

# Executive Summary

---

## Introduction and Alternatives

In June 2015, the City of Seattle (City) published the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Alaskan Way, Promenade, and Overlook Walk (AWPOW) projects, which are part of a larger group of infrastructure projects known as Waterfront Seattle. The Draft EIS evaluated two alternatives—the No Action Alternative and the Action Alternative—for each of the four projects that form the components of AWPOW:

- 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, pedestrian connections, and view opportunities 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

During the public comment period for the Draft EIS, the City received a number of comments related to the range of alternatives evaluated and specific aspects of design. These comments pertained primarily to two of the four AWPOW projects: the Main Corridor and the Overlook Walk. In response to public comments and in order to coordinate more closely with current planning for the Seattle Aquarium, the City has developed an additional alternative for each of these projects:

**Main Corridor Alternative 2**—This alternative would reduce the width of the southern portion of Alaskan Way between S. King Street and Columbia Street by removing the dedicated transit lanes south of Columbia Street. Transit would operate in the general-purpose traffic lanes. The reduction in width would range from approximately 2 feet, midblock between S. King and S. Jackson Streets, to approximately 34 feet at the S. Washington Street crosswalks. The roadway would generally have five to six traffic lanes, depending on where turn pockets are located. On-street parking and loading spaces would be provided on the east side of the street, except on blocks with bus stops. The space created by narrowing of the roadway and sidewalk would become part of the sidewalk, planting areas, and Promenade on the west.

**Overlook Walk Alternative 2**—This alternative would modify the original Overlook Walk design to accommodate approximately 48,000 square feet of interior space for the Seattle Aquarium Ocean Pavilion (Aquarium Pavilion) and modify the Overlook Walk stairs to consist of two stairways leading from the Overlook Walk to the Aquarium Plaza and the Promenade. The area under the stairways would provide space for park operations and maintenance as well as public restrooms.

While this Supplemental Draft EIS evaluates the impacts of a conceptual plan, location, and zoning envelope for the Aquarium Pavilion, the building's uses, functions, size, and form will be evaluated by the Seattle Aquarium in a separate environmental document.

To allow for a clear comparison of alternatives, the Main Corridor and Overlook Walk improvements described under the "Action Alternative" in Chapter 2 of the Draft EIS have been renamed for this Supplemental Draft EIS as Main Corridor Alternative 1 and Overlook Walk Alternative 1.

The analysis presented in this Supplemental Draft EIS builds upon the Draft EIS and presents the new information for the two new alternatives. Because no changes are proposed for the Promenade or East-West Connections projects, they are not discussed in this Supplemental Draft EIS.

The locations of the four AWPOW projects and the two additional alternatives are shown on Figure ES-1.

## Community, Agency, and Tribal Involvement

Waterfront Seattle planning has involved substantial participation by elected officials, stakeholders, and community members since 2011, as described in the Draft EIS.

Following publication of the Draft EIS, a public comment period was held from June 29, 2015 to August 26, 2015. As part of the public comment process, the City held a public open house about the Draft EIS on July 22, 2015. The City received 107 comment letters from tribes, agencies, organizations, and members of the public.

Since publication of the Draft EIS, the City has continued to meet with stakeholders and project partners to coordinate potential project design and to provide information on the additional alternatives reviewed in this Supplemental Draft EIS.

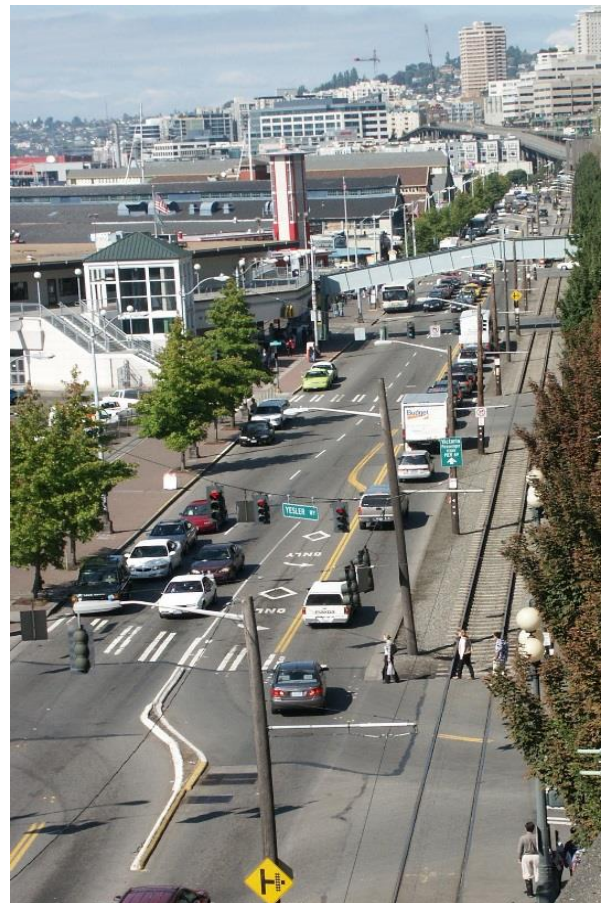
## Objectives of the AWPOW Projects

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 objectives of each project, or purpose and need (the term used in the Draft EIS), are summarized below; more information is provided in Chapter 1 of the Draft EIS.

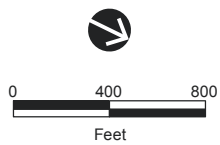
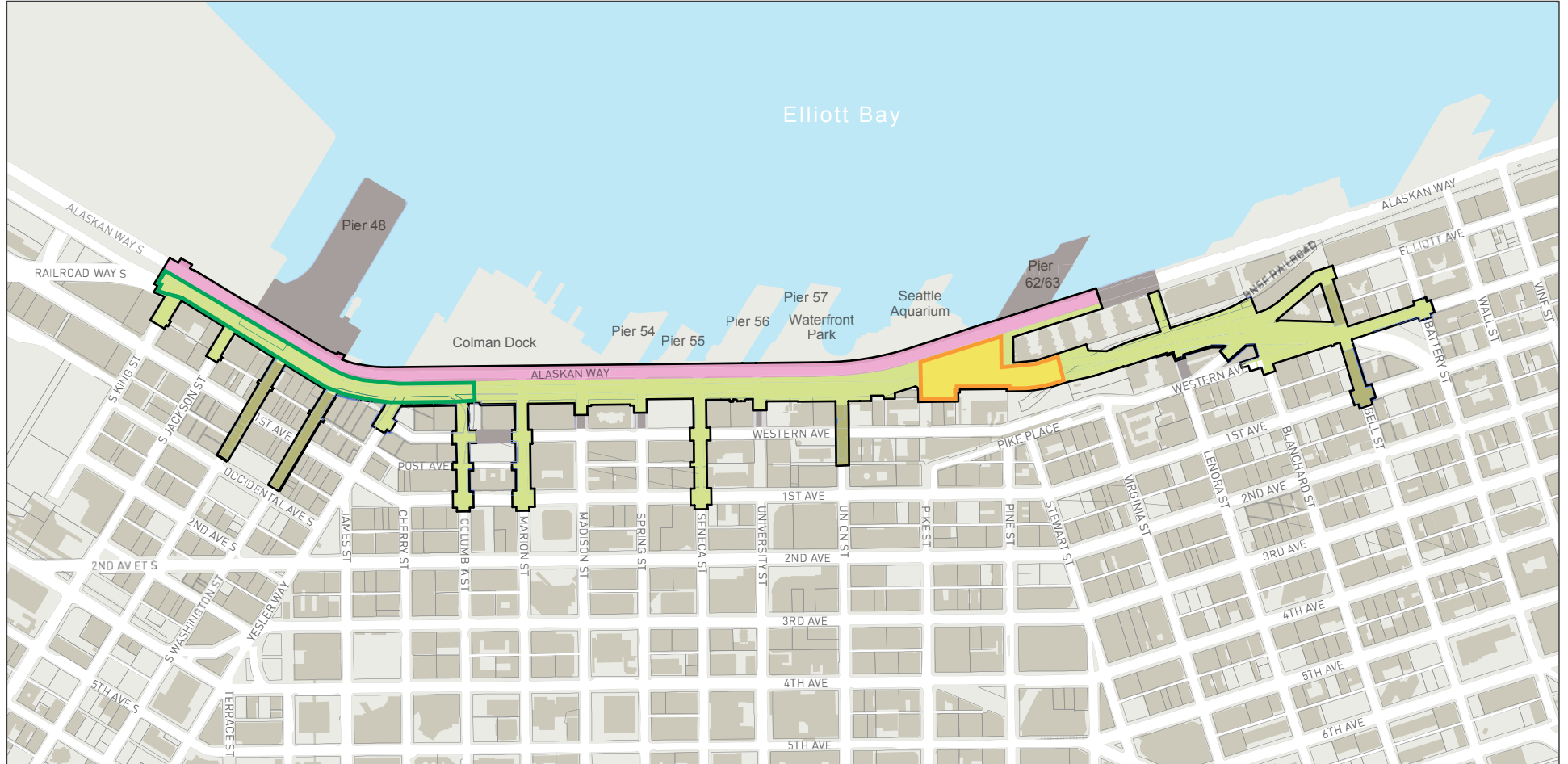
### Main Corridor

**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 the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) 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 new roadway 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.



Alaskan Way looking north from Yesler Way in 2003



Source: SDOT

- Project Footprint
- Potential Construction Staging Area

#### AWPOW Projects

- Main Corridor
- Promenade
- Overlook Walk
- East-West Connections
- Location of Main Corridor Alternative 2 Improvements
- Location of Overlook Walk Alternative 2 Improvements

- Parcel Boundary
- Building Footprint

#### Figure ES-1 Project Overview

Alaskan Way, Promenade, and  
Overlook Walk  
Supplemental Draft EIS

## 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 Way



Looking south on Alaskan Way near Union Street

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 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 provide 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 (SDOT 2014).

# Construction Impacts and Mitigation

## Main Corridor Alternative 2

Although the relative widths of the main corridor's components would change and the space dedicated to vehicles would be narrower, the overall AWPOW construction footprint and the types of construction activities required would remain the same as described in Section 2.5 of the Draft EIS. Main Corridor Alternative 2 is not anticipated to change the construction timing or sequencing of the AWPOW projects compared to Main Corridor Alternative 1.

Construction impacts and mitigation measures would be the same for both Main Corridor alternatives for all elements of the environment, with the exception of archaeological resources. One identified archaeological resource, Ballast Island, is located in the southern area of the main corridor near Pier 48. Ballast Island could be affected by construction of the sidewalk and bicycle facility, light poles, and telecommunication lines, including installation of street trees along the west side of Alaskan Way. Main Corridor Alternative 2 would change the location of facilities, potentially moving them farther east, away from Ballast Island. This may reduce the potential to encounter archaeological resources compared to Main Corridor Alternative 1. Otherwise, Main Corridor Alternative 2 would have the same potential to encounter archaeological resources as Main Corridor Alternative 1, because ground-disturbing activities would occur within the same footprint for both alternatives. If impacts on the site cannot be avoided, the City would work with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and interested Native American tribes to identify appropriate mitigation.

## Overlook Walk Alternative 2

For all elements of the environment, the nature and extent of construction impacts and mitigation measures for Overlook Walk Alternative 2 would be similar to those described in Draft EIS Chapters 3 through 14. The potential difference between Overlook Walk Alternatives 1 and 2 would be construction sequencing and activities.

Under Overlook Walk Alternative 2, construction of the Aquarium Pavilion would likely take more time to complete than Building C in Overlook Walk Alternative 1 because of the additional elements and specialized construction required for the exhibit space and to install complex mechanical systems.

If, under Overlook Walk Alternative 2, the Overlook Walk and the Aquarium Pavilion were completed in succession, the construction period would be longer than if the two projects were built concurrently as assumed in the Draft EIS. This would increase the duration of construction impacts, including the presence of large equipment, staging and storage areas, and safety barriers around construction areas. However, other than the increased duration of the construction period, the nature and scale of impacts would remain the same for the two Overlook Walk alternatives.

# Operational Impacts and Mitigation

The Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project, the Elliott Bay Seawall Project, and the Pike Place MarketFront project will be completed before AWPOW begins and are therefore assumed to be part of the future conditions for 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 adverse effects.

## Main Corridor Alternative 2

The operational impacts and potential mitigation measures for Main Corridor Alternative 2 would be the same as those identified in the Draft EIS for the following elements of the environment:

- Hazardous Materials
- Public Services and Utilities  
(with the exception of emergency services described under Transportation)
- Archaeological Resources
- Vegetation and Wildlife
- Energy Resources
- Air Quality

### Transportation

Main Corridor Alternative 2 would provide improved or additional facilities for motor vehicles, transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians in the study area compared to the No Action Alternative. However, traffic operations and intersection delays would be worse compared to Main Corridor Alternative 1. Under Main Corridor Alternative 2, removal of the transit-only lane and introduction of transit queue jumps at Yesler Way (southbound) and S. Main and S. King Streets (northbound) would reduce the amount of time the signal cycle is green for northbound and southbound general-purpose traffic. The reduced green time would result in worse travel times for all users, including transit, through the overall AWPOW study area for Main Corridor Alternative 2. These delays would cause greater congestion on Alaskan Way with Main Corridor Alternative 2 and result in traffic diverting to nearby streets. In addition, the lack of dedicated transit lane with, Main Corridor Alternative 2 would have reduced transit speed and reliability compared to Main Corridor Alternative 1.

Other aspects of the main corridor would also perform differently under Main Corridor Alternative 2 than under Main Corridor Alternative 1. Main Corridor Alternative 2 would have shorter east-west crossing distances for pedestrians at intersections on Alaskan Way, which would result in a slight reduction in crossing and wait times. Emergency services response times would be slightly worse under Main Corridor Alternative 2 due to increased travel times and intersection delays.

No mitigation measures beyond those described in the Draft EIS are proposed.

### 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.

Main Corridor Alternative 2 would have very similar impacts on parking as Main Corridor Alternative 1. The differences in parking impacts are limited to Parking Zone 1, where Main Corridor Alternative 2 would remove 3 on-street parking spaces on Alaskan Way while Main Corridor Alternative 1 would remove approximately 34 spaces. All other parking impacts would be the same between the two Main Corridor alternatives. The overall loss of 135 on-street parking spaces in Parking Zone 1 under Main Corridor Alternative 2 and 166 on-street parking spaces under Main Corridor Alternative 1 represents approximately 17 percent and 21 percent, respectively, of all on-street and off-street parking supply in Parking Zone 1.

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 Main Corridor Alternative 2, supports overall City planning goals for reducing dependency on single-occupant vehicles in the downtown area. These goals may be supported slightly less under Main Corridor Alternative 2 than Main Corridor Alternative 1.

because of the reduction in transit speed and reliability. The City is not required to mitigate for the parking loss, but may consider measures to help minimize the impact.

## **Land Use**

The operational impacts of Main Corridor Alternative 2 are expected to be positive, similar to Main Corridor Alternative 1. Both alternatives would result in more people accessing the waterfront and increase the desirability of the area for public use and general development. The reduced width of Alaskan Way adjacent to Pioneer Square under Main Corridor Alternative 2 would result in shorter crossing distances, improving connectivity to the waterfront. 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. Main Corridor Alternative 2 is expected to comply with state, regional, and local land use plans, many of which call for improvements along the waterfront. No adverse operational impacts are expected; accordingly, no mitigation measures are necessary.

## **Noise**

Operational noise from Main Corridor Alternative 2 would be essentially the same as for Main Corridor Alternative 1. In the southern end of the corridor, near the ferry loading docks, there would be some realignment of travel lanes, additional on-street parking, and removal of the transit-only lanes. However, these changes are not predicted to result in a measureable change in the overall traffic noise levels. The slight potential reductions in traffic speeds and volumes would not change noise levels in this area by more than 0 to 2 dBA, which is not normally perceptible to an average person. No mitigation measures are proposed for noise.

## **Historic Resources**

The impacts on historic resources from Main Corridor Alternative 2 would be similar to those described in the Draft EIS. Certain features of this alternative, such as the installation of curb bulbs to facilitate pedestrian crossing, would potentially improve the pedestrian experience, thus enhancing the historic connection between the waterfront and the Pioneer Square Historic District. No mitigation measures beyond those described in the Draft EIS are proposed.

## **Water Quality**

The operational impacts of Main Corridor Alternative 2 are expected to be beneficial, similar to the alternatives analyzed for the AWPOW projects. Main Corridor Alternative 2 would improve water quality compared to the 2017 existing conditions, mainly due to the conversion of some pollution-generating impervious surfaces to non-pollution generating surfaces. Main Corridor Alternative 2 is not expected to change sub-basin boundaries between the separated storm drain system and the combined sewer system beyond the changes already analyzed in the Draft EIS. As a result, no adverse operational impacts on water quality are expected and no additional mitigation measures are necessary.

## **Overlook Walk Alternative 2**

The operational impacts and potential mitigation measures under Overlook Walk Alternative 2 would be the same as identified in the Draft EIS for the following elements of the environment:

- Parking
- Land Use
- Noise
- Hazardous Materials
- Public Services and Utilities
- Archaeological Resources

- Water Quality
- Vegetation and Wildlife
- Energy Resources
- Air Quality

## Transportation

Pedestrian access from Pike Place Market to the waterfront would be provided by a different configuration of stairs and elevators under Overlook Walk Alternative 2 compared to Overlook Walk Alternative 1. For Overlook Walk Alternative 2, one stairway would be on the north side of the Aquarium Pavilion near Pine Street and the other on the south side of the building near Alaskan Way. However, pedestrian facilities under both alternatives would connect the same locations—Pike Place Market and the Aquarium Plaza and Promenade. The facilities would be grade-separated and fully accessible.

Overlook Walk Alternatives 1 and 2 would not differ in terms of traffic operations, freight, bicycle facilities, public transportation, water transportation, rail, or emergency services. No mitigation measures are proposed.

## Aesthetics

Under Overlook Walk Alternative 2, the Seattle Aquarium’s proposed Aquarium Pavilion would be substantially larger than Building C under Overlook Walk Alternative 1 (approximately 48,000 square feet as compared to approximately 22,000 square feet of above-ground interior space). Both buildings would be approximately 40 feet high above the Promenade (about 57 feet above sea level). However, the Aquarium Pavilion would extend the structure at this height farther west compared to Building C, to take the place of the descending stairs to the Aquarium Plaza and Promenade in Overlook Walk Alternative 1.

In the context of the overall waterfront environment, the Overlook Walk alternatives would not differ substantially in overall aesthetic quality, but the changes would result in several tradeoffs. The larger Aquarium Pavilion under Overlook Walk Alternative 2 would likely obstruct views from the north and south along the waterfront more than Building C under Overlook Walk Alternative 1. The Overlook Walk Alternative 2 staircases would offer two different view opportunities toward the south and west compared to the one west-facing staircase in Overlook Walk Alternative 1. In addition, in Overlook Walk Alternative 2, the public open space and viewing deck would be expanded across the roof of the Aquarium Pavilion to be contiguous and accessible from the Overlook Walk. This expanded rooftop area would increase the amount of public gathering space as part of the Overlook Walk. The views from the new deck area would likely be improved by allowing viewing opportunities closer to Elliott Bay and better views north and south along the waterfront compared to Overlook Walk Alternative 1.

If the Overlook Walk portion of Alternative 2 were constructed prior to the Aquarium Pavilion, various aesthetic impacts would be expected. The massing of the Overlook Walk would terminate just beyond the new routing of Alaskan Way, and this reduced massing would lessen some view impacts, especially from residences directly north of the Overlook Walk looking southward. New opportunities for desirable views associated with the Overlook Walk would be reduced with less public space and less effective viewing locations compared to Overlook Walk Alternative 1. The viewing deck for the Overlook Walk portion of Alternative 2 would be farther away from the water, and closer to buildings that could block portions of the views to the north and south.

Despite these changes, the overall visual quality rating would not lessen with Overlook Walk Alternative 2; therefore, no mitigation measures are proposed beyond those described in the Draft EIS.

## Historic Resources

The operational impacts of Overlook Walk Alternative 2 on historic resources would be generally the same as those described for Overlook Walk Alternative 1. Similar to Building C, the Aquarium Pavilion could potentially alter the setting, character, and usage in certain areas of Pike Place Market. Both Overlook Walk alternatives would improve pedestrian connections between two historic areas—the Pike Place Market and the historic piers. These improvements would potentially benefit both areas by making it easier for visitors to access and visit them. Having a portion of the Seattle Aquarium adjacent to the Overlook Walk may encourage more visitors to visit both the historic piers and Pike Place Market, enhancing the commercial viability of these historic areas and the ability of the owners to maintain the historic features of their properties. No mitigation measures are proposed beyond those described in the Draft EIS.

## Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation

Cumulative impacts are the accumulation of impacts from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions. These impacts are analyzed so that decision-makers can consider how impacts from actions over time “add up” to affect a resource.

The improvements for Main Corridor Alternative 2 and Overlook Walk Alternative 2 are in the same project footprint as described in the Draft EIS and differ only in aspects of design. Therefore, Main Corridor Alternative 2 and Overlook Walk Alternative 2 would not change the cumulative impacts or mitigation measures discussed in Chapter 15 of the Draft EIS. Cumulative impacts and mitigation measures under the new alternatives would be the same as Main Corridor Alternative 1 and Overlook Walk Alternative 1.

## Next Steps

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

AWPOW—Supplemental Draft EIS Comments  
c/o Mark Mazzola, Environmental Manager  
Seattle Department of Transportation  
P.O. Box 34996  
Seattle, WA 98124-4996

[SDEIS@waterfrontseattle.org](mailto:SDEIS@waterfrontseattle.org)

Comments must be postmarked by May 18, 2016.

After the Supplemental Draft EIS comment period concludes, the lead agency will review and respond to comments. A Final EIS will be prepared that will contain responses to comments on both the Draft EIS and Supplemental Draft EIS, along with any needed updates to the environmental documents. The Final EIS is expected to be published in fall 2016.

After the Final EIS is issued, the AWPOW projects will undergo final design and permitting. Construction is anticipated to begin no earlier than mid-2018.

