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# **Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

## **Executive Summary**

### **Alaskan Way, Promenade, and Overlook Walk**

Prepared for  
**Seattle Department of Transportation**  
**Seattle, Washington**

June 2015



### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information**

Materials can be provided in alternative formats—large print, Braille, or on computer disk for people with disabilities by contacting 206-499-8040. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make requests for alternative formats through the Washington Relay Service at 7-1-1.

### **Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI Statement to the Public**

The City of Seattle Department of Transportation hereby gives public notice that it is the policy of the department to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Title VI requires that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, nation origin, disability, or age, be excluded from the participation in, be denied benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the department receives federal financial assistance. Persons wishing information may call the City of Seattle Office of Civil Rights at (206) 684-4500.



# City of Seattle

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

## Department of Transportation

Scott Kubly, Director

June 29, 2015

Dear Affected Tribes, Interested Agencies, and Members of the Public,

The City of Seattle is proposing a series of infrastructure improvement projects along the Seattle Waterfront in response to the opportunities, transportation needs, and public objectives created by the replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct with a State Route (SR) 99 tunnel. The most substantial of these improvements are a set of contiguous projects collectively known as the Alaskan Way, Promenade, and Overlook Walk (AWPOW). The Seattle Department of Transportation is acting as lead agency under the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

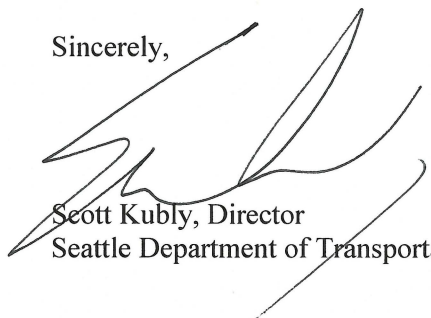
Once constructed, AWPOW would create a new transportation corridor between S. King Street and Battery Street, construct new public open space along Elliott Bay, provide a major new pedestrian connection between the waterfront and Pike Place Market, and improve east-west connections between the waterfront and downtown Seattle.

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) has been prepared to evaluate the projects to inform the public and to assist decision-makers in understanding the environmental effects--both positive and negative--associated with project construction and operation. The Draft EIS focuses on potential impacts and proposed mitigation measures for the following elements of the environment:


- Transportation
- Parking
- Land Use
- Aesthetics
- Noise
- Hazardous Materials
- Public Services and Utilities
- Historic Resources
- Archaeological Resources
- Water Quality
- Vegetation and Wildlife
- Energy Resources
- Air Quality

We encourage you to comment on this Draft EIS. Instructions for submitting comments are outlined on the Fact Sheet included in this document, which also includes details of a public hearing on the Draft EIS scheduled for July 22, 2015. All comments are due by August 12, 2015.

Sincerely,



Scott Kubly, Director  
Seattle Department of Transportation



Marshall Foster, Director  
Seattle Office of the Waterfront



# FACT SHEET

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## Project Name

Alaskan Way, Promenade, and Overlook Walk

## Proposed Action

The City of Seattle is proposing a number of infrastructure improvement projects (collectively referred to as “Waterfront Seattle”) along the Seattle waterfront. These improvements are proposed in response to the opportunities, transportation needs, and related public objectives created by the replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct with a new State Route (SR) 99 tunnel.

The most substantial of the planned improvements are four contiguous projects that would create a new transportation corridor between S. King Street and Battery Street, construct new public open space along Elliott Bay adjacent to the new Alaskan Way, provide a major new pedestrian connection between the waterfront and Pike Place Market, and improve east-west connections between the waterfront and downtown Seattle. The four projects are referred to collectively in this environmental impact statement (EIS) as the Alaskan Way, Promenade, and Overlook Walk, abbreviated as AWPOW. The projects are:

- The Main Corridor: A new Alaskan Way corridor from S. King Street to Pike Street, and a new Elliott Way corridor from Pike Street to Battery Street with improvements for general-purpose traffic, transit, freight, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- The Promenade: A continuous public open space along the waterfront
- The Overlook Walk: A new structure providing open space, view opportunities, and pedestrian connections between the waterfront and Pike Place Market
- The East-West Connections: Improvements to portions of S. Main, S. Washington, Union, and Bell Streets adjacent to the main corridor to provide better connections between the waterfront and downtown Seattle and to enhance the pedestrian experience

## Project Proponent and SEPA Lead Agency

City of Seattle Department of Transportation  
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900  
PO Box 34996  
Seattle, WA 98124-4996

## SEPA Responsible Official

Scott Kubly, Director  
City of Seattle, Department of Transportation

## Comment Period

The comment period will begin on the date the Notice of Availability is published in the State SEPA Register. Notice is anticipated to be published on June 29, 2015, and the 45-day comment period will conclude on August 12, 2015.

## Date Comments Are Due

August 12, 2015

## **Comment Submittal and Contact Information**

All written comments should be sent to:

AWPOW – Draft EIS Comments  
c/o Mark Mazzola, Environmental Manager  
Seattle Department of Transportation  
PO Box 34996  
Seattle, WA 98124-4996

Comments can be sent by email to: [DEIS@waterfrontseattle.org](mailto:DEIS@waterfrontseattle.org)

Comments can be provided online at: [waterfrontseattle.org](http://waterfrontseattle.org)

## **Public Meetings**

A public open house to provide project-related information and receive comments from the public and interested parties on the Draft EIS will be held:

Wednesday July 22, 2015  
Seattle City Hall, Bertha Knight Landes Room  
600 Fourth Avenue, Seattle  
4:30-7:30 p.m.

A court reporter will be available to receive oral testimony.

## **Document Availability and Cost**

The Draft EIS is available online at: [waterfrontseattle.org/environmental](http://waterfrontseattle.org/environmental)

Printed copies of the Draft EIS and technical appendices are available for review for no cost at:

Seattle Department of Planning and Development's Public Resources Center  
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000, Seattle  
  
Seattle Public Library, Central Library  
1000 Fourth Avenue, Seattle

The Executive Summary, which includes a CD of the Draft EIS and technical appendices, is also available for review at the University of Washington Suzzallo Library, all City Neighborhood Service Centers, and all Seattle Public Libraries.

Printed copies of the Executive Summary are available to the public at no charge and printed copies of the Draft EIS and technical appendices are available for purchase by calling 206-499-8040. Prices for printed volumes are:

Draft EIS \$50.00  
Technical Appendices \$50.00

## **Permits and Approvals**

- Clean Water Act Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction Stormwater General Permit (Washington State Department of Ecology)
- Major Public Projects Construction Noise Variance (City of Seattle)
- Seattle Landmarks Board Approval (City of Seattle)
- Pioneer Square Preservation Board Certificate of Approval (City of Seattle)
- Pike Place Market Historical Commission Certificate of Approval (City of Seattle)

- Master Use Permit for Shoreline Substantial Development (City of Seattle)
- Street Use Permit (City of Seattle)

### **Authors and Principal Contributors**

The List of Preparers can be found at the end of this Draft EIS.

### **Date of Issuance for the Draft EIS**

June 29, 2015

### **Related Documents**

Background data and materials used for this Draft EIS are listed in the References. Key documents used in this analysis include:

- Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program environmental documentation, including the Draft, two Supplemental Drafts, and Final EISs with associated discipline reports
- Elliott Bay Seawall Project Draft, Final, and Supplemental Final EISs with associated discipline reports

### **Subsequent Environmental Review**

After the Draft EIS comment period concludes, the lead agency will review and respond to comments. A Final EIS will be prepared that contain responses to the comments and potential updates to the environmental documents. The Final EIS is anticipated to be published in late 2015 or early 2016.





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# ACRONYMS

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<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AWPOW	Alaskan Way, Promenade, and Overlook Walk
AWVRP	Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project
bgs	below ground surface
BMP	best management practice
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
City	City of Seattle
DAHP	Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
dB	decibel
dba	A-weighted decibel
EBSP	Elliott Bay Seawall Project
Ecology	Washington State Department of Ecology
EIS	environmental impact statement
GHG	greenhouse gas
Leq	equivalent sound pressure level
LPS	light-penetrating surface
NAC	noise abatement criteria
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPGIS	non-pollution-generating impervious surfaces
PGIS	pollution-generating impervious surfaces
PPMWE	Pike Place Market Waterfront Entrance Project
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
SMC	Seattle Municipal Code
SR	State Route
WAC	Washington Administrative Code



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## Introduction

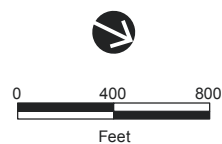
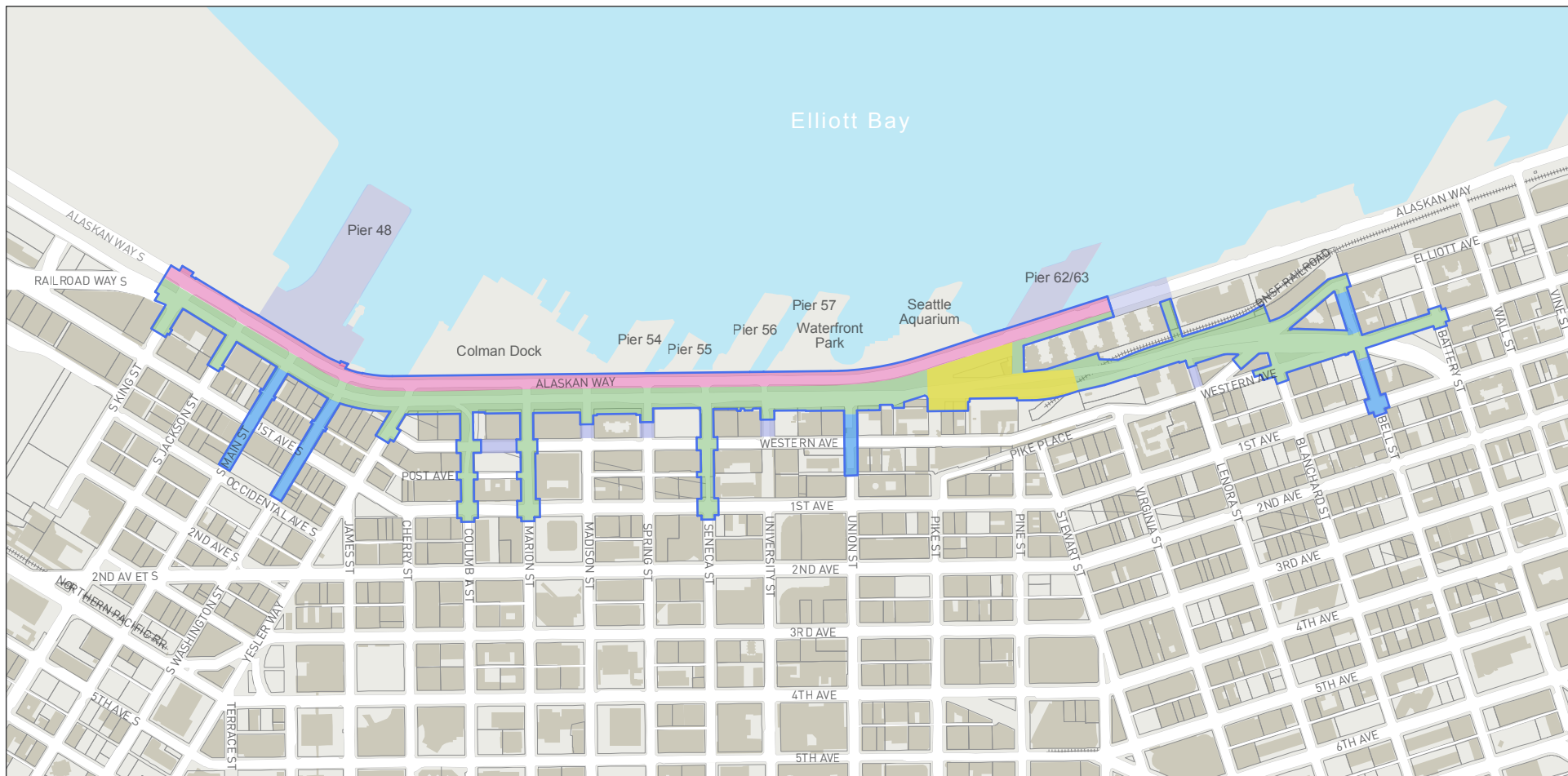
The City of Seattle is proposing a number of infrastructure improvement projects (collectively referred to as “Waterfront Seattle”) along the Seattle waterfront. The improvements are proposed in response to the opportunities, transportation needs, and related public objectives created by the replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct with a new State Route (SR) 99 tunnel. These opportunities, needs, and objectives for the waterfront are articulated in the Waterfront Seattle Guiding Principles, which affirm the following goals:

- Create a waterfront for all
- Put the shoreline and innovative, sustainable design at the forefront
- Reconnect the city to its waterfront
- Embrace and celebrate Seattle's past, present, and future
- Improve access and mobility (for people and goods)
- Create a bold vision that is adaptable over time
- Develop consistent leadership from concept to operations

The most substantial of the Waterfront Seattle planned improvements that implement the Guiding Principles are four contiguous projects that would create a new transportation corridor between S. King Street and Battery Street, construct new public open space along Elliott Bay adjacent to the new Alaskan Way, provide a major new pedestrian connection between the Pike Place Market and the waterfront, and improve east-west connections between downtown Seattle and the waterfront. These projects are:

- The Main Corridor: A new Alaskan Way corridor from S. King Street to Pike Street, and a new Elliott Way corridor from Pike Street to Battery Street with improvements for general-purpose traffic, transit, freight, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- The Promenade: A continuous public open space along the waterfront
- The Overlook Walk: A new structure providing open space, view opportunities, and pedestrian connections between the waterfront and Pike Place Market
- The East-West Connections: Improvements to portions of S. Main, S. Washington, Union, and Bell Streets adjacent to the main corridor to provide better connections between the waterfront and downtown Seattle and to enhance the pedestrian experience

Because of the complementary nature of these projects, and the fact that they represent the most substantial of the planned Waterfront Seattle improvements, the City is evaluating them together in this environmental impact statement (EIS), as authorized by the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) under Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-060(3)(c) and the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 25.05.060(C)(3). The four projects are referred to collectively in this EIS as the Alaskan Way, Promenade, and Overlook Walk, abbreviated as AWPOW, and also referred to as the Action Alternative and the project. Figure ES-1 shows the footprint and general location of these projects.



Source: SDOT

#### Action Alternative

- Project Footprint
- Potential Construction Staging Area

#### AWPOW Projects

- Main Corridor
- Promenade
- Overlook Walk
- East-West Connections

- Parcel Boundary
- Building Footprint

**Figure ES-1**  
**Action Alternative**  
**Overview**

Alaskan Way, Promenade, and  
Overlook Walk

## Purpose and Need for the Project

Each of the four projects within AWPOW has its own distinct purpose, which is based on a set of identified needs and policy decisions and is consistent with the Waterfront Seattle Guiding Principles. The purpose and need for each of the projects are summarized below; more information is provided in Chapter 1 of this EIS.

### Main Corridor

**Purpose of the action:** Accommodate safe, efficient, and reliable travel between the south downtown area and Belltown for general-purpose traffic, regional transit, freight, ferry traffic, pedestrians, and bicycles.

**Need for the action:** AWPOW responds, in part, to transportation needs created by WSDOT's replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct with a tunnel. Because of the elimination of the viaduct, Alaskan Way will be required to serve additional traffic demand and replace the viaduct's surface connection to Belltown. The new Alaskan Way will accommodate increased demand by vehicles, freight, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users, and comply with Seattle's "complete street" policy promoting safe operations for all users. This requires a corridor with speed limits similar to those of other downtown streets, signalized intersections that provide safe and convenient places to cross, generous sidewalks, and a street width as narrow as possible, given the traffic functions that the roadway must accommodate.

### Promenade

**Purpose of the action:** Provide significant public open space adjacent to the Elliott Bay shoreline in downtown Seattle to accommodate pedestrian demand, create public amenities, and strengthen the connection between the city and its waterfront.

**Need for the action:** Currently, the waterfront is difficult to access and provides little space to accommodate pedestrian movement and gathering. Visual and physical connections to the shoreline are limited. The quality of the existing pedestrian environment is compromised by the Alaskan



Looking south on Alaskan Way near Union Street

Way Viaduct, and will also be compromised in the future by the location of the restored Alaskan Way after construction of the Elliott Bay Seawall Project (EBSP) is completed. Collectively, these factors have resulted in a wide zone dominated by motor vehicles immediately adjacent to the city's most visited shoreline. The City's Pedestrian Master Plan identifies substantial opportunities along Alaskan Way to improve pedestrian linkages, roadway crossings, and the quality of the pedestrian environment.



## Overlook Walk

**Purpose of the action:** Provide a grade-separated pedestrian crossing, view opportunities, and public open space between the waterfront and Pike Place Market.

**Need for the action:** Access between the Pike Place Market and the waterfront, two of Seattle's most popular attractions, is impeded by steep topography and at-grade street crossings; open space in this area is limited, and there are few opportunities for views. The existing viaduct provides expansive views for motorists, but these views will be eliminated when the viaduct is demolished. The heavy use of this area by the public warrants the provision of additional open space that facilitates pedestrian movement while providing opportunities for people to gather and enjoy scenic vistas.

## East-West Connections

**Purpose of the action:** Improve key east-west streets adjacent to the main corridor to provide better connections between the waterfront and downtown Seattle and to enhance the pedestrian experience.

**Need for the action:** There is currently a lack of strong pedestrian connections between the waterfront area and the downtown Seattle street grid. At the southern end of the main corridor, access from Alaskan Way to Pioneer Square is hindered by uneven sidewalks, high curbs, and lack of facilities on east-west streets built to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The central portion of the main corridor, from Seneca Street to the Pike Street Hillclimb, affords no east-west access for people with limited mobility between the waterfront and First Avenue. In the northern portion of the main corridor, the elimination of the viaduct and decommissioning of the Battery Street Tunnel provides opportunities to reconnect and enhance portions of the east-west street grid for pedestrian and bicycle use. Improvements to east-west streets in these areas would strongly support the Waterfront Seattle Guiding Principles, as well as the policies and recommendations of the City's Pedestrian Master Plan.



Alaskan Way looking north from Yesler Way in 2003

## Community, Agency, and Tribal Involvement

Waterfront Seattle planning has involved substantial participation by elected officials, stakeholders, and community members. Since 2011, the City's public outreach program for Waterfront Seattle has included over 300 community events including public meetings, fairs, festivals, briefings, forums, and workshops. All planning and design efforts have taken place in partnership with a series of committees established by the Seattle City Council. The Central Waterfront Partnerships Committee, established in November 2009, developed the Waterfront Seattle Guiding Principles, which the Seattle City Council



affirmed by resolution in January 2011. The Central Waterfront Committee replaced the Central Waterfront Partnerships Committee in January 2011, and consisted of a wide range of volunteer community representatives and leaders appointed by the Seattle City Council. The committee developed documents in its role as the broad overseer of the design, financing, public engagement, long-term operations, and maintenance of Waterfront Seattle. These documents included the Framework Plan, the Concept Design, and the Strategic Plan, which were all published in July 2012 and supported by the Seattle City Council in August 2012. They provide guidance, goals, and strategies for implementation of Waterfront Seattle. In October 2014, the Central Waterfront Steering Committee replaced the Central Waterfront Committee in order to advise the City on implementing the Central Waterfront Concept Design and Strategic Plan.

The City began public scoping for the AWPOW EIS in compliance with SEPA in summer 2013. Scoping is the first step in the EIS process; its purpose is to narrow the focus of the EIS to significant environmental issues, to eliminate insignificant impacts from detailed study, and to identify alternatives to be analyzed in the EIS. Scoping also provides notice to the public and other agencies that an EIS is being prepared, and initiates their involvement in the process. The public was invited to submit comments by mail, email, an online comment form, or in person at a public scoping meeting, which was held at Seattle City Hall on September 9, 2013.

The City received over 200 comments during the scoping period. Most of the comments came from individuals. The remainder were from agencies; community, business, and labor organizations; and the Suquamish Tribe. Some main themes in the comments pertained to the width and number of lanes on Alaskan Way, local waterfront transit options, impacts on nearby residential properties, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and safety, and parking. Other comments requested that the EIS address fish, wildlife, and their habitats; stormwater and water quality; and hazardous materials. These comments assisted in shaping the scope and analysis found in this EIS. Appendix N, Scoping Summary, contains more information on the comments received during the scoping process.

## **Alternatives Evaluated**

### **Development of Alternatives**

The opportunity to reconfigure the downtown waterfront was made possible by the state of Washington's decision in 2009 to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct (SR 99) with a tunnel and improve the Alaskan Way surface street. The viaduct stands on City right of way, which will become available for reuse once the structure has been demolished. Together with the existing Alaskan Way surface street, this right of way creates a swath of contiguous City property along the Elliott Bay shoreline that can be used for transportation, open space, and key east-west connections, in accordance with AWPOW's purpose and need.

While removal of the viaduct opens up opportunities for use of the City right of way underneath, there are several constraints on how the space can be used, including existing topography, right of way (property) boundaries, historic features, shoreline law, roadway facilities, and pedestrian and bicycle facility goals. Given these constraints, only the No Action Alternative and Action Alternative are evaluated in this EIS. No other alternatives that could feasibly attain or approximate the proposal's objectives, but at a lower environmental cost or decreased level of environmental degradation, were identified. More information on alternatives development is provided in Chapter 2 and Appendix M of this EIS.

## No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the AWPOW projects would not be built. However, conditions in the area would be different from those that exist at the time this EIS is published (2015). Major changes assumed to be in place under the No Action Alternative are:

- The Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project (AWVRP) will be complete, with the viaduct eliminated and the SR 99 tunnel in operation. Parking that existed beneath the viaduct prior to the start of AWVRP construction is assumed to have been restored.
- The EBSP will be complete, and will include a new sidewalk inset with light-penetrating surface (LPS).
- The Pike Place Market Waterfront Entrance Project (PPMWE)<sup>1</sup> will be complete.

The analysis for the No Action Alternative is based on the expected conditions in 2030, which is the project design year (the year used for the assessment of future conditions). The No Action Alternative serves as the baseline against which the potential impacts of the Action Alternative are evaluated.

Upon completion of the EBSP (currently planned for 2016), Alaskan Way will be restored to the alignment that it occupied until construction began on the AWVRP and EBSP, immediately west of and generally parallel to the present alignment of the Alaskan Way Viaduct. The roadway will have two lanes serving general-purpose traffic in each direction, with an additional northbound lane to serve ferry traffic between S. King and S. Main Streets and two left-turn lanes between S. Main Street and Yesler Way. The east-west streets will generally connect to the restored roadway as they did before EBSP construction started, although the intersections of Alaskan Way with Columbia and Seneca Streets will be modified after removal of the Alaskan Way Viaduct ramps. There will be signals at all intersections. The restored Alaskan Way will not have a direct connection to Western Avenue or Elliott Avenue in Belltown. Vehicles traveling north will need to use Wall, Vine, or Broad Streets to cross the BNSF rail line and access Belltown.

Under the No Action Alternative, the City-owned right of way beneath the Alaskan Way Viaduct is assumed to be restored by the AWVRP and EBSP to its original configuration in 2010, before construction of those projects began. This configuration included parking spaces with pay stations as well as business and parking access lanes. Approximately the same number of parking spaces is assumed to be provided as were in place in 2010.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are assumed to generally match those existing in the corridor before EBSP construction began, but with improvements to meet ADA requirements. A sidewalk with a continuous band of LPS to improve aquatic habitat conditions will run along the western edge of the restored Alaskan Way. On the east side of Alaskan Way, an 8- to 10-foot-wide path will provide through access for bicycles and pedestrians.

## Action Alternative

The Action Alternative would implement Waterfront Seattle improvements after the AWVRP, EBSP, and PPMWE have been constructed. This alternative consists of the main corridor (which includes a new Alaskan Way with new connections to Elliott and Western Avenues), the Promenade, the Overlook Walk, and the East-West Connections. Each project is briefly described below; more detailed information on their design is provided in Chapter 2.

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<sup>1</sup> This project is now called the Pike Place MarketFront. Because the name evolved during the Draft EIS process, this document uses the term PPMWE.

## Main Corridor

The main corridor would operate as part of the regional transportation system, serving some of the functions that will no longer be provided by SR 99 after the Alaskan Way Viaduct is replaced with a tunnel. It would serve both local and regional transportation needs for a wide array of users, providing access between SR 99 and downtown Seattle as well as direct access to northwest Seattle. In addition to passenger, transit, and freight vehicles, it would accommodate high levels of pedestrian and bicycle traffic and would improve connections between the waterfront and downtown Seattle. The proposed improvements would consist of:

- Construction of the new Alaskan Way between S. King Street and Pine Street, along the east side of the right of way
- Construction of a new arterial connection, called Elliott Way, which would follow the path of the existing Alaskan Way Viaduct from Alaskan Way at Pine Street up the hill into Belltown, where it would connect with Elliott and Western Avenues
- A new intersection at Pine Street (referred to as the Pine Street extension) that would connect the new Alaskan Way and new Elliott Way with the existing Alaskan Way north of Pier 62/63
- A dedicated transit lane in each direction along Alaskan Way between S. King Street and Columbia Street and on Columbia Street between Alaskan Way and First Avenue, which are both part of King County Metro's Southwest Transit Pathway improvements to address transit needs following AWVRP completion
- Northbound ferry queuing lanes between S. King Street and Yesler Way, which include double left-turn lanes between S. Main Street and Yesler Way

Improvements for pedestrians would include wider sidewalks along the east and west sides of the new Alaskan Way. Sidewalks would continue along both sides of Elliott Way, allowing pedestrians to walk from the waterfront to Belltown. Signalized pedestrian crossings would be provided at all intersections. Other pedestrian improvements would include a rebuilt Marion Street pedestrian bridge, linking First Avenue with Colman Dock across Western Avenue and Alaskan Way. At Seneca Street, the project would reconstruct the stairs, sidewalk, and parking between Alaskan Way and Western Avenue. A continuous, protected two-way bicycle facility would run along the west side of the new Alaskan Way. The facility would begin at S. King Street and continue north on the west side of Alaskan Way to about Virginia Street, where it would cross the road to join the existing path on the east side of the roadway. At the new intersection with Elliott Way, the bicycle facility would transition to separate northbound and southbound paths that would connect with existing bicycle lanes on Elliott and Western Avenues in Belltown. Along Alaskan Way, the bicycle facility would be separated from the roadway and pedestrian areas by landscaping and other means to limit potential conflicts between pedestrians, bicyclists, and motor vehicles.

The main corridor would build accommodations for both regional transit and local waterfront transit that could provide connections to waterfront-area destinations for recreational visitors, local employees, and residents.

## Promenade

The Promenade would be a continuous public open space along the west side of the new main corridor from King Street to Virginia Street that would be designed for walking, sitting, gathering, and viewing the waterfront. Design features and landscaping along its length would create a series of different environments, or “places,” that would reflect the character of the surrounding areas. These places are:

- **Colman Dock Transit Hub**, an area supporting the regional transit hub in front of the Seattle Multimodal Terminal at Colman Dock

- **Historic Piers 54 through 59**, where narrow boardwalks or paths would traverse planted terraces with integrated seating
- **Aquarium Plaza**, a broad public gathering area at the intersection of the Seattle Aquarium, the Pike Street Hillclimb, and the Overlook Walk

The westernmost portion of the Promenade would include the band of LPS, cantilevered over Elliott Bay, which will be built as part of the EBSP. New, permanent railings would replace the temporary railings installed by the EBSP at the western edge of the overhang. The remainder of the Promenade would be constructed of an architectural concrete surface with decorative elements.

A linear canopy of trees would provide a buffer between the Promenade and the street. Kiosks would be located on the Promenade near the intersections of Alaskan Way with Spring, Seneca, University, and Union Streets, which would provide focal points for wayfinding, programs, and other services. Lighting along the Promenade would be designed in a layered pattern to provide visual interest and wayfinding clarity.

## Overlook Walk

The Overlook Walk would occupy the existing public right of way south of Victor Steinbrueck Park, west of Pike Place Market, and northeast of the Seattle Aquarium. It would be composed of two buildings and a sloping lid that would extend southwest from the Pike Place Market, across the new Elliott Way, and down more than 100 vertical feet to the waterfront near the Seattle Aquarium and Pier 62/63. The Overlook Walk would include over an acre of public open space, provide active gathering spaces and elevated scenic viewing opportunities, create a robust and accessible pedestrian connection with multiple ways to walk between Pike Place Market and the waterfront, and provide opportunities to enhance the pedestrian experience and revitalize the area. Stairs would link the northern part of the Overlook Walk to Victor Steinbrueck Park and Elliott Way. On the southwest side of the lid, wide, amphitheater-style steps would open onto Pier 62/63.

The configuration of the Overlook Walk lid against the hillside would provide an opportunity to create two new buildings, known as Building B and Building C. These buildings would be used for public purposes and to serve transportation functions, as well as for incidental private uses. One use currently being considered for Building C is an expansion of the Seattle Aquarium. Building B, located on the east side of Elliott Way and rising above the east edge of the Overlook Walk lid, would contain approximately 23,000 square feet of interior space. Building C, located beneath the wide amphitheater steps connecting the Overlook Walk lid to the Aquarium Plaza, would contain approximately 22,000 square feet of interior space. Both buildings would have elevators, providing a fully accessible route between the waterfront and the Pike Place Market.

## East-West Connections

The East-West Connections are improvements to portions of S. Main, S. Washington, Union, and Bell Streets adjacent to the main corridor to provide better connections between the waterfront and downtown Seattle and to enhance the pedestrian experience. The S. Main and S. Washington Street Improvements would replace the roadway pavement and reconstruct the sidewalks to create more pedestrian-friendly links between the waterfront and Pioneer Square. The Union Street Pedestrian Connection would construct two elevated pedestrian walkways and associated elevators and stairs along the south side of Union Street to serve as an accessible pedestrian link between the new waterfront and downtown. The Bell Street Park Extension would continue the shared street (roadway and public park space) between Elliott and First Avenues, creating a better pedestrian connection towards Elliott Way and the waterfront.

# Construction Impacts and Mitigation

Construction of the Action Alternative is expected to consist of the following general activities:

- Utility removal, replacement, or relocation
- Demolition of the existing roadway and appurtenances on Alaskan Way, S. Main, S. Washington, Union, and Bell Streets
- Demolition of existing stairs and reinforcement and repair of the retaining walls at Union Street
- Ground improvement, where necessary, to stabilize soils for support
- Dewatering of excavations below the water table (generally about 5 feet below ground surface [bgs] along the waterfront) to provide a dry work area, where necessary
- Use of best management practices (BMPs) to protect water quality and reduce erosion; these may include installation of silt fencing, covering of stockpiled soil, and collection and treatment of construction stormwater runoff
- Drilling and vibratory pile driving for deep shafts to support the Overlook Walk and Elliott Way bridge structures
- Earthwork (excavation and filling) for the Pine Street extension and the section of Elliott Way between Lenora Street and the bridge over the BNSF tunnel
- Micropile driving to support structures such as the kiosks and the Marion Street pedestrian bridge
- Placement of foundation and pavement for the new Alaskan Way and Elliott Way roadways, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Vibratory pile driving and micropile driving to support Union Street pedestrian structures
- Excavation, formwork construction, and concrete pumping and pouring for the Union Street pedestrian structures
- Placement of roadway foundation and pavement for S. Main, S. Washington, Union, and Bell Streets
- Installation of Promenade elements including paving, benches, kiosks, and landscaping
- Installation of street lighting, signal poles, and signage

It is anticipated that construction activities would begin with early utility work in 2017 and be completed in 2020. The construction time frame could shift depending on when the AWVRP is completed.

Construction would be sequenced to build the new Elliott Way connection and the Columbia Street improvements first to provide an efficient connection to Belltown and improved transit connections in and through the corridor. The new Alaskan Way surface street would likely be constructed in segments. During construction of the Pine Street extension and the western portion of the Overlook Walk, Alaskan Way in the vicinity of Pine Street would be closed for a short period (assumed to be up to 4 months for the purposes of analysis); however, Elliott Way would be open to provide access to destinations on Alaskan Way north of Pine Street.

The No Action Alternative would not have any construction activities or impacts. The potential construction impacts of the Action Alternative are summarized in Table ES-1 and described below. Implementing mitigation measures and adhering to permit conditions would minimize or avoid the potential for adverse impacts during construction of the Action Alternative.

**Table ES-1. Potential Construction Impacts**

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>No Action Alternative</b>	<b>Action Alternative</b>
Transportation	None	Moderate Adverse Impact
Parking	None	Moderate Adverse Impact
Land Use	None	Moderate Adverse Impact
Aesthetics	None	Moderate Adverse Impact
Noise	None	Moderate Adverse Impact
Hazardous Materials	None	Minor Adverse Impact
Public Services and Utilities	None	Moderate Adverse Impact
Historic Resources	None	Minor Adverse Impact
Archaeological Resources	None	Minor Adverse Impact
Water Quality	None	Minor Adverse Impact
Vegetation and Wildlife	None	Minor Adverse Impact
Energy Resources	None	Minor Adverse Impact
Air Quality	None	Minor Adverse Impact

## Transportation

Construction of the Action Alternative could impact transportation along Alaskan Way and the east-west cross streets in the corridor by increasing congestion and modifying local access to and from downtown Seattle. During the midday and non-peak commute periods, generally up to one lane in each direction could be closed periodically. However, it is anticipated that impacts on traffic operations would be relatively minor because roads would remain open for the majority of the construction period and closures would occur during periods of lower traffic volumes. Construction truck trips are not expected to substantially increase traffic volumes and delays because the number of anticipated truck trips is small in the context of overall truck use in the area.

The largest construction impact for the Action Alternative would be the closure of Alaskan Way in the vicinity of Pine Street while the Pine Street extension and western portion of the Overlook Walk are built. For purposes of this analysis, the closure is assumed to last up to approximately 4 months. During this time, vehicles would access the waterfront north of Pine Street from the south by traveling along the newly constructed Elliott Way to reach the northern portion of Alaskan Way via east-west streets. This could result in delay and congestion for all traffic, including emergency vehicles, when trains are using the at-grade crossings on these streets.

Access to businesses would be maintained to the extent feasible throughout construction; any blockages would be temporary. Pedestrians and bicyclists would be rerouted around active construction zones; sidewalks that meet minimum ADA requirements would be provided during construction on at least one side of the street in all work zones, and the existing path on the east side of Alaskan Way would remain open, with detours as necessary. Transit routes would run on interim pathways, which would likely be similar to where they were rerouted during construction of EBSP and AWVRP. Construction is not expected to impact service or sailing schedules for ferries, cruise ships, or sightseeing boats.

The City would develop a Traffic Control Plan to reduce impacts on traffic operations and to protect and control motor vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic during all phases of construction. The plan would be developed in accordance with City construction specifications and would be updated as appropriate for each construction phase.

## Parking

Construction activities for the Action Alternative would temporarily impact on-street parking throughout the study area. The amount of on-street parking affected would vary by construction stage and segment and would be determined once construction and staging plans are finalized. Some businesses could have access routes or loading zones temporarily blocked, but this would only occur intermittently.

To construct the Action Alternative, a surface parking lot with approximately 60 spaces would be acquired. These off-street parking spaces represent less than 1 percent of the off-street parking supply in the area. Off-street parking outside of the project footprint would not be affected, except for minor temporary changes in access to build the improvements.

While AWPOW would reduce the overall parking supply in the project footprint, the City would maintain parking availability to the extent feasible during construction. Once construction and staging plans have been developed, the City would develop practices to manage parking during construction to ensure, to the extent feasible, that parking is convenient and accessible to waterfront businesses and their patrons. In addition, the City would continue enforcement of short-term parking limits and the use of e-Park, which provides real-time off-street parking availability information, to make the most efficient use possible of the supply of short-term parking within the project footprint.

## Land Use

Construction of the Action Alternative would result in temporary impacts to most or all land uses in and adjacent to the project footprint. Impacts would be due to noise, dust, congestion, loss of parking, and temporary access changes associated with construction that could negatively affect residences, recreational users, and businesses.

The Action Alternative would require the acquisition of two full parcels: a commercial surface parking lot with approximately 60 parking spaces, and a small two-story office building (the Harborscape Professional Building) with one business. Both of these uses would be displaced. In addition, five parcels would be partially acquired for the Action Alternative, converting a total of about 0.4 acre to new City right of way. The partial acquisitions would not alter or preclude the current use of the properties. Temporary construction easements would also be needed for several properties adjacent to Alaskan Way. For these easements, the property would generally be restored to its previous condition before being returned to the property owner.

Mitigation measures and BMPs would address the construction impacts. For increased noise, traffic congestion, and aesthetic impacts, the City would implement measures as described for those disciplines. The City would work closely with property owners, businesses, and residents on communication and coordination to reduce the level of impact. The City would compensate the owners of properties acquired for right of way in accordance with Washington's relocation and property acquisition law and regulations (Revised Code of Washington [RCW] 8.26) and the City's relocation assistance policy (SMC 20.84). Just compensation for all acquisitions and easements would be determined by a qualified appraiser.

## Aesthetics

Short-term construction impacts on aesthetics would result from the presence and movement of construction equipment, stockpiled construction materials and debris, screening and safety fences, and nighttime illumination. Because work would be done in segments, views would be affected for only a portion of the overall construction period, and long-distance views of visual resources to the west would not be affected. Construction on east-west streets would occur in one- to two-block segments and would primarily be visible only to viewers in the immediate vicinity. Construction of the new elevator shafts at Union Street could potentially affect long-distance views from locations on Union Street east of Post Alley for a portion of the construction period. Local visual impacts could be reduced by minimizing

construction-related light and glare and developing strategies to maintain views when locating and maintaining safety fencing and screening.

## Noise

Construction noise would result from the operation of heavy equipment needed to construct various project features and structures, such as bridges, retaining walls, roads, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The contractor would be required to comply with the requirements of the City of Seattle Noise Control Ordinance; construction activities outside normal daytime hours would require a noise variance from the City. Maximum typical construction noise levels could reach as high as 88 dBA at the closest receiver locations.

The City would minimize construction noise at nearby noise receptors by complying with the Seattle Noise Ordinance and any variances to the ordinance that are obtained for the project.

## Hazardous Materials

The Action Alternative has the potential to encounter contaminated materials such as petroleum products and metals during construction. Within the project footprint (specifically beneath Alaskan Way), there is documented soil and groundwater contamination that varies widely from location to location due to the large amount of fill material present and the area's history of industrial uses. In addition to this general contamination, nine specific sites with hazardous materials that are being overseen by the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) were identified that have the potential to impact the project. Also, one of the acquired properties for the Action Alternative includes a building that would need to be demolished. The building could contain hazardous materials such as lead-based paint or asbestos-containing materials that might need to be abated before demolition begins. As a result of these conditions and the use of hazardous materials during project construction, potential construction impacts could include the exposure of workers or the public to:

- Contaminated materials contained in soil and groundwater
- Hazardous materials contained in underground storage tanks
- Hazardous materials in structures to be demolished
- Construction-related spills or releases

Impacts may also include the potential for the City to acquire hazardous materials-related liability as part of project-related property acquisition.

Mitigation for construction impacts includes the preparation and implementation of the following plans, programs, and procedures:

- Health and Safety Plan
- Hazardous Building Materials Survey and Abatement Program
- Monitoring Well Decommissioning and Protection Procedures
- Underground Storage Tank Decommissioning and Protection Procedures
- Contaminated Media Management Plan

## Public Services and Utilities

Public services could be adversely impacted by traffic congestion and detours during construction of the Action Alternative. Periodic closures and restrictions on east-west streets and the approximately 4-month closure of Alaskan Way for construction of the Pine Street extension would affect access for



service providers. The City would work closely with emergency service providers to put in place appropriate measures for emergency access to and travel through construction areas to minimize impacts on response times. In addition, timely communications would be provided to all service providers with details about detours, utility disruptions, and other critical activities. The City would also:

- Coordinate with solid waste service providers to minimize impacts on solid waste collection and recycling activities
- Notify the Seattle School District of construction detours that may affect school bus routings to and through the study area
- Notify the United States Postal Service of construction detours and access changes that may affect postal deliveries and its facility at S. Jackson Street

Impacts on utilities during construction of the Action Alternative would vary depending on the depth of the utilities below grade, their material composition, and the construction excavation limits. Potential utility outages would affect business and residential customers as well as public services. The project design would comply with current City of Seattle and state of Washington regulatory requirements; the City would work closely with utility providers to ensure appropriate space planning and construction sequencing to minimize overall risks, costs, and impacts. The City would also:

- Work with utility providers to provide maintenance and emergency access to all utilities throughout construction
- Ensure that outages are minimized and that critical utilities, such as power, water, and telecommunications for emergency response and public safety, are maintained
- Contact the utility provider immediately if any inadvertent damage to the utility occurs

## Historic Resources

The Action Alternative's footprint includes portions of the Pioneer Square Preservation District and is adjacent to the Pike Place Market Historical District. Nineteen individual Seattle Landmarks outside of the historic districts are also located near the project footprint. During construction, reduced access and parking, as well as construction-related noise and dust, would make it more difficult for people to patronize businesses in historic buildings and districts. However, because construction work would be done in segments, each historic property would be affected for a relatively short period. While these short-term impacts would inconvenience residents, customers, and employees who use the historic properties, the ability of owners to maintain the historic integrity of their properties is not expected to be affected.

Potential mitigation measures implemented for transportation, parking, noise, public services, and water quality during construction would help protect the historic and physical integrity of the structures and the economic viability of the properties and districts. Before constructing the Action Alternative, the City would obtain the required Certificates of Approval for work within historic districts and any alterations, even temporary ones, to landmarked buildings. Such Certificates of Approval would be needed from the Pioneer Square Preservation Board, the Pike Place Market Historical Commission, and the Seattle Landmark Preservation Board. The City would repair any damage that occurs to historic buildings as a result of AWPOW construction in accordance with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 67).

## Archaeological Resources

Five archaeological sites have been recorded within the Action Alternative's footprint. Three of the sites have been mitigated through recordation, and have been at least partially removed by previous projects that disturbed these sites. The other two archaeological sites are:

- A site near Pier 48, where a portion of the now buried Ballast Island is still in place and could be affected by construction of the sidewalk and bicycle facility
- A site near Union Street and Western Avenue, where a historic buried concrete wall could intersect with the pedestrian improvements at Union Street

Undetected sites may still be present in portions of the project footprint that have not been investigated for cultural resources. The greatest likelihood of encountering such materials is in the area between Pike Street and Blanchard Street, where construction depths could reach 80 feet bgs. Although regrading in this area has removed some of the native soils, the historic fill is thinner than it is along the shoreline, and deeper areas of excavation could intersect older deposits that have the potential to contain pre-contact materials. Construction activities on Union Street would be 40 to 60 feet deep due to the drilled shafts required for the pedestrian walkway connections; therefore, older archaeological deposits could also be encountered. To address the potential for project construction to impact currently undetected archaeological sites, the City would prepare an Inadvertent Discovery Plan before project construction begins. The City might also develop a plan in consultation with the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and interested Native American tribes to conduct archaeological monitoring during some construction activities in areas having a high potential for encountering undetected archaeological resources.

## Water Quality

Construction activities such as earthwork, stockpiling, material transport, concrete work and paving, storm drain utility work, use of construction machinery, and dewatering have the potential to affect water quality in Elliott Bay. These pollutants can increase turbidity, change pH, and reduce available oxygen in the water. The impacts would be temporary, would vary in intensity and duration depending on the type of construction occurring, and would be mitigated through required preventative measures. The City would prepare and implement plans pursuant to the City of Seattle Stormwater Code, Stormwater Manual, and the NPDES Construction Stormwater General Permit that describe BMPs to prevent pollution, control stormwater flows, and protect Elliott Bay during construction.

## Vegetation and Wildlife

During construction of the Action Alternative, human activity and noise from construction equipment could disturb wildlife. However, wildlife species that use habitats in the study area are already adapted to high levels of noise and human activity, and construction noise and activity would not constitute a substantial increase in disturbance compared to the No Action Alternative. A Tree, Vegetation, and Soil Protection Plan would be developed to ensure the selection of appropriate protective measures during construction. These measures would identify protective measures for trees and other vegetation to be retained as well as for soil surfaces to guard against compaction and erosion. They would also include appropriate measures to minimize the risk of introduction and spread of noxious and invasive species. The City would restore and landscape the project footprint as soon as practicable during construction and would implement appropriate conservation measures and BMPs to minimize potential impacts on wildlife. No adverse impacts on vegetation and wildlife are expected as a result of construction activities.

## Energy Resources

Construction activities would consume energy to manufacture materials, transport materials, and operate construction equipment. Construction would also contribute to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through the burning of fossil fuels to operate construction machinery and transport workers. In addition to construction activities, GHG emissions would originate from the production of concrete and steel for the project and from the project's use of electrical energy generated by fossil fuels.

The amount of energy used for AWPOW, although substantial, would be a small fraction of overall energy consumption in Seattle and is not expected to have a substantial impact on energy resources. Similarly, AWPOW is not expected to contribute significantly to overall GHG emissions or to hinder compliance with GHG reduction targets in Seattle or the state. BMPs, such as limiting idling of equipment, would contribute to improved energy efficiency during construction.

## Air Quality

During construction of the Action Alternative, soil-disturbing activities, operation of heavy-duty equipment, commuting workers, and the placement of concrete and asphalt may generate emissions that would temporarily affect air quality. The total emissions and the timing of these emissions would vary depending on factors such as construction phasing and the types of equipment used.

State law requires that construction site owners and operators take reasonable precautions to prevent fugitive dust from becoming airborne. Dust may become airborne during demolition, material transport, grading, vehicle and machinery operations on and off the work site, and wind events. Controlling fugitive dust emissions could involve BMPs such as spraying exposed soil with water, covering materials, and scheduling construction activities to keep disturbed areas to a minimum.

## Operational Impacts and Mitigation

Table ES-2 summarizes AWPOW's operational impacts for both the No Action and Action alternatives, which are described in more detail below. The AWVRP, EBSP, and PPMWE will be completed before AWPOW begins and are therefore assumed to be part of the future conditions for both the No Action and Action alternatives. The project would be designed to minimize or avoid the potential for adverse impacts; in addition, implementing mitigation measures and adhering to permit conditions would minimize or avoid the potential for adverse impacts.

**Table ES-2. Operational Impacts and Benefits**

Discipline	No Action Alternative	Action Alternative
Transportation	Minor to Moderate Adverse Impact	Moderate Benefit
Parking	No Impact	Moderate Adverse Impact
Land Use	Minor Adverse Impact	Moderate Benefit
Aesthetics	No Impact	Moderate Benefit
Noise	No Impact	Minor Adverse Impact
Hazardous Materials	Minor Adverse Impact	Minor Adverse Impact
Public Services and Utilities	Minor Adverse Impact (public services) No impact (utilities)	Minor Benefit (public services) No Impact to Minor Benefit (utilities)
Historic Resources	No Impact	Minor Adverse Impact
Archaeological Resources	No Impact	No Impact
Water Quality	No Impact	Minor Benefit
Vegetation and Wildlife	No Impact	Minor Benefit
Energy Resources	Minor Adverse Impact	Minor Benefit
Air Quality	Minor Adverse Impact	Minor Benefit

## Transportation

The transportation analysis for both alternatives reflects the future conditions in 2030, the project design year, and accounts for population and employment changes and transportation improvements anticipated by that time. Under the No Action Alternative, traffic volumes are generally expected to increase by approximately 5 to 10 percent between 2017 and 2030 due to regional population and employment growth. The restored Alaskan Way roadway would not have sufficient capacity to accommodate this future travel demand. As a result, general-purpose and freight traffic would experience more congestion and delays at intersections. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities under the No Action Alternative would remain the same as in 2017; the stairs at Seneca and Union Streets would not meet ADA standards.

The primary operational impact of the Action Alternative would be to provide improved or additional facilities for motor vehicles, transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians in the study area. This would improve overall traffic operations, transit reliability, emergency service response, and pedestrian and bicyclist comfort and safety. Levels of service would improve at most intersections compared to the No Action Alternative, which would reduce delays for vehicle traffic. Travel times under the Action Alternative would also improve or remain similar to the No Action Alternative. Along the east side of the new Alaskan Way, properties that currently use City right of way to access parking or loading areas would experience changes in access. Freight access to businesses would be accommodated with on-street parking and loading zones along Alaskan Way, side streets, and alleys, but with modifications in some locations. Regional transit would benefit from improved traffic operations and dedicated transit facilities in the study area. Water transportation services and rail would not be disrupted by the Action Alternative and would likely experience safety and congestion improvements because of improved roadway operations and levels of service.

At the north end of the project footprint, the extension of Bell Street Park between Elliott and First Avenues would change the roadway configuration to become a one-way shared street (roadway and public park space). This would have a minor impact on the roadway operations on Bell Street and the adjacent roadways.

## Parking

The parking supply under the No Action Alternative is expected to remain the same as under 2017 existing conditions. Population and employment growth would likely increase the demand for parking by 2030, the project's design year.

The Action Alternative would permanently remove approximately 88 on-street parking spaces along Alaskan Way, 377 parking spaces that existed in the Alaskan Way Viaduct footprint, 15 on-street spaces on Bell Street, 3 spaces on Union Street, and 1 space on S. Main Street. The loss of 484 on-street parking spaces represents approximately 26 percent of the on-street parking supply in the study area. The Action Alternative would also permanently remove 189 off-street parking spaces in the study area. The overall loss of 484 on-street parking spaces and 189 off-street parking spaces would result in a total project-related parking loss of approximately 673 parking spaces, which represents approximately 6 percent of all on- and off-street parking supply in the study area. The City would mitigate this loss by providing approximately 250 new parking spaces that are being constructed by the Pike Place Market Preservation Authority as part of the PPMWE Project. The City may also consider other measures to help minimize the parking loss impact for the Action Alternative.

It is expected that demand for both on-street and off-street parking would increase in conjunction with population and employment growth in Seattle's central business district. Because parking supply would decrease under the Action Alternative, this increase in demand for parking, coupled with the decrease in parking supply, is expected to increase the on-street and off-street parking utilization rates across all parking zones and time periods studied.

The proposed removal of on-street parking is consistent with applicable policies in Seattle's Comprehensive Plan (2005). The removal of on-street parking spaces, in conjunction with the enhanced nonmotorized and transit facilities that are part of the Action Alternative, supports overall City planning goals for reducing dependency on single-occupant vehicles in the downtown area.

## Land Use

Compared to the Action Alternative, operation of the No Action Alternative would result in higher traffic congestion and less potential for beneficial redevelopment in accordance with adopted land use plans. Because Alaskan Way would not have sufficient capacity to accommodate increased travel demand in 2030, the resulting congestion could affect business patronage, and would not address City land use goals of increased connectivity and mobility. The No Action Alternative would maintain the existing non-accessible and indirect pedestrian connections between the Pike Place Market and the waterfront. It would not support local land use plans that envision a downtown waterfront with enhanced connection to the shoreline, increased public gathering space, and improved accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

The operational impacts of the Action Alternative on land use are expected to be positive because the project would result in a more accessible waterfront and increase the desirability of the area for public use and general development. Positive operational impacts are expected because the new public facilities associated with this project would enhance traffic operations, support increased walking and bicycling, improve multimodal connectivity and mobility, provide new open space and recreation opportunities, and support economic development. Although the project would not change existing zoning or land use designations, increased activity and public amenities along the waterfront could encourage beneficial redevelopment of adjacent areas in accordance with applicable zoning and development standards. The Action Alternative is expected to support the goals of state, regional, and local land use plans, many of which call for improvements along the waterfront.

## Aesthetics

There would be no visual impacts or benefits under the No Action Alternative because it would be identical to the 2017 existing conditions. Operational impacts of the Action Alternative would be generally positive because the streetscape and pedestrian spaces would replace paved areas currently dedicated to parking and vehicle traffic. Elements that are expected to enhance visual quality include trees and shrubs, gathering areas with seating, and custom paving patterns and lighting. With these landscaping and urban design elements, the Action Alternative streetscape and pedestrian spaces would generally be considered an aesthetic enhancement compared to the No Action Alternative.

The new kiosk structures along the Promenade would be prominent in the historic pier section of the waterfront. At their proposed height, the kiosks could impact views along designated view corridors at Seneca, Spring, Union, and University Streets. Depending on their final design, the kiosks could be perceived to have either a positive or a negative visual impact, depending on the viewer.

The Overlook Walk and Buildings B and C would be new dominant structures in views from the waterfront and from Pike Place Market and Belltown. This change to the visual landscape could be perceived to have either a negative or a positive impact, depending on the viewer. Negative impacts from the Action Alternative could arise if tree canopies and kiosk structures were to block or interfere with scenic views along the waterfront or toward Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains.

The Union Street Pedestrian Connection would include walkways with new public viewpoints that would provide very high-quality views of the waterfront and Elliott Bay. The new pedestrian connection would also include elevator towers that would be compatible with existing nearby development, although the towers would partially alter the views of Elliott Bay currently provided at Union Street just east of Post Alley.



Visualization of the Action Alternative from Victor Steinbrueck Park, looking south

## Noise

Noise levels in the study area are currently dominated by traffic. Modeled future noise levels, calculated as A-weighted decibels expressed in terms of average sound levels (abbreviated as dBA Leq), were compared to the Federal Highway Administration's noise abatement criteria (NAC). In 2017, after the AWVRP is complete, 1,136 noise receivers in the study area are predicted to be at or above the NAC for residential land uses, with noise levels ranging from 61 to 73 dBA Leq. Under the 2030 No Action Alternative, the number of units at or above the NAC would be the same as under the 2017 existing conditions, and traffic noise levels are predicted to range from 62 to 74 dBA Leq.

Under the Action Alternative, 1,211 residential units are predicted to be at or above the NAC; noise levels would range from 58 to 72 dBA Leq during peak hours in 2030. Noise levels would increase in some locations and decrease at others because of changes in the roadway alignment compared to No Action. Overall, traffic noise levels are expected to increase by up to 5 dBA in some locations (primarily in the northern portion of the study area), and decrease by 5 to 6 dBA in other locations compared to the No Action Alternative.

Several types of mitigation measures were reviewed for their potential to reduce noise impacts where the Action Alternative would cause noise levels to increase above the NAC. All of the measures reviewed were determined to be infeasible, in conflict with project objectives, or not cost effective. Although there are no clear, reasonable, and feasible methods of reducing noise in this area, it is important to note that the overall noise levels in the corridor would be up to 12 dBA lower than the noise levels with the viaduct in operation.

## Hazardous Materials

Potential operational impacts under the No Action and Action alternatives include spills or releases from vehicles traveling in the corridor, the potential to create contaminant migration corridors through the installation of utilities, and exposure of workers to contamination during maintenance activities. The potential for such impacts would be minimized or mitigated through the use of BMPs and compliance with regulations governing the handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials.

## Public Services and Utilities

The No Action Alternative would not construct the proposed connection between Alaskan Way and Elliott Way; as a result, it would take public service providers longer to reach destinations between Belltown and Alaskan Way than under the Action Alternative. The operational impacts on public services as a result of the Action Alternative would therefore be positive. The improved roadway capacity and connection to Belltown should reduce the time required to provide public services and respond to emergencies compared to the No Action Alternative.

The Action Alternative's impacts on utility operation and maintenance are expected to be minimal, and new facilities would provide a benefit. The Action Alternative would be designed to provide maintenance access to underground utilities that meets the standard access criteria and associated vehicle loading. Therefore, no mitigation for operational impacts would be necessary.

## Historic Resources

The No Action Alternative would have minimal or no impact on historic resources. The Action Alternative would have minimal adverse impacts on historic resources and could have slight benefits. The primary potential impact of the Action Alternative would be alterations to the historic character of the waterfront, which could lessen the sense of connection between the waterfront and the buildings and neighborhoods east of Alaskan Way. Proposed improvements on S. Main and S. Washington Streets could potentially have permanent impacts on some areaways. The type and extent of alterations to historic resources would be determined during final design.

The City would obtain Certificates of Approval and undergo Landmarks Adjacency Reviews, as appropriate, for all permanent impacts the Action Alternative would have on historic resources. Certificates of Approval would be needed from the Pioneer Square Preservation Board, the Pike Place Market Historical Commission, and the Seattle Landmarks Board. The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods would conduct Landmarks Adjacency Reviews for project elements located next to or across the street from designated City landmarks. These approvals and reviews would consider the compatibility of project elements, materials, and designs with the area's historic character. The City would also use urban design and place-making approaches such as landscaping, interpretation, and reuse of historical elements (seawall railing, ship's wheel ornamentation, etc.) to enhance the sense of historical connection among the waterfront structures, the roadway, and buildings on the east side of Alaskan Way.

## Archaeological Resources

No operational impacts on archaeological sites are anticipated as a result of either the No Action Alternative or the Action Alternative.

## Water Quality

The No Action Alternative would not result in any operational impacts or benefits to water quality. The operational impacts of the Action Alternative are expected to be beneficial. The project would reduce flow volumes to the combined sewer by diverting a portion of the stormwater runoff area from the combined sewer system to the separated storm drain system. In addition, the project would reduce the overall quantity of pollutants in stormwater runoff by converting portions of the existing pollution-generating impervious surfaces (PGIS) to non-pollution-generating impervious surfaces (NPGIS) in the footprint. Also, the project would improve the quality of discharges to Elliott Bay by treating runoff from PGIS that was previously untreated.

## Vegetation and Wildlife

The No Action Alternative is not expected to affect vegetation or wildlife. The operational impacts of the Action Alternative on vegetation and wildlife would be minimal. The primary effect would be a slight increase in native vegetation and the availability of habitat for native wildlife, as well as natural recruitment of native vegetation. This could lead to some increase in the populations and densities of wildlife in the study area. Because no adverse impacts are anticipated, no mitigation measures are proposed for vegetation and wildlife.

## Energy Resources

Vehicles are expected to operate more efficiently and overall energy consumption is expected to decline slightly under the Action Alternative as compared to the No Action Alternative. Because the project would improve traffic operations and travel times, as well as reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled in the corridor, the Action Alternative is also expected to slightly reduce GHG emissions compared to the No Action Alternative. No adverse effects on energy resources and GHG emissions are expected from the operation of the Action Alternative.

## Air Quality

Under the No Action Alternative, congestion on Alaskan Way and east-west cross streets would result in increased emissions of air pollutants. Congestion would be reduced by the improvements under the Action Alternative. Because air emissions are directly correlated to traffic volumes and congestion, the Action Alternative is expected to result in a slight reduction in emissions of air pollutants within the study area; therefore, no mitigation is required.

## Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation

Cumulative impacts are project-related environmental impacts in combination with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects in the vicinity. In other words, they are the combined individual impacts of multiple projects over time. SEPA requires the evaluation of cumulative impacts as part of the EIS analysis.

AWPOW would be constructed once the SR 99 tunnel is in operation and the viaduct is removed. Construction would occur in the midst of a busy waterfront at the same time as other capital projects, including the Seattle Multimodal Terminal at Colman Dock. The construction-related impacts of AWPOW would add to the temporary adverse construction-related impacts of those other projects. Construction-related noise, dust, and traffic congestion would be greater with all of the projects together than if only one were constructed at a time. Therefore, AWPOW would contribute to an adverse cumulative impact during construction. Mitigation would consist of measures to reduce the overall impacts of construction by coordinating with other projects and agencies to verify the effectiveness of BMPs and ensure that residents, employees, and visitors can navigate efficiently and safely through the construction area.

The operational impacts of AWPOW, combined with those of other reasonably foreseeable projects, would result in long-term improvements to transportation, aesthetics, and water quality, and would further the goals of regional and local land use and transportation plans. Overall, project operation would not contribute to adverse cumulative impacts, and no mitigation would be necessary.



## Next Steps

Comments on this Draft EIS can be submitted by mail or email to:

AWPOW – Draft EIS Comments  
c/o Mark Mazzola, Environmental Manager  
Seattle Department of Transportation  
P.O. Box 34996  
Seattle, WA 98124-4996  
[DEIS@waterfrontseattle.org](mailto:DEIS@waterfrontseattle.org)

Comments must be postmarked by August 12, 2015.

After the Draft EIS comment period concludes, the lead agency will review and respond to comments. A Final EIS will be prepared and contain responses to the comments and potential updates to the environmental documents. The Final EIS is anticipated to be published in late 2015 or early 2016.

After the Final EIS is issued, final design and permitting are expected to be completed in 2016 and 2017. Construction would begin no earlier than 2017.

