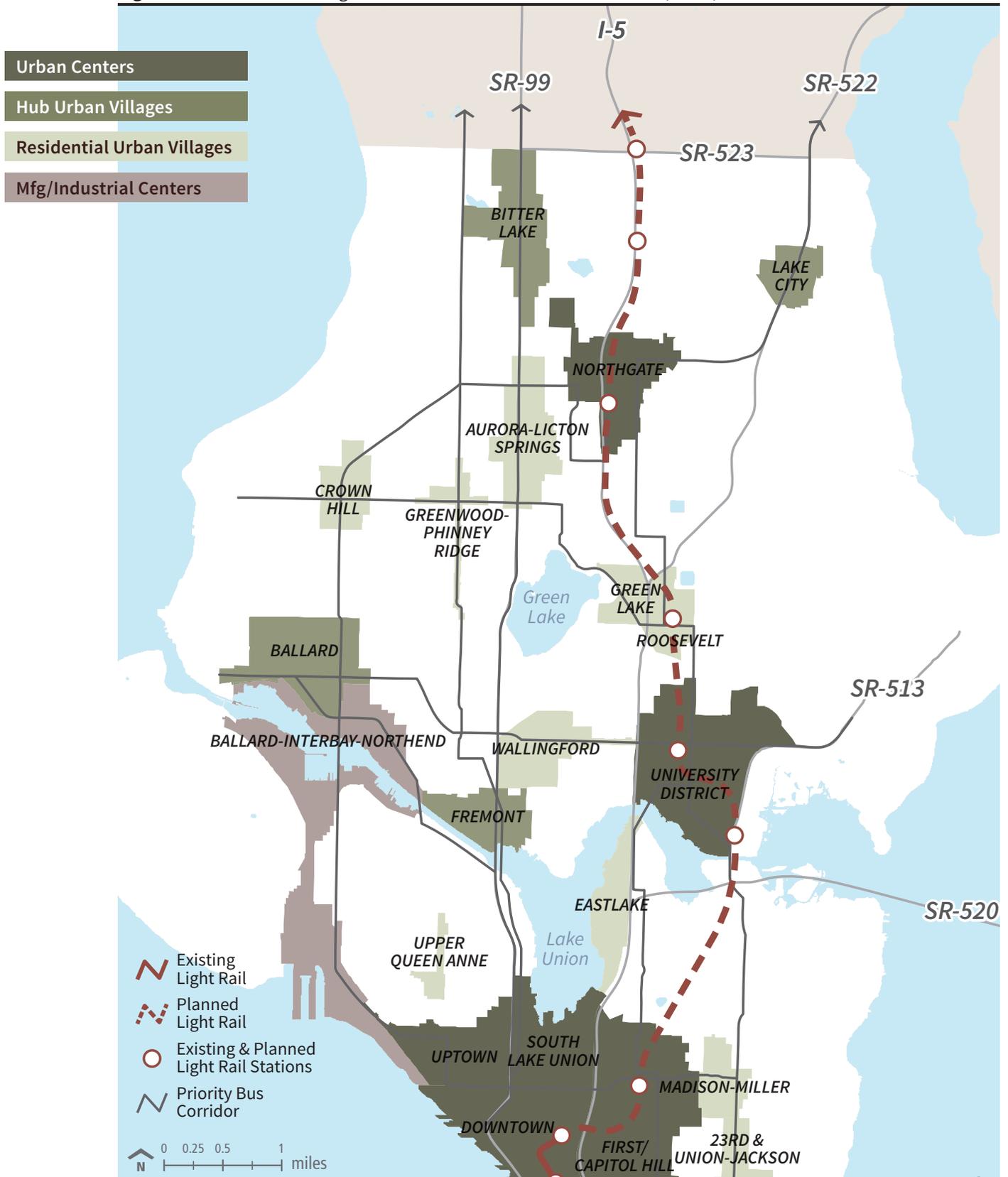
2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

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

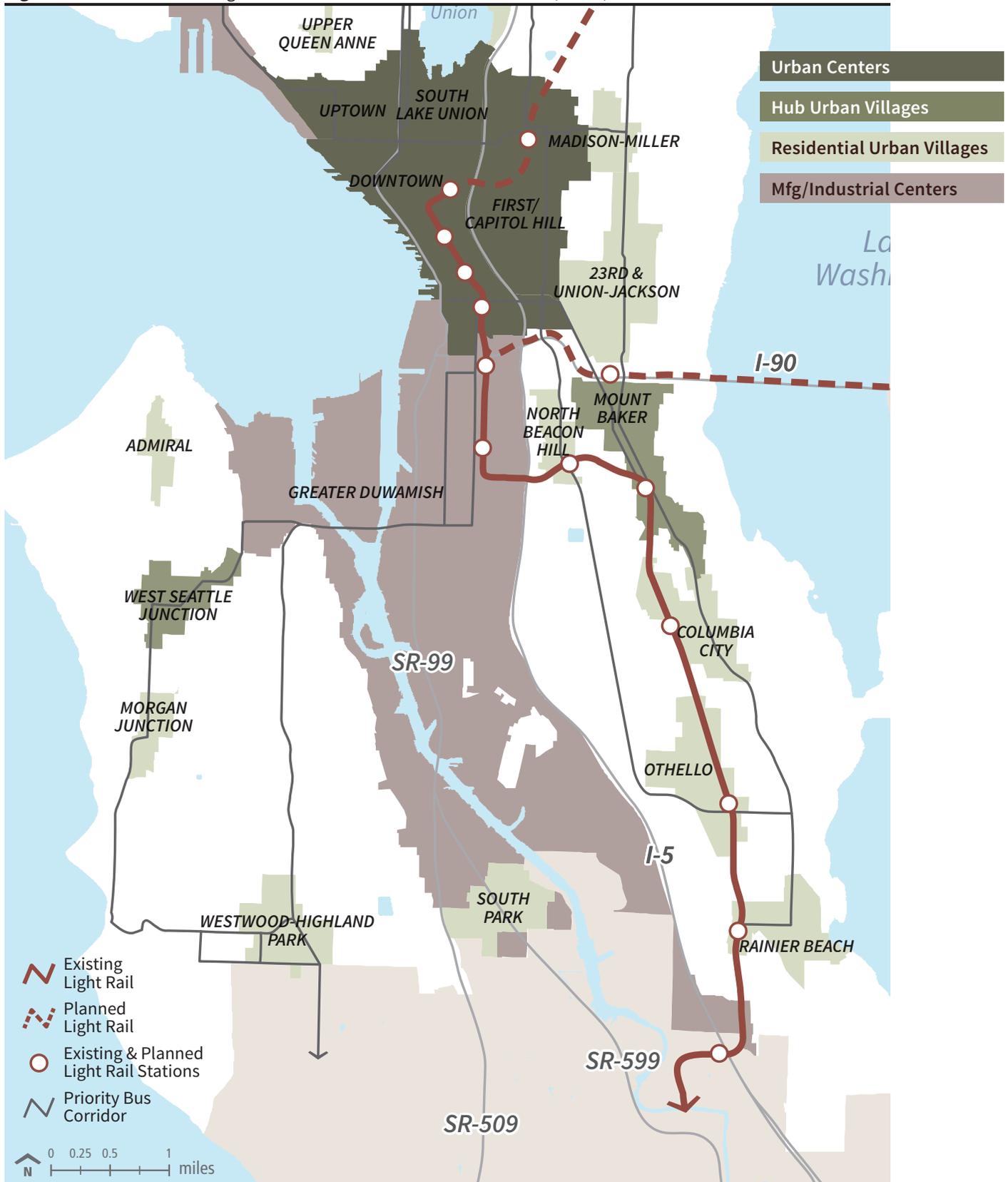


2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

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



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



**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**

**Table 2-3** Housing growth assumption

	<b>Alt 1</b>	<b>Alt 2</b>	<b>Alt 3</b>	<b>Alt 4</b>	<b>Alt 5, Preferred Alt</b>
<b>Urban Centers</b>					
Downtown	10,000	15,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
First/Capitol Hill	7,000	8,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
University District	2,700	4,000	3,500	3,500	3,500
Northgate	1,600	5,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
South Lake Union	4,700	12,000	8,000	7,500	7,500
Uptown	3,500	2,500	2,000	2,000	3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,500 (42%)</b>	<b>46,500 (66%)</b>	<b>34,500 (49%)</b>	<b>34,000 (49%)</b>	<b>35,000 (50%)</b>
<b>Hub Urban Villages</b>					
Ballard	3,000	1,500	1,500	3,000	3,000
Bitter Lake	2,100	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,300
Fremont	900	700	700	1,300	1,300
Lake City	1,400	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Mount Baker	700	800	3,000	3,500	1,500
West Seattle Junction	1,400	1,200	1,250	3,000	2,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,500 (14%)</b>	<b>6,200 (9%)</b>	<b>8,450 (12%)</b>	<b>12,800 (18%)</b>	<b>10,400 (15%)</b>
<b>Residential Urban Villages</b>					
23rd & Union-Jackson	2,200	600	1,750	1,750	2,700
Admiral	200	200	300	300	350
Aurora-Licton Springs	2,500	500	700	700	1,000
Columbia City	2,200	800	2,700	2,700	1,300
Crown Hill	100	300	300	1,200	650
Eastlake	800	300	300	300	800
Green Lake	500	500	700	700	800
Greenwood-Phinney Ridge	700	600	600	600	500
Madison-Miller	1,100	500	500	500	850
Morgan Junction	300	300	300	300	400
North Beacon Hill	200	500	1,500	1,500	750
Othello	1,700	800	2,500	2,500	850
Upper Queen Anne	600	300	300	300	500
Rainier Beach	100	500	1,500	1,500	450
Roosevelt	400	300	1,500	1,500	800
South Park	200	300	300	300	400
Wallingford	800	600	600	600	950
Westwood-Highland Park	400	300	600	600	650
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,000 (21%)</b>	<b>8,200 (12%)</b>	<b>16,950 (24%)</b>	<b>17,850 (26%)</b>	<b>14,700 (21%)</b>
<b>New Residential Urban Villages</b>					
130th/I-5			1,500	1,500	1,500

Source: City of Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development, 2016.

**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives****Table 2-4** Employment growth assumptions

	<b>Alt 1</b>	<b>Alt 2</b>	<b>Alt 3</b>	<b>Alt 4</b>	<b>Alt 5, Preferred Alt</b>
<b>Urban Centers</b>					
Downtown	30,000	33,000	25,000	30,000	35,000
First/Capitol Hill	4,000	7,000	5,000	5,000	3,000
University District	8,000	8,000	4,000	4,000	5,000
Northgate	5,000	11,000	7,500	7,500	8,000
South Lake Union	20,000	20,000	15,000	12,000	15,000
Uptown	3,500	3,500	2,000	2,000	2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>70,500 (61%)</b>	<b>82,500 (72%)</b>	<b>58,500 (51%)</b>	<b>60,500 (53%)</b>	<b>68,000 (59%)</b>
<b>Hub Urban Villages</b>					
Ballard	2,500	1,200	1,200	4,000	3,000
Bitter Lake	1,500	500	800	2,000	2,000
Fremont	400	400	400	400	400
Lake City	1,500	900	900	1,200	600
Mount Baker	1,000	800	3,200	3,200	2,000
West Seattle Junction	800	600	800	2,500	1,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,700 (7%)</b>	<b>4,400 (4%)</b>	<b>7,300 (6%)</b>	<b>13,300 (12%)</b>	<b>9,600 (8%)</b>
<b>Residential Urban Villages</b>					
23rd & Union-Jackson	400	400	1,200	1,200	1,000
Admiral	50	75	50	50	50
Aurora-Licton Springs	400	400	400	1,000	600
Columbia City	1,400	600	1,400	1,400	800
Crown Hill	150	150	150	150	100
Eastlake	150	150	150	150	100
Green Lake	250	250	250	250	150
Greenwood-Phinney Ridge	400	400	400	600	500
Madison-Miller	500	500	500	500	500
Morgan Junction	30	30	30	30	30
North Beacon Hill	150	150	500	500	300
Othello	600	300	2,000	2,000	800
Upper Queen Anne	30	30	30	30	30
Rainier Beach	300	300	600	600	500
Roosevelt	400	400	1,600	1,600	500
South Park	100	100	100	300	300
Wallingford	180	180	180	180	150
Westwood-Highland Park	100	100	100	100	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,590 (5%)</b>	<b>4,515 (4%)</b>	<b>9,640 (8%)</b>	<b>10,640 (9%)</b>	<b>6,510 (6%)</b>
<b>New Residential Urban Villages</b>					
130th/I-5			400	400	400
<b>Mfg/Industrial Centers</b>					
Greater Duwamish	3,000	12,000	11,000	6,000	6,000
Ballard-Interbay-Northend	1,500	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000

Source: City of Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development, 2016.

**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**

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

## **Alternative 3: Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Light Rail**

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

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

### **DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER**

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

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

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

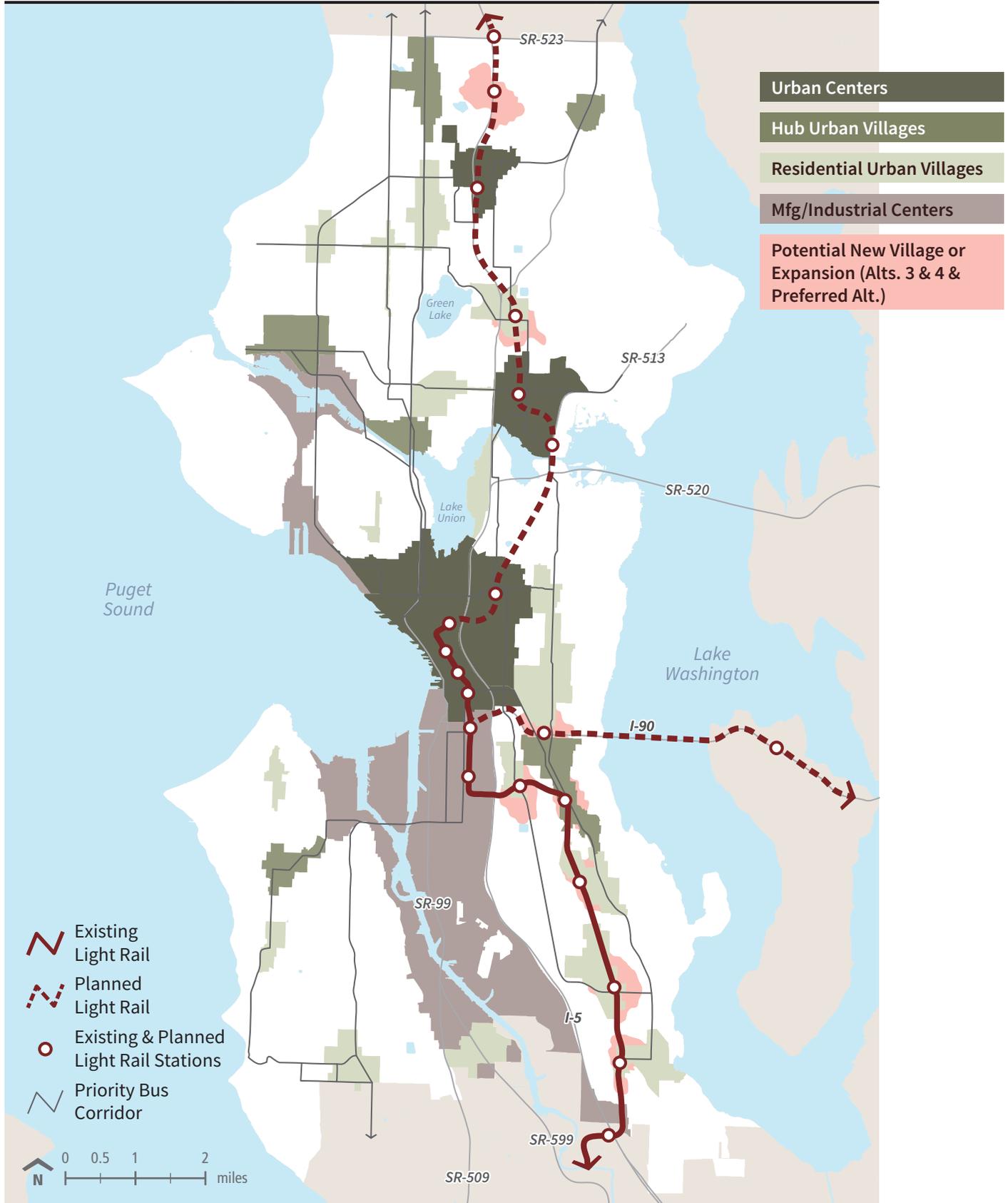
### **FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

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

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

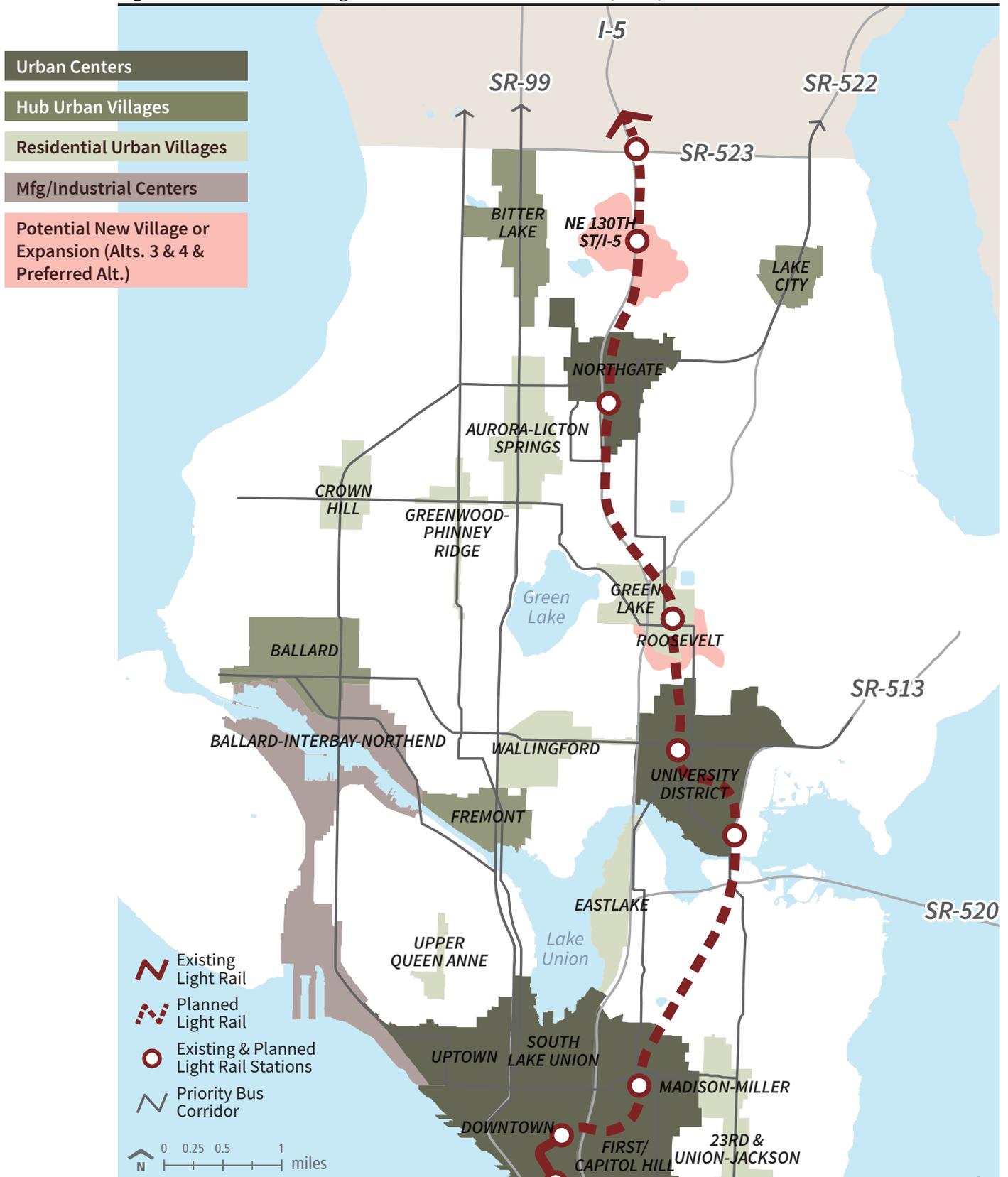
2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

**Figure 2-11** Urban village boundaries under Alternative 3



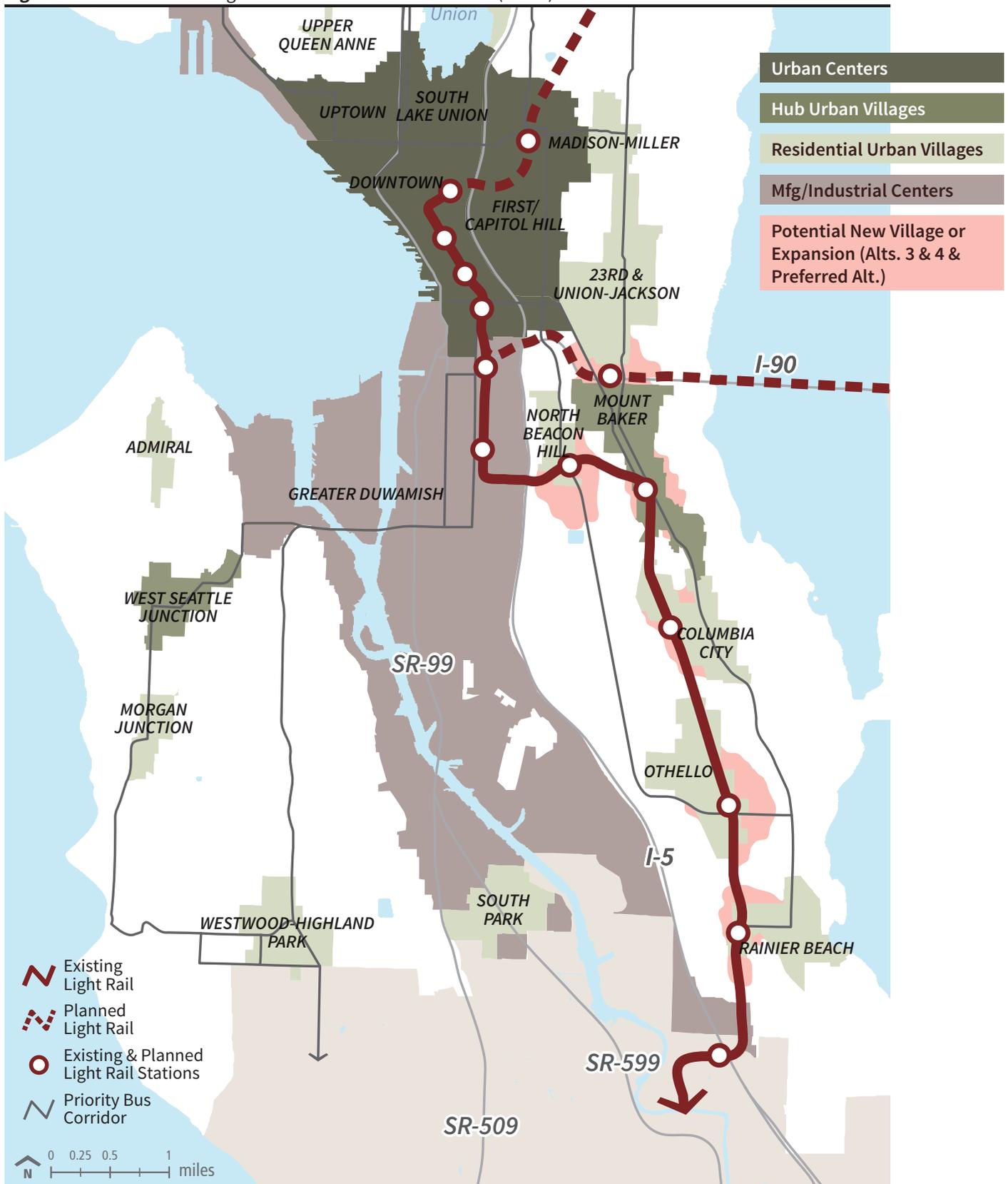
**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**

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



2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

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



**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**

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

**POLICY AND REGULATORY AMENDMENTS**

Similar to Alternative 2 and as shown in Table 2-5 on page 2-40, implementing actions under Alternative 3 to encourage focused growth around existing and planned light rail stations may include increased zoning flexibility and development incentives and focused public investments to support increased livability. This would be accomplished by changing the designation of urban centers and urban villages on the Future Land Use Map so that each category (center, hub, residential) would show as a single category with a distinct color, compared to the current map, which shows major land use categories by color. The map change would be accompanied by policies that describe the types and scales of development that would be expected inside each category. The effect would be to allow more flexibility for the zoning types that could be applied in the centers and villages.

**Alternative 4: Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Transit**

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

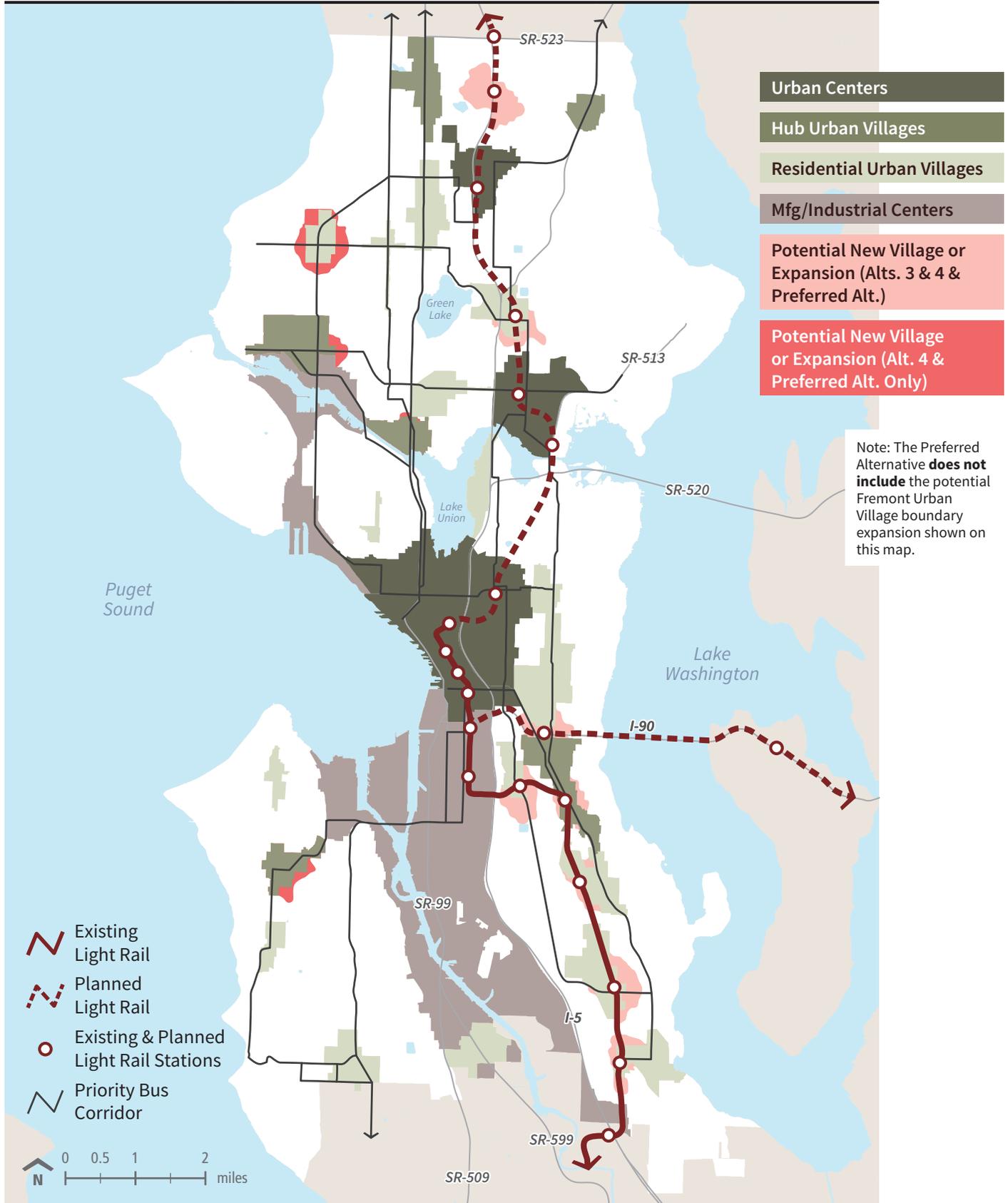
Alternative 4 would include the expanded urban village boundaries of Alternative 3 with additional expansions to encompass ten-minute walksheds around selected bus transit nodes with very good transit service in the Ballard, Fremont, West Seattle Junction and Crown Hill urban villages. Like Alternative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

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

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

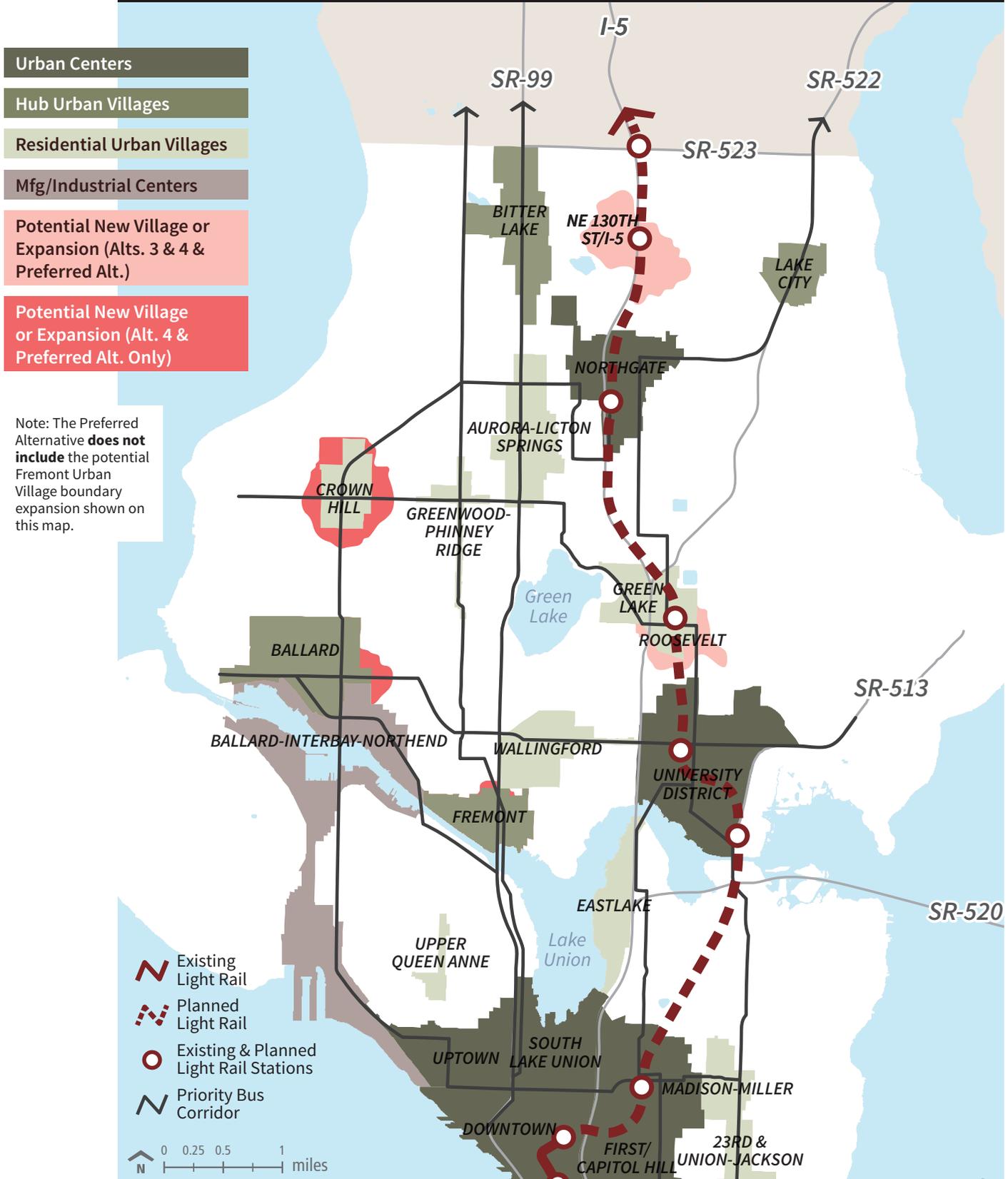
2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

**Figure 2-14** Urban village boundaries under Alternative 4 and Alternative 5, Preferred Alternative



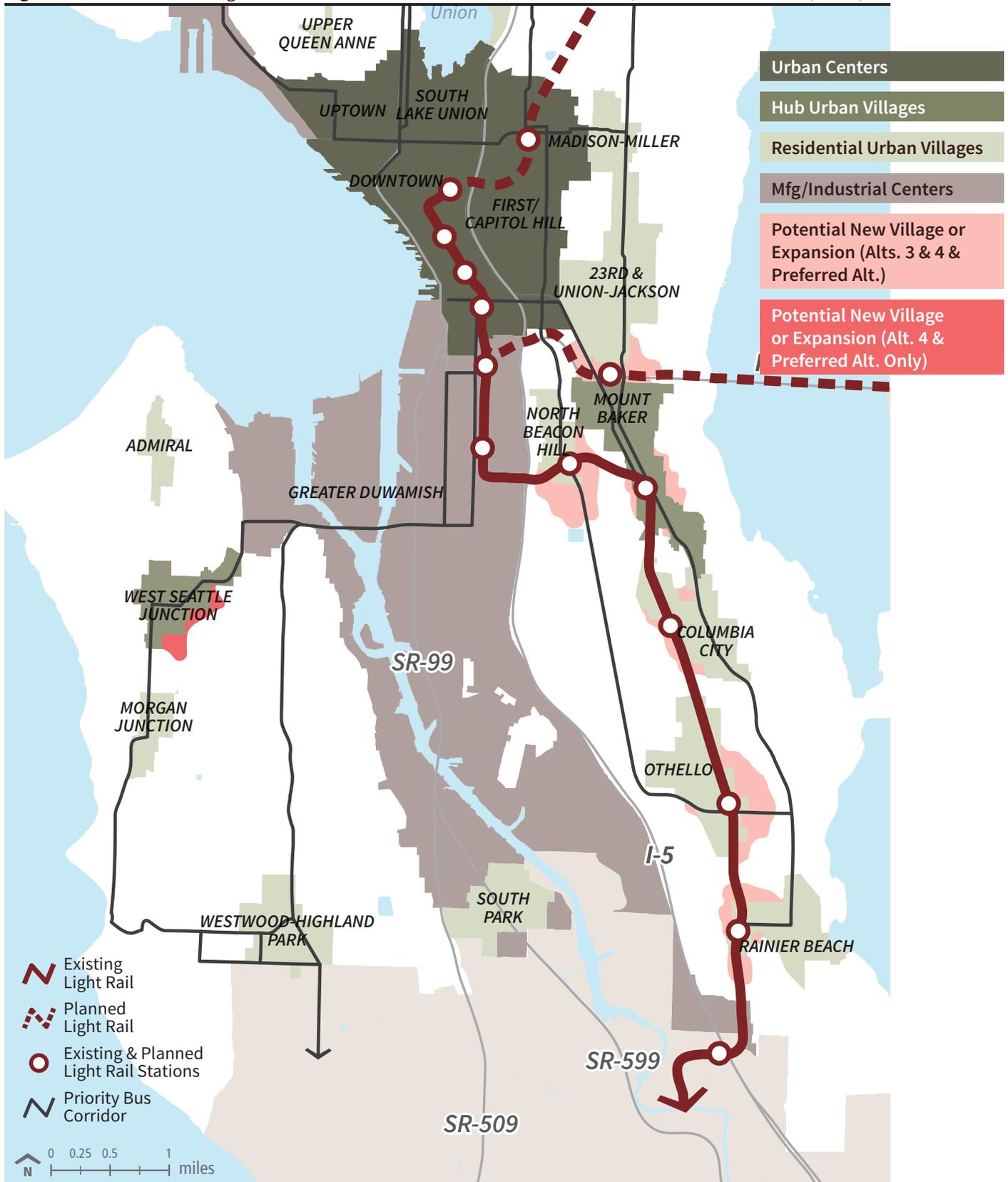
2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

**Figure 2-15** Urban village boundaries under Alternative 4 and Alternative 5, Preferred Alternative (north)



2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives

**Figure 2-16** Urban village boundaries under Alternative 4 and Alternative 5, Preferred Alternative (south)



**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**

**DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER**

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

**FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

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

**POLICY AND REGULATORY AMENDMENTS**

Similar to Alternative 2 and 3, and as shown in Table 2-5 on page 2-40, implementing actions under Alternative 4 to encourage focused growth around existing and planned light rail stations may include increased zoning flexibility and development incentives and focused public investments to support increased livability. This would be accomplished by changing the designation of urban centers and urban villages on the Future Land Use Map so that each category (center, hub, residential) would show as a single category with a distinct color, compared to the current map, which shows major land use categories. The map change would be accompanied by policies that describe the types and scales of development that would be expected inside each category. The effect would be to allow more flexibility across zoning types that could be applied in the centers and villages.

**Alternative 5: Preferred Alternative**

Similar to Alternative 4, the Preferred Alternative would guide and accommodate future growth around light rail transit stations and in selected urban villages with very good transit service levels. The Preferred Alternative also seeks to address the equity and displacement issues identified in public comment and the Growth and Equity Analysis. In order to reduce the potential for displacement, the Preferred Alternative plans for somewhat less growth in urban villages where the equity analysis showed both a high risk of displacement and a low access to opportunity.

The Preferred Alternative would include the same potential expansions of urban village boundaries as Alternative 4 except for the omission of Fremont's expansion area. Similar to alternatives 3 and 4, a new urban village would be located around the potential N 130th Street station as shown in Figure 2-14, Figure 2-15 and Figure 2-16. All other urban village boundaries would remain unchanged.

Under the Preferred Alternative, about 88 percent of new residential and 81 percent of new employment growth would be guided toward the urban villages and urban centers. Compared to the other alternatives, the Preferred Alternative would guide less growth toward

**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**

the urban centers and villages than alternatives 2, 3 and 4, but more than Alternative 1 (No Action). The Preferred Alternative would be similar to Alternative 4 in that it would result in a development pattern having more locations with growth. Compared to the other alternatives, the Preferred Alternative would result in an expansion of urban village boundaries comparable to but slightly less than Alternative 4. These expansions would relate to improving efficiency of land use patterns in lands within a ten-minute walkshed from selected bus or rail transit nodes; they are not motivated by a compulsory need to boost development capacity in these urban villages.

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

**DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER**

Residential and employment development character under the Preferred Alternative is anticipated to be similar to that described for Alternative 4. Compared to Alternative 4, a similar but slightly lesser area of expanded urban villages would be likely to convert from existing lower intensity to higher intensity development.

**FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

The Preferred Alternative would include the same kinds of Future Land Use Map changes as described for Alternative 4.

**POLICY AND REGULATORY AMENDMENTS**

As shown in Table 2-5 on page 2-40, types of implementing actions under the Preferred Alternative would be the same as anticipated for Alternative 4, with the exact locations and types of actions determined at a later date, and subject to factors such as which preferred growth distribution is approved. As necessary, a number of these potential implementing measures could be subject to phased review under SEPA, if or when they become ripe for SEPA review.

Final EIS Section 3.1 contains an impact analysis for the Preferred Alternative, including the sensitivity analysis described above.

**SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS**

The Growth Management Act requires the City's Comprehensive Plan to plan for the amount of population growth that has been allocated to the City by the Washington State Office of Financial Management. That allocation is 70,000 additional housing units and 115,000 additional jobs through 2035. The proposed Comprehensive Plan plans for that additional growth and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Plan evaluates the potential environmental impacts of alternative distributions of that growth throughout the City.

**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**

In response to the Draft EIS, citizen commenters asked the City to also include in the Final EIS a discussion about the potential environmental impacts of the Plan hypothetically assuming that more growth would occur. The City subsequently decided to study a scenario discussing the impacts that could occur assuming a growth of 100,000 housing units rather than the growth amount (70,000 housing units) allocated to the City by the State. No additional employment growth amount was defined. The SEPA rules authorize the City to include such additional, optional analysis in an EIS, and further provide that such optional analysis does not affect the adequacy of an EIS.

That analysis is referred to as a “sensitivity analysis,” and its findings are presented in Final EIS Section 3.1.2, following the Preferred Alternative impact analysis in Section 3.1.1.

## Policy and Regulatory Amendments

Potential implementing measures associated with each alternative are summarized in Table 2–5 below.

**Table 2–5** Potential implementing measures

	Rezones	Other Zoning Code, Regulatory, Policy or Investment Strategies
<b>Alternative 1</b> Continue Current Trends (No Action)	None known and none needed*	None known and none needed*
<b>Alternative 2</b> Guide Growth to Urban Centers	None known and none needed*  Future potential rezones are undefined but could be pursued by the City, as an implementing strategy	Complementary strategies supporting urban center growth could be pursued: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tools for zoning flexibility</li> <li>• Other growth incentive tools or programs to attract new buildings <u>construction</u></li> <li>• Public investments to aid livability and attract development</li> </ul> A precise description of content of such strategies is not defined at this time.
<b>Alternative 3</b> Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Light Rail	Change mapped designations of urban centers and urban villages on the FLUM to allow flexibility  Similar to Alternative 2, except FLUM change may enable more rezones to occur inside urban villages	Same as Alternative 2
<b>Alternative 4</b> Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Transit	Same as Alternative 3	Same as Alternative 2
<b>Alternative 5, Preferred Alternative</b> Guide Growth to Urban Villages near Transit	Same as Alternative 3	Same as Alternative 2

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

## 2.4 Environmental Review

### PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

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

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

### SEPA INFILL EXEMPTION

According to Washington State's environmental policies (see RCW 43.21c), the City may consider adjustments to "categorical exemptions" from environmental review, including for "infill development" as described in RCW 43.21c.229, if it fulfills certain requirements. Among these requirements is SEPA environmental review of a comprehensive plan in an EIS. By conducting this review, the City fulfills this obligation, and

The EIS identifies the potential range of impacts that may occur by pursuing alternative courses of growth policy directions ranging from a continuation of current policies (Alternative 1/No Action Alternative) to strategies that would differently emphasize growth patterns among urban centers, urban villages, light rail station area vicinities and/or other transit-served vicinities. The range of impact findings also help illustrate the implications of the possible future City action that could be taken to define higher SEPA categorical exemption levels related to infill development, which would eliminate environmental review for certain size ranges of future development. Such higher exemption levels could continue until applicable levels of density or intensity of development, as defined in the Comprehensive Plan, are met.

Except as may be otherwise discussed in Chapter 3 of this EIS, the use of the SEPA infill provisions is concluded to generate essentially the same potential for adverse environmental impacts as is identified for each alternative. This reflects a conclusion that the use of the higher categorical exemption levels encouraging infill development would be likely to result in future growth in patterns that would aid in accomplishing the urban village strategy because its use would be oriented to development within the urban centers and urban

**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**

villages, and not other places. This is likely to be so regardless of which EIS alternative might be selected by decision-makers to implement the urban village strategy preferred in the Comprehensive Plan. A corollary finding of the EIS is that the range of identified environmental impacts would be able to be addressed through the implementation of the City's development regulations, other applicable requirements of the City's comprehensive plan and functional plans, or other local, state, or federal rules or laws.

The proposal is to re-establish SEPA categorical exemption levels for infill development that are the same as were in effect until repealed in 2015. These are illustrated in Table 2-6 and Table 2-7 at right.

**SCOPE OF ANALYSIS**

The City issued a Determination of Significance and Scoping Notice on October 17, 2013. During the scoping comment period, which extended from October 17, 2013 to April 21, 2014, interested citizens, agencies, organization and affected tribes were invited to provide comments on the scope of the EIS. During the comment period, the City held a public scoping meeting to provide information and invite comment from interested parties.

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

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

**OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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

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

**2.3 Proposed Action & Alternatives**

- Amendments to policies addressing Environmentally Critical Areas.
- Amendments to Environment Element policies addressing stormwater drainage management and permeable surfaces.
- Housing Element amendments.

**Table 2-6** Proposed SEPA environmental review infill categorical exemption levels for establishing a new residential use with new construction

<b>Residential Uses: Number of Exempt Dwelling Units</b>			
<b>Zone</b>	<b>Outside of Urban Centers and Urban Villages Containing a Station Area Overlay District</b>	<b>Within Urban Centers, or Urban Villages Containing a Station Area Overlay District</b>	<b>Within Urban Centers, or Urban Villages Containing a Station Area Overlay District, if Growth Targets Have Been Exceeded</b>
<b>SF, RSL</b>	4	4	4
<b>LR1</b>	4	200	20
<b>LR2</b>	6	200	20
<b>LR3</b>	8	200	20
<b>NC1, NC2, NC3, C1, C2</b>	4	200	20
<b>MR, HR, SM</b>	20	200	20
<b>Downtown Zones</b>	N/A	250	20
<b>Industrial Zones</b>	4	4	4

**Table 2-7** Proposed SEPA environmental review infill categorical exemption levels for establishing a new non-residential use with new construction

<b>Non-Residential Uses: Exempt Area of Use (Square Feet of Gross Floor Area)</b>			
<b>Zone</b>	<b>Outside of Urban Centers and Urban Villages Containing a Station Area Overlay District</b>	<b>Within Urban Centers, or Urban Villages Containing a Station Area Overlay District</b>	<b>Within Urban Centers, or Urban Villages Containing a Station Area Overlay District, if Growth Targets Have Been Exceeded</b>
<b>SF, RSL, LR1</b>	4,000	4,000	4,000
<b>LR2, LR3</b>	4,000	12,000 <sup>1</sup> or 30,000	12,000
<b>MR, HR, NC1, NC2, NC3</b>	4,000	12,000 <sup>1</sup> or 30,000	12,000
<b>C1, C2, SM</b>	12,000	12,000 <sup>1</sup> or 30,000	12,000
<b>Industrial Zones</b>	12,000	12,000	12,000
<b>Downtown Zones</b>	N/A	12,000 <sup>1</sup> or 30,000	12,000

<sup>1</sup> New nonresidential development that is not part of a mixed-use development and that does not exceed 12,000 square feet is categorically exempt from SEPA. Pursuant to RCW 43.21C.229, new non-residential development that does not exceed 30,000 square feet and that is part of a mixed-use development located in an urban center, or in an urban village that contains a Station Area Overlay District, is categorically exempt from SEPA, unless the Department has determined that employment growth within the urban center or urban village has exceeded exemption limits for the center or village that the Department has established.

**2.4 Environmental Review**

**LEVEL OF ANALYSIS**

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

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

For each of the alternatives, potential environmental impacts to the elements of the environment listed above are described in Draft EIS Chapter 3. Additional analysis, including analysis of the Preferred Alternative, and revisions or clarifications to the analyses in the Draft EIS, can be found in Final EIS Chapter 3 and of this EIS and briefly summarized in Chapter 1. Please refer to these chapters for a comparison of the impacts of the alternatives, potential mitigating strategies and significant unavoidable adverse impacts.

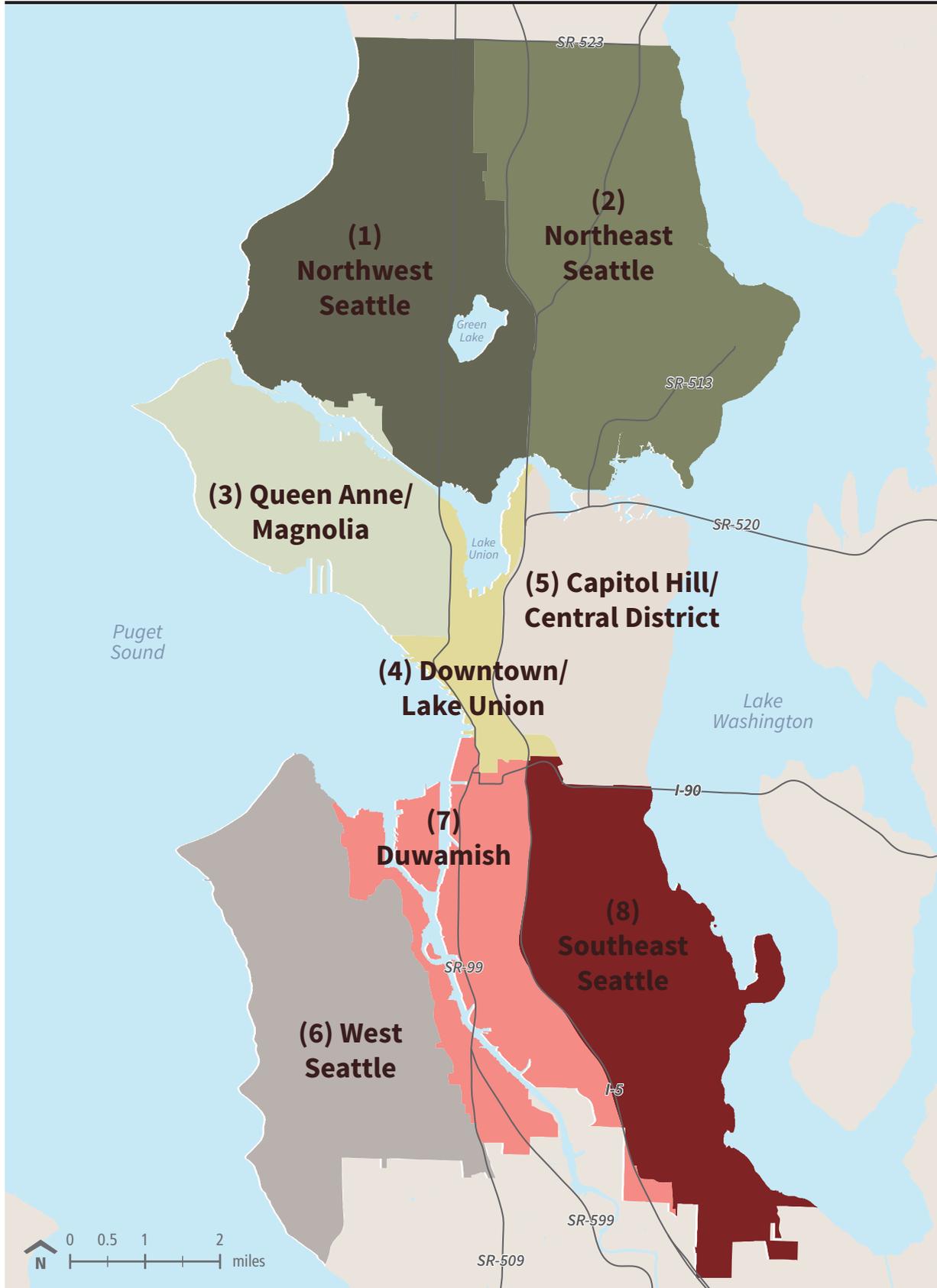
## **2.5 Benefits and Disadvantages of Delaying the Proposed Action**

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

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

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

**Figure 2-17** Eight analysis sectors



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