

CITY OF MONROE
2024–2044 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
PERIODIC UPDATE
DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

MAY 2024

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May 14, 2024

Subject: City of Monroe 2024–2044 Comprehensive Plan Update, State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Community Members:

The City of Monroe is updating its Comprehensive Plan and planning for growth to the year 2044. The 2024–2044 Comprehensive Plan Update complies with the Growth Management Act and new standards and regulations focused on promoting sustainable and managed growth, while incorporating the community's input. The Update sets the framework and describes actionable steps for making the community's vision, *Imagine Monroe (2021)*, a reality.

The City plans to meet Snohomish Countywide growth allocations of an additional 4,603 residents, 2,216 housing units, and 2,324 jobs within City boundaries by the year 2044, representing a total of 24,302 residents, 8,379 housing units, and 12,420 jobs. The Update includes a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) consistent with the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) in Washington. The SEIS is intended to update and supplement the 2015 City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Statement (Appendix A of the 2015 City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan).

The SEPA process identifies and analyzes environmental impacts to help agency decision-makers, applicants, and the public understand how the proposal will affect the built and natural environment. The SEPA SEIS process is a tool for identifying and analyzing probable adverse environmental impacts, reasonable alternatives, and potential mitigation.

The City of Monroe issued a Draft SEIS that addresses changes to the City's Future Land Use Map, zoning map, policies, and code that are part of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update. This Draft SEIS evaluates the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action. The No Action Alternative represents the adopted 2015 plan that proposed eight goals. The eight goals addressed safety and security; environment and natural resources; regional growth alongside a resilient and stable economy; development that ensures land use compatibility, neighborhood character, and long-term sustainability; a range of housing types; utilities and transportation; parks and cultural facilities and activities; and a thriving Downtown Monroe.

The Proposed Action consists of the following proposals for land uses in the City, consistent with the 2024–2044 Comprehensive Plan Update:

- Change zoning along US 2 to allow high-density (R25) residential development within the General Commercial zone. This change would protect commercial development along US 2 and its side streets and allow residential uses behind the commercial development or as part of mixed-use development.
- Increase residential densities or shift residential densities between areas not previously considered for residential development in 2015. Higher residential densities south of US 2 may be moved to areas north of US 2 or allowed in certain commercial zones.

The Draft SEIS analyzes the impacts of the alternatives on elements of the environment such as Land Use, Aesthetics, and Parks, Recreation, and Open Space; Shorelines and Natural Environment; Population, Employment, and Housing; Capital Facilities and Utilities; and Transportation. The purpose of the analysis is to estimate the nature, severity, and duration of impacts that might occur and to compare the impacts of the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative.

This SEIS adopts and supplements prior relevant SEPA documents including the City of Monroe 2015–2035 Comprehensive Plan (December 2015), <http://monroewa.gov/831/2015-2035-Comprehensive-Plan>.

Affected agencies, tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on this Draft SEIS for the Monroe Comprehensive Plan Update.

Written comments are due no later than 4:30 p.m., June 14, 2024, and should be directed to:

Lance Bailey, Community Development Director
SEPA Responsible Official
Monroe City Hall
14841 179th Ave SE, Suite 320
Monroe, WA 98272
Phone: 360.794.7400 | Email: PlanUpdate@monroewa.gov

The City of Monroe plans to hold a public meeting consistent with Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-535 at 6 p.m., June 5, 2024. This will be an in-person meeting for Commissioners and the public only, where participants may join via computer or phone. See the City's web page <https://www.monroe2044.com/> for more information.

Sincerely,

Lance Bailey
Community Development Director and SEPA Responsible Official
City of Monroe



FACT SHEET Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

PROJECT NAME

Monroe 2024–2044 Comprehensive Plan Update Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)

DATE OF ISSUE OF DRAFT SEIS

May 14, 2024

PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

The City of Monroe is updating its Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the requirements of Washington’s Growth Management Act (GMA).

PERMITS, LICENSES, AND APPROVALS LIKELY REQUIRED FOR PROPOSAL

Comprehensive plan updates must be considered and approved by City Council after recommendations are made. The Washington Department of Commerce coordinates state agency review during a required review period. The Puget Sound Regional Council certifies Transportation Elements of comprehensive plans and reviews comprehensive plans for consistency with Countywide Plans and Policies.

DOCUMENTS SUPPLEMENTED OR ADOPTED

This City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan Update SEIS supplements the 2015 City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan EIS (Appendix A of the 2015 City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan). The 2015 City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan EIS is adopted per Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-630.

Project Proponent and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Lead Agency

City of Monroe Community Development Department

SEPA Responsible Official

Lance Bailey, Community Development Director

Authors and Contributors

A list of authors and contributors is provided in this Fact Sheet.

Location of Background Materials

Background materials used in the preparation of this Draft SEIS are listed in Chapter 10, *References*.



DRAFT SEIS PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Written Comments

Public Comment Period and How to Comment

Visit this website <https://comment-tracker.esassoc.com/monroe/index.html> to submit comments.

Verbal comments may be given at the in-person Draft SEIS public meeting on June 5, 2024, at 6 p.m.

Written comments may be submitted online at <https://comment-tracker.esassoc.com/monroe/index.html> or via email to the Community Development Department at PlanUpdate@monroewa.gov.

Mailed comments can be sent to:

Attn: Community Development
14841 179th Ave SE, Suite 320
Monroe, WA 98272

In-person comments may be provided at the location of the public meeting.

This Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (Draft SEIS) will be available for a 30-day public comment period.

Date Written Comments Are Due

Comment Deadline: The Draft SEIS public comment period begins 8 a.m. Pacific time on May 14, 2024, and ends at 4:30 p.m. PST on June 14, 2024. All comments related to the Draft SEIS must be submitted by this date.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY AND COST TO THE PUBLIC

Project-related information can be reviewed for free on the project website at <https://www.monroe2044.com/>.

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TIMING OF ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This SEIS was prepared in accordance with WAC-197-11-560. After the Draft SEIS comment period concludes, Monroe Community Development Department staff will review and respond to comments. A Final SEIS will be prepared that contains the responses to the comments and potential updates to the environmental document. The City anticipates releasing the Final SEIS and adopting the Comprehensive Plan Update in 2024. After the Preferred Alternative is chosen and the Final SEIS released, specific projects will undergo separate project-level SEPA review as they are funded for design or implementation. Project-level review may result in different procedural compliance for individual projects.



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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
ACS	American Community Survey
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADU	accessory dwelling unit
AMI	Area Median Income
BAS	best available science
BID	Business Improvement District
BLR	Buildable Lands Report
BMPs	best management practices
BNSF	Burlington Northern Santa Fe
CAO	Critical Areas Ordinance
CARA	critical aquifer recharge area
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFP	Capital Facilities Plan
CHAS	Consolidated Housing Affordability Strategy
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
Commerce	Washington Department of Commerce
CPPs	Countywide Planning Policies
CRF	Community Revitalization Funding
CRS	Community Rating System
CTR	Commuter Trip Reduction



Abbreviation	Definition
CWA	Clean Water Act
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
DOC	Department of Corrections
DS	Determination of Significance
du	dwelling unit
EB	eastbound
EBL	eastbound left
Ecology	Washington Department of Ecology
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMS	emergency medical services
EMT	emergency medical technician
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FC-O	Frylands Commercial Overlay District
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
FLUM	Future Land Use Map
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTE	full-time equivalent
FWHCA	Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Area
GC	General Commercial
GHG	greenhouse gas
GIS	geographic information system
GMA	Growth Management Act
gpc	gallons per capita
gpd	gallons per day
HB	House Bill
HCM	Highway Capacity Manual
HMP	Hazard Mitigation Plan
HPA	Hydraulic Project Approval



Abbreviation	Definition
HSS	Highway of Statewide Significance
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
IBC	International Building Code
IFC	International Fire Code
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
IRP	Integrated Resource Plan
LI/FC-O	Light Industrial/Frylands Commercial Overlay District
LID	low-impact development
LIFT	Local Infrastructure Financing Tools
LOS	level of service
LUV-it	Land Use Vision – Implemented Allocations
MDth	thousand dekatherms
MFTE	Multi-family Tax Exemption
MG	Mixed Use-General
mgd	million gallons per day
MHI	Median Household Income
MM	Mixed Use-Medical
MMC	Monroe Municipal Code
MN	Mixed-Use Neighborhood
MPPs	Multicounty Planning Policies
MPWD	City of Monroe Public Works Department
MS4	municipal separate storm sewer system
MSD	Monroe School District
MW	megawatt(s)
MWh	megawatt-hours
NB	northbound
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NIBRS	National Incident-Based Reporting System
NK/TP-O	North Kelsey/Tjerne Place Overlay District
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NPCC	Northwest Power and Conservation Council



Abbreviation	Definition
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPIAS	National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems
NPMS	National Pipeline Mapping System
NRPA	National Recreation and Park Association
NWIFC	Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
OHWM	ordinary high water mark
OMD	City of Monroe Public Works Operations & Maintenance Division
OSPI	Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
PD	Police Department
PHS	Priority Habitats and Species
PROS Plan	Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan
PRV	pressure reducing valve
PSE	Puget Sound Energy
PSH	permanent supportive housing
PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council
R15	Single-family Residential 15 Units per Acre
R25	Multifamily Residential 25 Units per Acre
R4	Residential 4 Units per Acre
R7	Residential 7 Units per Acre
RCO	Recreation and Conservation Office
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SB	southbound
SCPUD	Snohomish County Public Utility District
SCT	Snohomish County Tomorrow
SED	shoreline environment designation
SEIS	Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
SF	Single Family
SFR	Single-family Residential



Abbreviation	Definition
SI/GI	Shoreline Industrial/General Industrial
SMA	Shoreline Management Act
SMP	Shoreline Master Program
SRFR	Snohomish Regional Fire & Rescue
SRO	single-room occupancy
SSD	Snohomish School District
STRACNET	Strategic Rail Corridor Network
TDM	transportation demand management
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TPL	Trust for Public Land
UGA	urban growth area
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
V/C	volume-to-capacity
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
WAC	Washington Administrative Code
WB	westbound
WBL	westbound left
WDFW	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
WM	worst movement
WNHP	Washington Natural Heritage Program
WRIA	Water Resource Inventory Area
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation
WUTC	Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
WWTP	wastewater treatment plant



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CHAPTER 1 Summary

1.1 Introduction

This Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (Draft SEIS) analyzes the potential environmental impacts associated with the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update and supplements the current (2015) City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan EIS. The Draft SEIS has been prepared in accordance with Washington’s Growth Management Act (GMA) and to comply with new regulations focused on sustainable and managed growth. In addition, the Draft SEIS seeks to incorporate the community’s input.

GMA requires periodic updates to Monroe’s Comprehensive Plan to ensure compliance with amendments to GMA and associated state laws and to extend the planning horizon with new 20-year population, housing, and employment forecasts. The Monroe Comprehensive Plan Update covers 2024 through 2044. The Draft SEIS analyzes two alternatives: the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action. The Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (Final SEIS) will select a Preferred Alternative and identify its significant unavoidable adverse impacts.

The Monroe 2024–2044 Comprehensive Plan Update sets the framework and describes actionable steps for making the City’s vision, Imagine Monroe, a reality (City of Monroe 2021). The Comprehensive Plan is the City’s 20-year plan for land use and growth based on the community’s vision for the future. It guides City decisions about where housing and jobs should be located, and how public investments are made for things like transportation, utilities, parks, and other assets. Monroe’s



Comprehensive Plan Update provides goals, policies, and strategies to work toward the City’s vision:

Imagine Monroe. A lively center surrounded by nature. A place of beauty and goodwill.

Our parks, waterways, and environment are healthy and accessible for everyone to enjoy. Our historic downtown and business districts are thriving and full of locally owned businesses and locally sourced products. We can find everything we need with regional connections and with a variety of choices for work, housing, dining, shopping, arts, and activities.

Friendly and responsive, we strengthen connections through gathering spaces, events, services, and community-centered infrastructure —creating a safe place for all.

In Monroe, everyone feels at home, and everyone feels they belong (City of 2021).

The City of Monroe is also updating the 2015 Utility Systems Plan (OMD 2015) that includes three different plans in 2024: the Water System Plan, Sewer System Plan, and the Stormwater System Plan. The Transportation System Plan is also being updated in 2024. The City updated the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan in 2022. These updated plans prioritize projects to work toward future development identified in the 2024–2044 Comprehensive Plan Update and the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The FLUM illustrates land use patterns over the next 20 years in Monroe.

As part of the Monroe 2024–2044 Comprehensive Plan Update, the City has also updated its Development Code to implement new or support updated Comprehensive Plan policies. These policies meet regional and state requirements and dictate how and where development occurs in Monroe. In addition, the City updated the Shoreline Master Program and critical areas regulations in 2019, and plans to update the critical areas regulations again in 2025.

In summary, the Comprehensive Plan Update addresses:

- Population, housing, and employment allocations through 2044, consistent with the Puget Sound Regional Council’s (PSRC) VISION 2050 and as adopted in the Snohomish Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs).
- Updates to the City’s Capital Facilities Plan.
- Updates to the City’s Transportation System Plan.
- Any changes required by state and federal laws or requirements.

The 2024–2044 Comprehensive Plan Update plans to accommodate Monroe’s growth allocations of an additional 5,404 people, 2,629 housing units, and 2,359 jobs in the Urban Growth Area (UGA) by the year 2044.

The Draft SEIS process includes the development of alternatives, environmental analysis of those alternatives, and identification of potential impacts and mitigation measures. The No Action Alternative represents the adopted 2015 Comprehensive Plan and its eight goals. The eight goals addressed include safety and security; environment and natural resources; regional growth alongside a resilient and stable economy; development that ensures land use compatibility, neighborhood character, and long-term sustainability; a range of housing types; utilities and transportation infrastructure; parks, civic facilities, and cultural activities; and a thriving Downtown Monroe.

The Proposed Action alternative was defined to represent the most intense development of several scenarios the City is considering to meet future housing and employment allocations set for Monroe in Snohomish County’s CPPs and PSRC’s MPPs. The Proposed Action consists of the following proposals for land uses in the City, consistent with the 2024–2044 Comprehensive Plan Update:

- Change zoning along US 2 to allow high-density (R25) residential development within the General Commercial zone. This change would protect commercial development along US 2 and its side streets and allow residential uses behind the commercial development or as part of mixed-use development.
- Increase residential densities or shift residential densities between areas not previously (2015) considered for residential development. Higher residential densities south of US 2 may be moved to areas north of US 2 or allowed in certain commercial zones.

The Draft SEIS analyzes the impacts of the two alternatives on five elements of the environment including: Land Use, Aesthetics, and Parks, Recreation, and Open Space; Shorelines and Natural Environment; Population, Employment, and Housing; Capital



Facilities and Utilities; and Transportation. The purpose of the analysis is to estimate the nature, severity, and duration of impacts that might occur and to compare the impacts of the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative. More information on the alternatives is presented in Chapter 2 and summarized in Section 1.5, *Significant Areas of Controversy and Uncertainty*, of this chapter. Chapters 3 through 7 of the SEIS present an analysis of the five elements of the environment.

The City asks for feedback from the public relating to the Comprehensive Plan Update SEIS. Comments and feedback will be considered as part of the Final SEIS, as described in Section 1.4, *SEPA Process and Public Involvement*.

1.2 Project Purpose, Desired Outcomes, and Exclusions

This Draft SEIS is a disclosure document that provides a qualitative and quantitative analysis of environmental impacts associated with the City of Monroe 2024–2044 Comprehensive Plan Update. The purpose of this Draft SEIS is to inform and assist the public and City of Monroe decision-makers in considering future growth and policy/code proposals appropriate throughout the City.

The City’s desired outcome is a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) SEIS that can be relied upon over the next 10 years to guide development and planning and streamline project-level SEPA evaluations.

The City chose to exclude the following SEPA topics listed in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-444 because: (1) the alternatives analyzed in this SEIS are not expected to result in significant impacts related to the excluded topics; or (2) impacts for the excluded topics (earth; geology; topography; air; runoff; groundwater; environmental health; historical and cultural preservation; and agriculture) cannot be fully evaluated at the programmatic level.

1.3 Study Area

The study area for the Draft SEIS analysis is the Monroe Urban Growth Area (UGA) (see **Figure 1-1**) that includes areas within the City limits and some areas of unincorporated Snohomish County. Depending on the resource, information is presented in the SEIS for additional areas such as school districts, police and fire service areas, or areas served by capital facilities or utility providers.



FIGURE 1-1 City and Urban Growth Area Boundaries

1.4 SEPA Process and Public Involvement

1.4.1 Environmental Review Process

PROCESS

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) (Chapter 43.21C Revised Code of Washington [RCW]) is a Washington law that helps agency decision-makers, applicants, and the public understand how a proposal would affect the environment. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process analyzes and informs decision-makers and the public about probable adverse environmental impacts, reasonable alternatives, and potential mitigation.

Preparation of an EIS is required for actions that have the potential for significant impacts. This document is a programmatic (non-project) EIS that analyzes the proposals and alternatives broadly across the study area and a Supplemental EIS (SEIS) because it supplements the current (2015) Monroe Comprehensive Plan EIS. The City of Monroe has determined that this periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan may have significant adverse impacts on the environment in addition to those analyzed in the City of Monroe 2015 Comprehensive Plan EIS, and is therefore required under WAC 197-11-330 to prepare an SEIS.

WAC 197-11-442(1-4) states that the SEPA lead agency (City of Monroe, in this case) shall have more flexibility in preparing EISs or SEISs on non-project proposals because less-detailed information is typically available on environmental impacts and on subsequent project proposals when compared to a project proposal. The EIS or SEIS may be combined with other planning documents and should address impacts and alternatives at the level of detail appropriate for the scope of the non-project proposal and to the level of planning for the proposal. The EIS's or SEIS's discussion of alternatives for a comprehensive plan should be limited to a general discussion of the impacts of alternate proposals for policies and implementation measures contained in the comprehensive plan. SEPA does not require the lead agency to evaluate every alternative iteration. Selecting alternatives that represent the range of options provides an effective method to evaluate and compare the merits of different choices (WAC 197-11-442(4)). The final action chosen by City of Monroe decision-makers need not be identical to any single alternative in the SEIS but must be within the range of alternatives discussed.



WAC 197-11-444 categorizes the elements of the environment into the natural environment (earth, air, water, plants and animals, and energy and natural resources) and built environment (environmental health, land and shoreline use, transportation, and public services and utilities). To simplify the EIS or SEIS, reduce paperwork and duplication, improve readability, and focus on the significant issues, some or all of the elements of the environment in WAC 197-11-444 may be combined. The City of Monroe combines the SEPA elements into the following categories in this SEIS: land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space; shorelines and natural environment; population, employment, & housing; capital facilities and utilities; and transportation.

This Draft SEIS describes:

- Existing conditions in the City.
- Potential growth alternatives (e.g., new growth strategies).
- Mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate adverse impacts.
- Potential significant, unavoidable, and adverse impacts.

The SEIS process involves the following steps: (1) initial research, issuing a Determination of Significance; (2) preparing a Draft SEIS with a comment period; (3) responding to comments and developing a Preferred Alternative; and (4) issuing the Final SEIS to inform development of legislation.

The Draft SEIS provides information about the Comprehensive Plan Update to agencies, tribes, and all interested groups and community members. The SEIS includes information on alternatives, existing environmental conditions, potential significant impacts, and potential measures to mitigate impacts. The process of developing the SEIS provides opportunities for the public, agencies, and tribal governments to participate in developing and analyzing information. Preparation of the SEIS will assist with the development of the Comprehensive Plan Update and the decision-making process.

Community members have the opportunity to comment at the Draft SEIS stage. The Draft EIS is available to the public for review and comment. To be most effective, comments are encouraged on the analysis of the affected environment, the impact analysis, and potential mitigation measures for each of the alternatives.

The City is due to complete the Final EIS in fall of 2024. The Comprehensive Plan Update process will be completed in 2024.

PROGRAMMATIC EIS

A programmatic (or non-project) EIS does not evaluate the impacts associated with a specific development project. Rather, a programmatic EIS (or SEIS) contains broader, planning-level analyses that emphasize cumulative impacts, impacts from policy changes, and program-level mitigation measures. A programmatic EIS studies and compares a range of alternatives to support the consideration of plans, policies, or programs ([WAC 197-11-442](#)). The City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan Update SEIS contains programmatic analyses of potential significant impacts associated with adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update alternatives. Individual development projects proposed in the future consistent with the policies of the updated Comprehensive Plan will still be subject to SEPA review and state, county, and City regulations. Future review could occur in the form of additional supplemental EISs, SEPA addenda, or determinations of non-significance.

SUPPLEMENTAL EIS

A supplemental EIS adds information and analysis to supplement the information in a previous EIS. It may address new alternatives, new areas of likely significant adverse impact, or add additional analysis to areas not adequately addressed in the original document. A supplemental EIS includes a draft (with comment period) and a final document, and essentially follows the same requirements as a Draft EIS and Final EIS. In this case, the update is a change to the Comprehensive Plan and is likely to cause new or increased significant adverse environmental impacts that were not evaluated in the original EIS.

A supplemental EIS is used when an existing EIS addresses some, but not all, of a new proposal's probable significant adverse environmental impacts. The existing EIS (the 2015 Comprehensive Plan EIS, in this case) is used as the basis for a supplemental EIS.

PRIOR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

RCW 43.21C.034 allows use of existing documents and describes incorporation by reference as similar to directly adopting a previous SEPA document because all or part of the incorporated document becomes part of the agency environmental documentation for a proposal. The 2015 City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan EIS is the only prior SEPA document considered in this SEIS and incorporated by reference.

DOCUMENTS SUPPLEMENTED OR ADOPTED

This City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan Update SEIS supplements the 2015 City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan EIS (Appendix A of the 2015 City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan). The 2015 City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan EIS is adopted per WAC 197-11-630.

1.4.2 Scoping

The scoping process is intended to identify the range of potential significant impacts on the built and natural environment that should be considered and evaluated in an EIS. The City published a Scoping Notice in combination with the Determination of Significance (DS) on February 2, 2024, with a 30-day public comment period that ran through March 6, 2024. Agencies, affected tribes (Tulalip Tribes, Snoqualmie Tribe, Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians), and members of the public were invited to comment on the scope of the SEIS, including the alternatives, mitigation measures, probable significant adverse impacts, and licenses or other approvals that may be required.

The City received one comment on February 15, 2024, in response to the DS and Scoping Notice. The comment, from the Snoqualmie Tribe, stated that based on the information provided and the Tribe's understanding of the project and its Area of Potential Effects, the Tribe had no substantive comments. The Tribe requested that if the scope of the project or the parameters for defining an Area of Potential Effect change, they reserve the right to modify their current position.

1.4.3 Draft SEIS Comment Process

Public and agency comments are invited on this Draft SEIS during the 30-day public comment period following issuance of the Draft SEIS. Parties of interest (see Chapter 9, *Distribution List*) will be notified of the Draft SEIS issuance. Written and verbal comments are invited. The City will hold a public engagement event during the comment period to help inform the identification of the Preferred Alternative. Public comments will be considered and addressed in the Final SEIS. See the Fact Sheet at the beginning of this Draft SEIS for the dates of the public comment period and public meeting. Meetings and the Draft SEIS comment period are also described on the City's project webpage: <https://www.monroe2044.com/>. SEPA requires a minimum 30-day comment period after a Draft EIS is published.

1.4.4 Draft and Final SEIS

After considering comments on the Draft SEIS, the City of Monroe as the lead agency will issue a Final SEIS in fall 2024. The Final SEIS will include an updated Fact Sheet and responses to public comments received during the Draft SEIS comment period. The Final SEIS will also include any changes to the information and analysis in the Draft SEIS. In the Final SEIS, the City will identify and evaluate a Preferred Alternative that is within the range of the growth studied in the Draft SEIS alternatives.

Following the EIS process, the City will develop specific edits to the Future Land Use Map and Comprehensive Plan, which will be the subject of public meetings by the Planning Commission and City Council.

SEPA requires a 7-day waiting period after the Final SEIS is issued before the City can take any action related to the Preferred Alternative. Parties of interest (see Chapter 9) will be notified of the Final SEIS issuance.

1.5 Significant Areas of Controversy and Uncertainty

A potential area of controversy may be the Proposed Action's expected significant impact on transportation and traffic volumes and operations due to the additional economic activity related to more jobs and housing by 2044.

1.6 Issues to Be Resolved

The 2024 updates to the utility system plans and the 2024 Transportation Plan will be integrated into the Final SEIS.

1.7 Summary of Description of Alternatives

Alternatives are different ways of achieving a project's purpose and need and serve as the basis for environmental analysis relative to elements of the environment. The two alternatives are described in greater detail in Chapter 2 of this Draft SEIS.

Environmental analysis is the process of studying each alternative and forecasting impacts on different elements of the environment such as capital facilities, shorelines, or transportation.

Environmental Impact Statements must include an alternative that represents “no action” and one or more alternatives that includes changes in land use or policies, called the “action alternatives.” Action alternatives allow the City to understand the impacts of a range of growth scenarios and test ideas, implications, benefits, and impacts and compare them to the impacts of the No Action Alternative.

The lead agency has identified two alternatives to be analyzed in the SEIS (see below for brief descriptions of these alternatives): the No Action Alternative and one action alternative (the Proposed Action). The No Action Alternative represents a continuation of development in Monroe similar to existing trends and as defined in the 2015–2035 Comprehensive Plan. The Proposed Action focuses on higher density and middle housing development north of US 2 and increasing job capacity along Main Street and near North Kelsey Street. The Proposed Action may increase the intensity of development, which would also increase connectivity between neighborhoods and communities, offering higher densities and services in proximity to affordable housing, compared to the No Action Alternative.

The Proposed Action was developed to:

- Respond to population, housing, and job allocations for the City of Monroe and its UGA through 2044.
- Comply with new regulations related to housing types and affordability.
- Develop goals, policies, and actions to work toward the implementation of Monroe’s 2021 vision, Imagine Monroe (City of Monroe 2021).

The Proposed Action reflects changing needs to accommodate expected future residents and employees and will plan for and accommodate housing that is affordable to all.

Both alternatives center on the intensity, character, and location of future development. Neither alternative includes an expansion of the City’s UGA. Analyzing different alternatives, and especially the differences between them, allows decision-makers and the public to compare the effects of different options and ultimately to select a Preferred Alternative.



1.8 Summary of Key Findings, Impacts, and Potential Mitigation Measures

One of the most important functions of an EIS is to identify potential impacts associated with a proposal and identify appropriate mitigation measures. The following chapters describe how the alternatives differ from one another, how the SEIS analyzed each element of the environment, what impacts have been identified, and what measures are proposed to mitigate impacts. The analysis contained in the SEIS will be used to guide City of Monroe decision-makers in selecting the appropriate Preferred Alternative.

Table 1-1 summarizes the results of the environmental evaluation of alternatives further detailed in Chapter 2, *Alternatives*, and Chapters 3 through 8. Where impacts are identified, even with compliance with regulations and standards, mitigation measures are provided. The reader is encouraged to review this summary section to find areas of interest and to read the more-detailed analysis in the following chapters for the full context of the affected environment, impact analysis, mitigation measures, and overall findings.



TABLE 1-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Element of the Environment	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Land Use, Aesthetics, and Parks, Recreation, and Open Space</p>	<p>The No Action Alternative would result in significant impacts on land use planning. The lack of increased density would work against the CPPs and Monroe’s visions of community connectivity. The proposed development pattern would not entirely align with the MPPs. The No Action Alternative does not fully align with the PSRC VISION 2050.</p> <p>Under the No Action Alternative, less-than-significant impacts on land use compatibility are expected. The No Action Alternative would allow some parcels to be redeveloped to use the allowed building envelope more fully based on existing standards that would continue to apply to siting, massing, design, and orientation of new development, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on visual character. Existing development regulations would minimize risk of view obstruction in areas of Monroe where taller or more dense development is already permitted, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on scenic viewsheds.</p> <p>Development consistent with the No Action Alternative would comply with Chapter 15.15 Monroe Municipal Code (MMC) standards for exterior lighting of buildings and parking lots, which</p>	<p>Development patterns under the Proposed Action would be consistent with VISION 2050, GMA requirements, the MPPs, and the CPPs. Although future development could result in higher housing densities and more varied land uses near each other, housing types, closely spaced housing, and urban uses bordering the UGA boundary, development would comply with existing development regulations, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on land use compatibility. Existing standards would continue to apply to new development relating to siting, massing, design, and orientation, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on visual character. Maximum height restrictions and standards for exterior lighting of buildings and parking lots would minimize potential changes to views from taller buildings permitted under existing regulations and increases in light and glare, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on scenic viewsheds and light & glare.</p> <p>Under the Proposed Action, the current level of service (LOS) deficit for both neighborhood and community parks would be remedied with acquisition of lands identified on</p>	<p>Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan updates.</p>



Element of the Environment	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	Mitigation
	<p>would ensure that increases in light and glare from future development would be less-than-significant.</p>	<p>the 2022 PROS Plan. Implementation of mitigation measures in the 2022 PROS Plan would mitigate the LOS and walkability impacts to less-than-significant.</p>	
<p>Shorelines & Natural Environment</p>	<p>The majority of land adjacent to shorelines is within designated park lands. Growth areas are already highly developed, and the City’s critical areas regulations would reduce impacts from geologic hazards and on public health and safety, resulting in less-than-significant impacts on earth resources.</p> <p>Growth is expected to result in permitted wetland, stream, and buffer impacts with mitigation resulting from development. With Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) compliance, less-than-significant impacts on wetlands and streams would occur.</p> <p>Development and new jobs are proposed in already largely developed industrial zones in the floodplain adjacent to Lake Tye. Future development in the floodplain would comply with Chapter 14.01 MMC, Flood Hazard Area Regulations and would not result in a greatly elevated chance of risk to humans and the natural and built environment where a substantial change in the way flood hazards are currently mitigated would</p>	<p>Impacts would be similar to the No Action Alternative. More development would occur under the Proposed Action but would occur in already-developed areas. Impacts would be less-than-significant.</p>	<p>Use Best Available Science (BAS) as required in the City’s critical areas regulations, which will be updated in 2025.</p> <p>Implement Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, policies, and actions designed to mitigate earth-related impacts, impacts on wetlands and streams, flooding impacts, and impacts on the floodplain and shoreline.</p> <p>Continue to invest in the stormwater management system by installing, maintaining, and repairing pipes, catch basins, ditch lines, and stormwater ponds.</p> <p>Continue to educate residents, students, and businesses on ways they can prevent pollutants from reaching Monroe’s waterbodies.</p> <p>Continue to engage community volunteer and stewardship groups in activities and events that support stormwater management and water quality.</p>



Element of the Environment	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	Mitigation
	<p>be required. The impact on floodplains would be less-than-significant.</p> <p>Substantial changes in allowed uses per the City’s existing Shoreline Master Program (SMP) are not proposed, nor is substantial development proposed in City shoreline jurisdiction. With SMP compliance, less-than-significant impacts on shorelines would occur.</p> <p>Impacts could include a loss or reduced function of plant communities, loss of vegetated land and wildlife habitat, declines in plant species diversity, infestations by invasive or non-native species, or loss of tree canopy and forest patch size. Most future development would occur in the already built environment. The likelihood of jeopardizing a plant population or species is minimal. Impacts on plants would be less-than-significant.</p> <p>Impacts could include lost, simplified, or degraded wildlife habitat. Reduced habitat could result in decreased species abundance and fragmented habitats. Most proposed development, especially dense development, would occur in already highly developed areas. Impacts on animals would be less-than-significant.</p>		<p>Continue to participate in the Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum.</p> <p>Continue the Monroe Parks Department’s relationship with the Stilly-Snohomish Fisheries Enhancement Task Force, which is a member of the Woods Creek Coalition.</p>



Element of the Environment	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Population, Employment, & Housing</p>	<p>Displacement risk would remain due to less integration of Monroe’s 2021 Housing Action Plan strategies, fewer opportunities for homeownership, fewer affordable housing and living-wage jobs created near residences, and fewer policies that encourage anti-displacement practices. The result is a significant impact on population.</p> <p>The No Action Alternative would not meet the Snohomish County CPP allocations for the UGA or fully align with VISION 2050, resulting in a significant impact on employment growth. The No Action Alternative would not comply with House Bill (HB) 1220 or statewide GMA requirements, resulting in a significant impact related to housing policy.</p> <p>The No Action Alternative would not comply with GMA housing requirements and would not have the capacity to provide sufficient housing for extremely low, very low, or low-income households, resulting in a significant impact with respect to housing supply and affordability.</p>	<p>The Proposed Action would accommodate increased affordable housing units that include provisions for all income levels and would provide middle housing opportunities. Although the risk of displacement would remain, policies and regulations that support anti-displacement practices would be in place under the Proposed Action, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on population.</p> <p>The Proposed Action would exceed the CPP employment allocation for Monroe and align with VISION 2050 in support of employment growth.</p> <p>The Proposed Action would allow for more housing types with increased density and ownership opportunities and would provide more than 900 housing units in the extremely low, very low, and low median income levels. It would exceed extremely low, very low, low, moderate, and above moderate income housing requirements set by GMA and HB 1220, supporting housing affordability and supply.</p> <p>The Proposed Action would provide more housing close to multimodal transportation options and would align more with VISION 2050’s focus of increased proximity to transit and connectivity compared to the No</p>	<p>Implement policies to preserve existing affordable housing.</p> <p>Obtain public investment or transfer of development rights to encourage maintenance of and retention of current affordable housing structures at affordable rates to prevent displacement.</p> <p>Explore funding or community-owned land options like community land trusts to offer increased options for affordable homeownership.</p> <p>Implement protections against landlord-tenant issues, eviction, and income discrimination.</p> <p>Distribute community resources that help residents learn about affordable housing and protect their rights.</p> <p>Create a regular monitoring system to evaluate the effectiveness of housing programs and strategies.</p> <p>Align capital funding sources and maintenance funding sources to create motivation for neighborhood and Main Street revitalization.</p> <p>Update development standards and zoning regulations to</p>



Element of the Environment	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	Mitigation
		<p>Action Alternative. The result would increase the number of dwelling units in proximity to transit. This alternative could bring homes and businesses closer to transit.</p>	<p>permit and encourage middle housing.</p> <p>Adopt smaller minimum lot sizes and inclusionary zoning policies.</p> <p>Allow micro apartments.</p> <p>Provide incentives for constructing housing for incomes less than 80% Area Median Income (AMI).</p>
<p>Capital Facilities & Utilities</p>	<p>Periodic planning and capital budgeting processes would ensure that staffing, equipment, and infrastructure are adequate to serve additional development. Communications and data are market-driven and will respond to increased demand with more services. Increased demand for capital facilities and utilities would represent a less-than-significant impact.</p>	<p>Impacts would be similar to the No Action Alternative, except that the Proposed Action would result in higher housing, employment, and population growth by 2044. Increased demand for capital facilities and utilities would represent a less-than-significant impact.</p>	<p>Concentrate growth in areas with adequate capital facilities and utilities.</p> <p>Build additional population density into upcoming plans or service updates, such as conservation plans and other future utility planning documents.</p> <p>Invest in building and maintaining facilities for capital facilities and utilities.</p> <p>Require potable water, wastewater, and stormwater connections for all new development, unless otherwise allowed by state, county, or City regulations.</p>



Element of the Environment	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	Mitigation
<p>Transportation</p>	<p>The No Action Alternative would result in a 34% increase in weekday PM peak hour trips and 25% increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) compared to existing conditions. The PM peak-hour volumes at the study intersections would increase on average by approximately 30% compared to existing conditions. The No Action Alternative would result in a significant impact on traffic operations because LOS standards would not be met at the Fryelands Boulevard/US 2 and 179th Avenue/US 2 intersections.</p> <p>Safety issues would accompany increased traffic volumes and worsening LOS; goals and policies to improve safety for all travel users and modes would reduce the impacts on traffic safety to a less-than-significant level. Although the No Action Alternative would support working toward a yellow LOS for transit and Community Transit has identified increased transit frequency for Monroe, some corridors could continue to operate below the yellow LOS standard, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on transit service.</p> <p>The growth in housing and jobs under the No Action Alternative would not result in freight traffic increases; therefore, no impact on rail traffic would occur. The No Action Alternative</p>	<p>Under the Proposed Action, additional growth in land use would result in 3% more weekday PM peak hour trips and 1% more VMT compared to the No Action Alternative. The increase in intersection traffic volumes is similar to the No Action Alternative, except slightly higher volume increases. The 179th Avenue/US 2 intersection would continue to operate at LOS F, similar to the No Action Alternative, but with a 10-second increase in delay. The Proposed Action would result in a significant impact on traffic volumes due to this increase in delay. Safety issues would accompany increased traffic volumes similar to under the No Action Alternative, and goals and policies to improve safety for all travel users and modes would reduce the impacts on traffic safety to a less-than-significant level. Impacts on transit service and rail traffic under the Proposed Action would be the same as the No Action Alternative, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on transit service and no impact on rail traffic. Impacts of the Proposed Action on the pedestrian and bicycle network would be the same as under the No Action Alternative.</p> <p>The City’s new multimodal LOS standard (development of which is in progress) will be used to confirm</p>	<p>Implement policies that address circulation system classification and design, concurrency standards, transit coordination and improvements, non-motorized facilities, and financing; including transportation impact fees and joint transportation planning.</p> <p>Implement and continue demand management strategies. Adopt and implement multimodal transportation LOS standards.</p>



Element of the Environment	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	Mitigation
	would increase demand for pedestrian and bicycle facilities due to the increased development and population, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on pedestrian and bicycle facilities.	impacts on pedestrian and bicycle facilities.	



1.9 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

The No Action Alternative would result in a significant unavoidable adverse impact on current land use plans, policies, and regulations. The lack of increased density under the No Action Alternative would work against the CPPs and visions of connectivity. The No Action Alternative would not fully align with the MPPs or the PSRC VISION 2050. The No Action Alternative does not support needed changes in land use to accommodate the anticipated growth in Monroe’s population or housing and employment needs.

Both the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action are expected to result in significant unavoidable adverse impacts on transportation operations, including traffic LOS and volumes.

Mitigation would reduce other significant impacts listed in **Table 1-1** to less-than-significant levels.

2

CHAPTER 2 Alternatives

2.1 Description of Alternatives

Alternatives are different ways of achieving a proposal's purpose and need and serve as the basis for environmental analysis relative to elements of the environment. Alternatives under consideration in this SEIS include the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action and are described below.

2.1.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative continues the current plan for growth in the City and unincorporated areas of Monroe's Urban Growth Area (UGA), including (1) the adopted zoning and planning designations in the 2015 Comprehensive Plan and the 2015 Future Land Use Map, and (2) the use of existing tools already in use by the City to meet housing-related state mandates. The No Action Alternative assumes the following:

- High-density attached housing growth would occur in areas already designated attached housing or mixed use. The 2015 Comprehensive Plan also encourages increases in residential densities within the areas designated for mixed use development, south of Main Street, within the SR 522/US 2 interchange area, and North Kelsey Subarea.
- Detached dwellings would be added on vacant lands and on partially developed lands where large lots can be further subdivided. These include areas that were rezoned as part of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan for increased residential density, including portions of the Foothills and Roosevelt Roads, and Roosevelt Ridge areas. The 2015 Comprehensive Plan also rezoned properties in the Tester Road area, near the SR 522/US 2 interchange, and east of SR 522 from Medium

Density Residential to High Density Single-Family Residential (SFR). Additional capacity includes areas identified in the Snohomish County Buildable Lands Report (BLR) (Snohomish County 2021).

Under the No Action Alternative, the City would have capacity for 1,468 new housing units, 975 housing units within the City and 493 housing units in the unincorporated UGA (**Table 2-1**). This capacity of 975 new housing units within the City is 858 units below the 2019–2035 housing allocation established in the Snohomish County BLR (2021). The No Action Alternative would have capacity for 2,330 new jobs (**Table 2-1**) in the City, which is 721 jobs above the 2019–2035 employment allocation established in the Snohomish County BLR. Similarly for the UGA, housing capacity under the No Action Alternative is lower than the capacity that was reported in Snohomish County BLR (2021). Job capacity for the UGA is higher under the No Action Alternative analyzed in this SEIS compared to the Snohomish County BLR (2021).

TABLE 2-1 Additional Housing and Jobs Capacity Under the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action

Capacity	2035 BLR Total Capacity	CPPs 2044	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action
HOUSING				
City	1,833	2,216	975	2,471
Unincorporated	596	413	493	479
Total Monroe UGA	2,429	2,629	1,468	2,950
EMPLOYMENT				
City	1,609	2,324	2,330	2,741
Unincorporated	1	35	0	109
Total Monroe UGA	1,610	2,359	2,330	2,850

BLR = Snohomish County Buildable Lands Report, 2021.

CPPs = Snohomish Countywide Planning Policies, 2023.

SOURCE: Developed by MIG 2024

The Snohomish County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) identify 2044 housing unit growth allocations for Monroe as 2,216 for the City and 413 for the unincorporated UGA, for a total of 2,629 housing unit growth (Snohomish County 2023). The Snohomish County CPPs identify 2044 employment growth allocations for Monroe as 2,324 for the City and 35 for the unincorporated UGA,

and a total of 2,359 employment growth. Housing units and jobs under the No Action Alternative are less than adopted growth allocations for the UGA as a whole. The No Action Alternative does not meet employment capacity allocations primarily because employment growth outside of the City is constrained by critical areas. The No Action Alternative would also not meet other new planning requirements, such as providing affordable housing across income bands and a range of housing types.

2.1.2 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would allow more housing and jobs and a greater diversity of housing types. The Proposed Action would add capacity for an additional 2,950 housing units (2,471 in the City and 479 in the unincorporated UGA) (**Table 2-1**), which is 321 more units of housing capacity than the CPP allocation for Monroe and 1,482 more units of housing capacity than the No Action Alternative.

Job capacity would increase with the Proposed Action, adding space for an additional 2,850 jobs (2,741 in the City and 109 in the unincorporated UGA), which is space for 491 more jobs than the CPP allocation for Monroe and 520 more jobs than the No Action Alternative.

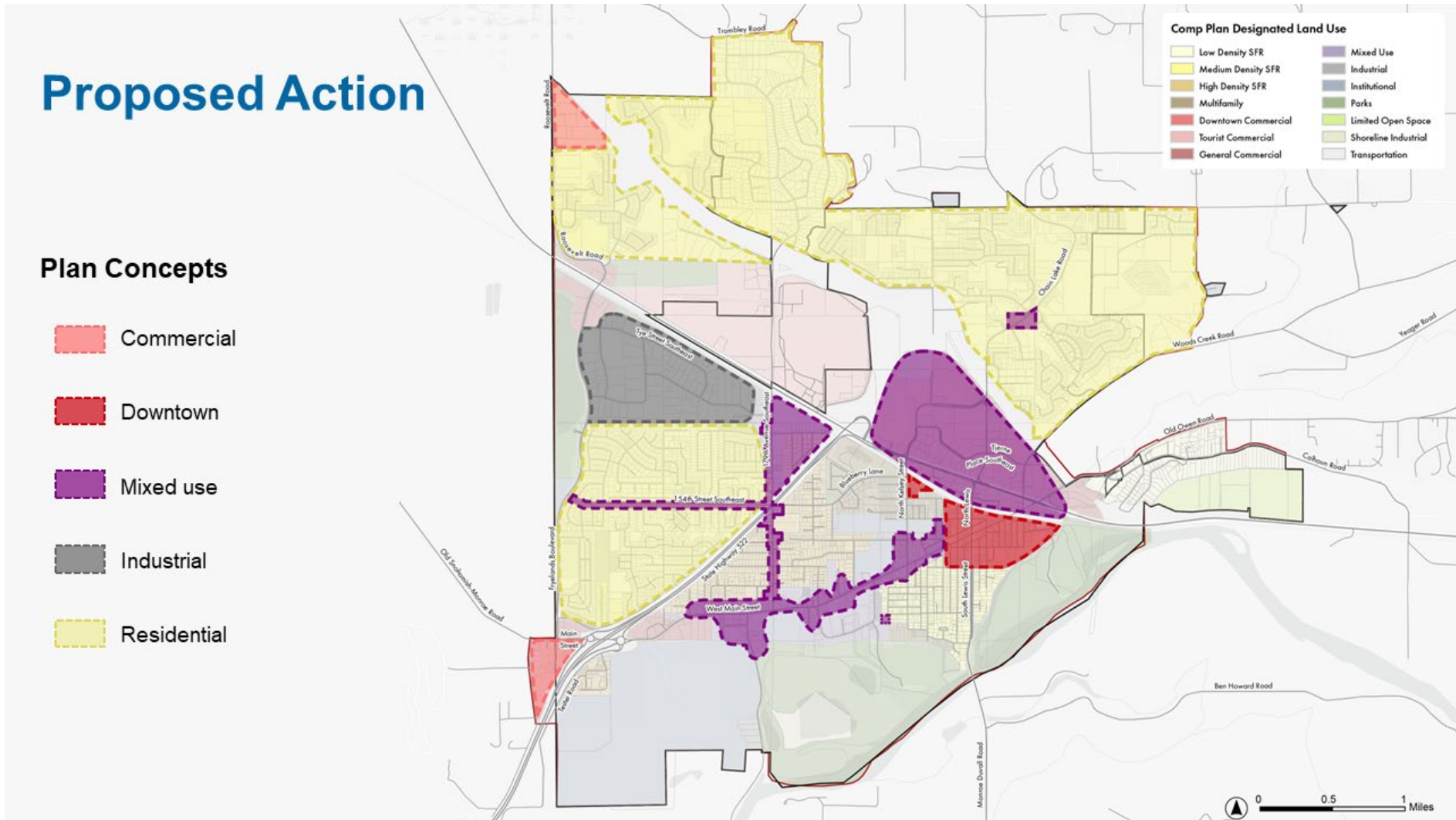
To increase the number of housing units, meet new state requirements to permit middle housing (higher density attached housing such as duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes), increase opportunities for housing and multiple income levels, and support existing and future neighborhoods, the Proposed Action would:

- Allow middle housing in all residential areas north of US 2.
- Add commercial development in the northwest corner of the City.
- Rezone all areas currently zoned Residential 4 Units per Acre (R4) to Residential 7 Units per Acre (R7) in annexation areas and infill areas in-City (e.g., the residential area north of SR 522 and south of the Tye Street SE industrial area).
- Add mixed use and neighborhood-serving commercial uses near Monroe High School.
- Add mixed use to Chain Lake Road to serve residential uses.
- Allow mixed use in high-density residential areas and along 179th Avenue SE, 154th Street, and W Main Street to increase housing (and employment) options.
- Increase housing density Downtown through higher density mixed and residential uses.

To increase jobs capacity, the Proposed Action would:

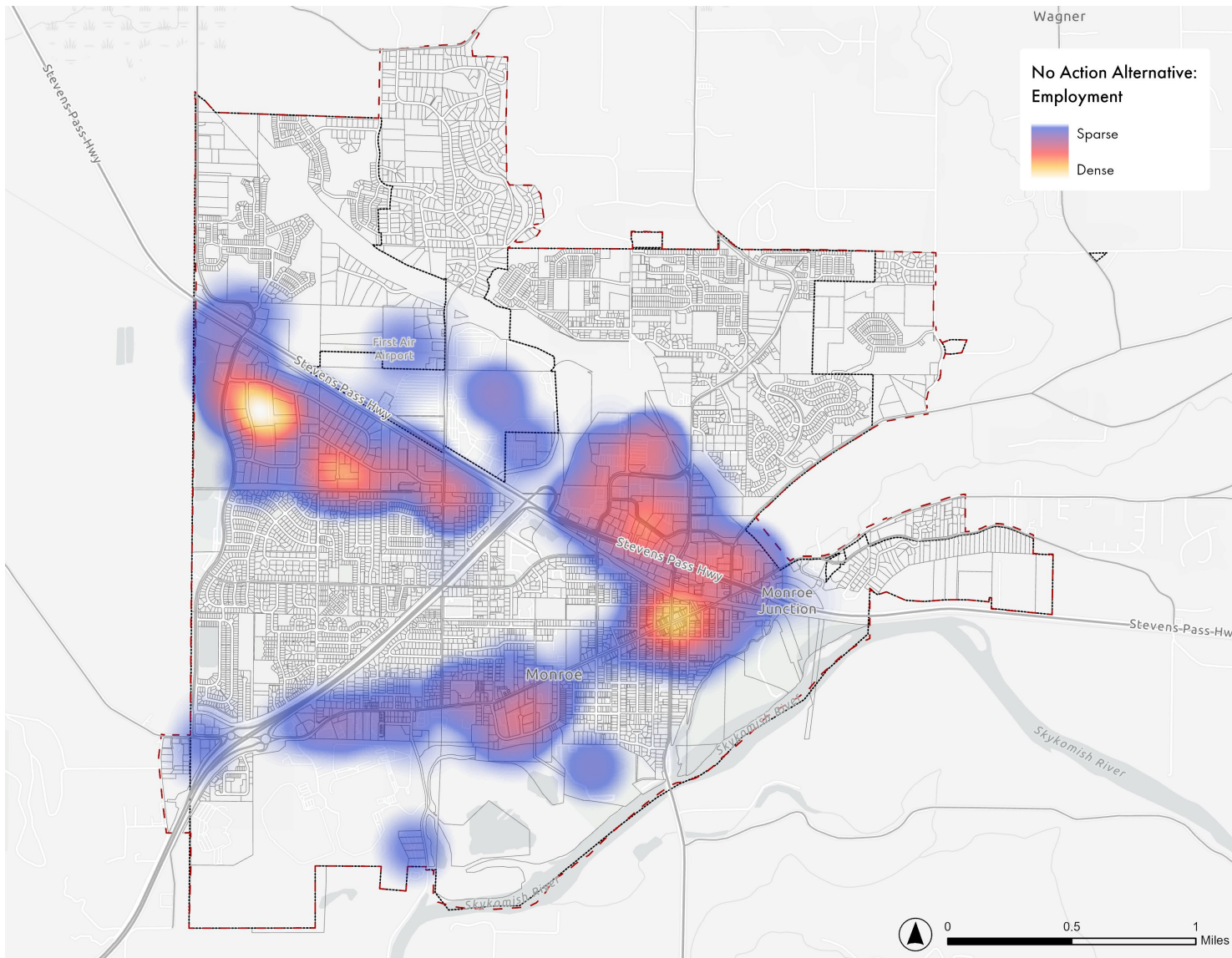
- Increase industrial densities to allow varied uses in the industrial area south of US 2 surrounding Tye Street SE.
- Increase the intensity of development through infill on Main Street, including allowing mixed use on Main Street east of Dickinson Street.
- Add mixed use development along Main Street, west of Dickinson Street.
- Allow for the addition of commercial services in the area near North Kelsey Street.
- Add mixed use to the existing commercial services in the area east of the SR 522/US 2 interchange.
- Add mixed use to Chain Lake Road to serve residential uses.

Figure 2-1 shows conceptual proposed development types under the Proposed Action. **Figure 2-2** and **Figure 2-3** show housing and jobs density under the No Action Alternative. **Figure 2-4** and **Figure 2-5** show housing and jobs density under the Proposed Action.



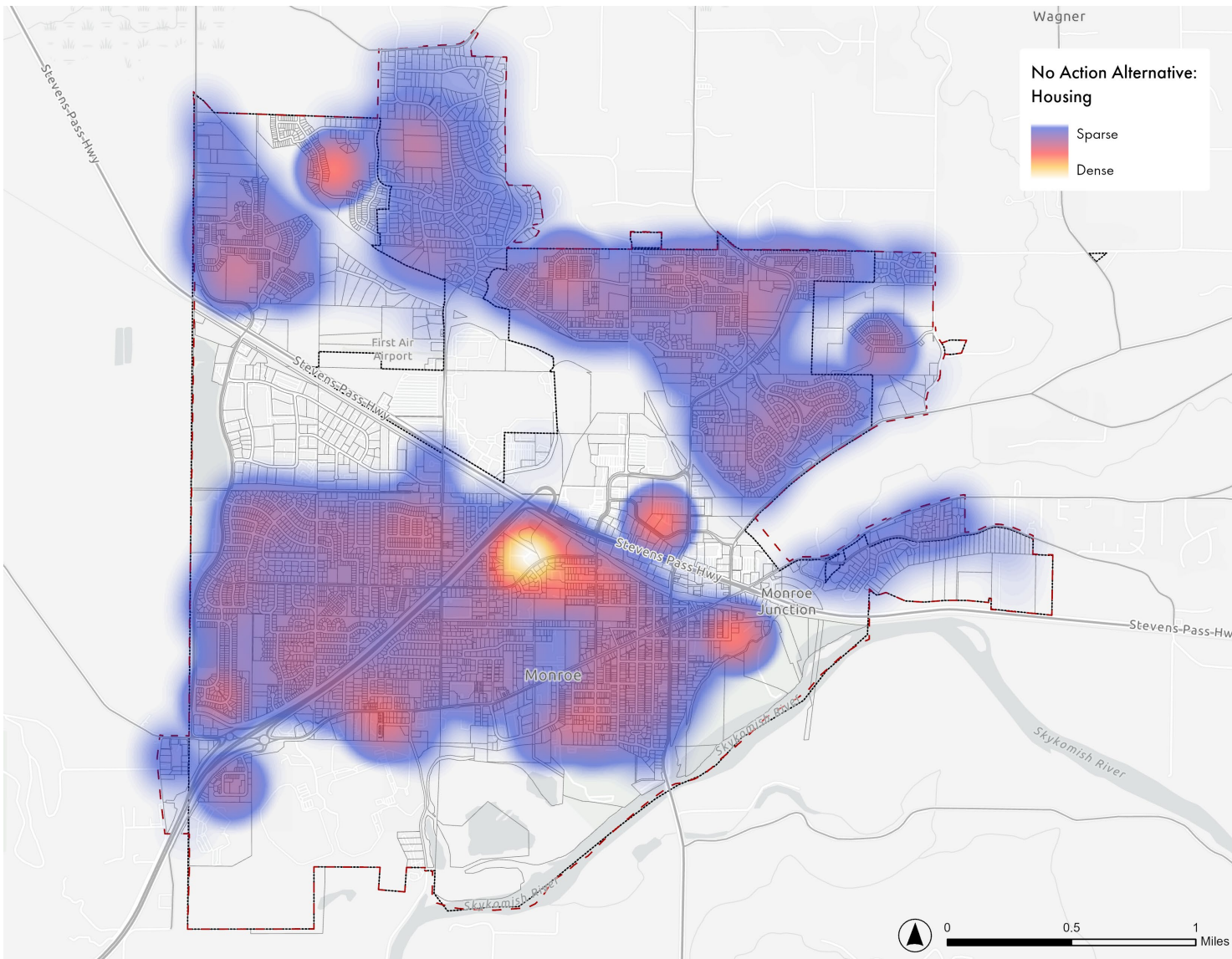
SOURCE: Prepared by MIG Inc. based on data provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 2-1 Conceptual Proposed Development under the Proposed Action



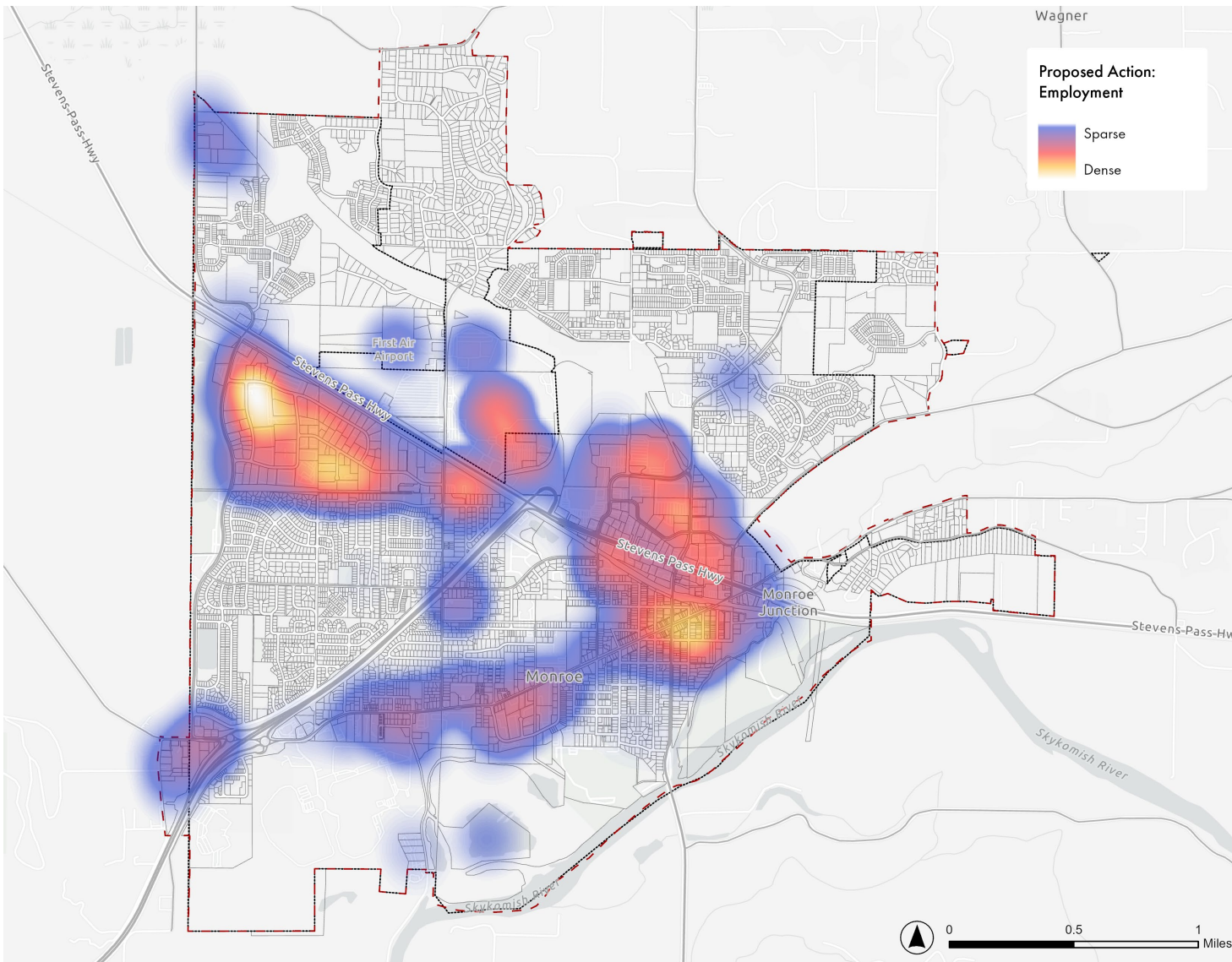
SOURCE: Prepared by MIG Inc. based on data provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 2-2 Employment Density under the No Action Alternative



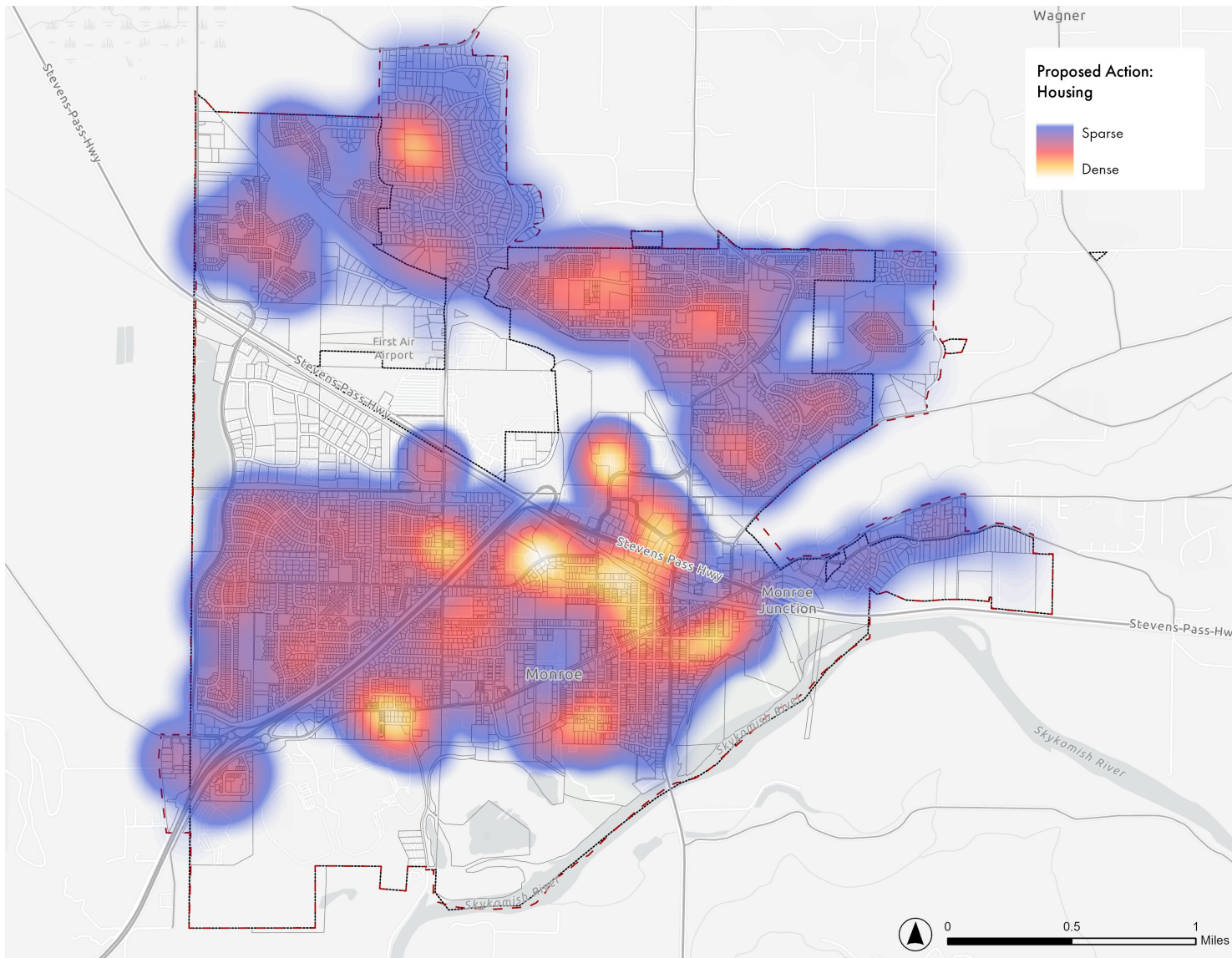
SOURCE: Prepared by MIG Inc. based on data provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 2-3 Housing Density under the No Action Alternative



SOURCE: Prepared by MIG Inc. based on data provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 2-4 Employment Density under the Proposed Action



SOURCE: Prepared by MIG Inc. based on data provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 2-5 Housing Density under the Proposed Action



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CHAPTER 3 Land Use, Aesthetics, and Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

As part of the City of Monroe’s SEPA programmatic SEIS evaluation of probable impacts relating to the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, this chapter describes land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space within the study area and assesses potential impacts associated with the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative. For land use, topics addressed include land use planning and land use compatibility. For aesthetics, topics addressed include visual character, scenic viewsheds, and light and glare. Level of service is addressed for parks, recreation, and open space.

3.1 Affected Environment

Section 3.1 presents methodology, the regulatory context, and information about existing land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space in the study area, which is defined as the City of Monroe and its Urban Growth Area (UGA).

3.1.1 Methodology

Section 3.1 describes the existing land uses in Monroe and 2015 Comprehensive Plan future land use designations. The analysis uses the most recent data available, generally from 2021 or 2022, and the City of Monroe 2015 Comprehensive Plan. This section also describes aesthetics and parks, recreation, and open space in Monroe. The summary of current conditions relies on geospatial information provided by the City of Monroe and Snohomish County, such as assessor tax parcel information (including current use codes), the 2021 Snohomish County Buildable Lands Report, and

future land use and zoning maps. The information is preceded by a summary of relevant and applicable state, regional, and local land use policies.

3.1.2 Regulatory Setting

The following regulations, plans, and policies apply to land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space.

STATE REGULATIONS

Washington’s Growth Management Act (GMA). GMA, adopted in 1990, mandates land use that accommodates for projected population growth and associated housing and employment needs. Planning needs to provide special consideration for environmental justice,¹ the reduction of health risks, and places added protections to human life and natural resources. GMA is primarily codified under Chapter 36.70A RCW, although it has been amended and added to in several other parts of the RCW and WAC. GMA includes 15 planning goals that guide the development and adoption of local comprehensive plans and development regulations. Goals related to land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space are identified below:

- **RCW 36.70A.020 (1) Urban Growth.** Encourage development in urban areas in an efficient manner.
- **RCW 36.70A.020 (2) Reduce Sprawl.** Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.
- **RCW 36.70A.020 (9) Open Space and Recreation.** Retain open space and green space, enhance recreational opportunities, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities.
- **RCW 36.70A.070 (8) Park and Recreation Element.** The park and recreation element of a comprehensive plan must contain at least the following features: (i) consistency with the capital facilities element as it relates to park and recreation facilities; (ii) estimates of park and recreation demand for at least a 10-year period; (iii) an evaluation of facilities and service needs; and (iv) an evaluation of intergovernmental coordination

¹ Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and has equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work (Ecology 2024).

opportunities to provide regional approaches for meeting park and recreational demand.²

- **RCW 36.70A.160 Open Space Corridors.** Directs local governments to identify lands that are useful for public purposes and to identify open space corridors within the urban growth area.

REGIONAL REGULATIONS

Puget Sound Regional Council’s (PSRC) Regional Growth Strategy, VISION 2050. VISION 2050 encourages the use of resources, facilities, and infrastructure to support alignment and concurrency within Snohomish, King, Kitsap, and Pierce counties across building development, land use allocations, and level of service (LOS) needs. VISION 2050 includes the GMA-required Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs) for the four counties and a regional strategy for accommodating growth through 2050. VISION 2050 includes 216 MPPs, organized around nine topic areas. MPPs applicable to land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space are identified below.

- **MPP-DP-6.** Preserve significant regional historic, visual, and cultural resources, including public views, landmarks, archaeological sites, historic and cultural landscapes, and areas of special character.
- **MPP-DP-40.** Protect and enhance significant open spaces, natural resources, and critical areas.
- **MPP-DP-41.** Establish best management practices (BMPs) that protect the long-term integrity of the natural environment, adjacent land uses, and the long-term productivity of resource lands.
- **MPP-En-11.** Designate, protect, and enhance significant open spaces, natural resources, and critical areas through mechanisms, like reviewing policies and provisions.
- **MPP-En-12.** Identify, preserve, and enhance significant regional open space networks and linkages across jurisdictional boundaries.
- **MPP-En-15.** Provide parks, trails, and open space within walking distance of urban residents. Prioritize historically underserved communities for open space improvements and investments.
- **MPP-RGS-4.** Accommodate the region’s growth first and foremost in the UGA. Ensure that development in rural areas is consistent with the regional vision and the goals of the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan (see below).

² Additional requirements are listed under the 2024 update to RCW 36.70A.070 (8), but they are options, as statewide funds have not been allocated to support their development.

Regional Open Space Conservation Plan. Developed in 2018, this conservation plan for King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties focused on protecting more than 400,000 acres of the region’s at-risk farms, forest, natural areas, and aquatic systems.

Snohomish Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs). GMA requires counties and cities to collaboratively develop CPPs to set the general framework for coordinated land use and population planning between a county and its cities to ensure comprehensive plans are consistent with each other. Multiple policies mitigate impacts and achieve goals that also align with GMA, the Regional Growth Strategy, and MPPs. CPPs applicable to land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space are identified below.

- **DP-13.** The county and cities should integrate the desirable qualities of existing residential neighborhoods when planning for urban centers and mixed use developments. Jurisdictions should adopt design guidelines and standards for urban centers to provide for compact, efficient site design that integrates building design with multimodal transportation facilities and publicly accessible open spaces.
- **DP-16.** Jurisdictions should encourage the use of innovative development standards, design guidelines, regulatory incentives, and applicable low-impact development measures to provide compact, high-quality communities.
- **DP-33.** Jurisdictions should minimize the adverse impacts on resource lands and critical areas from new developments through the use of environmentally sensitive development and land use practices.
- **DP-35.** Jurisdictions should identify and plan for the development of parks, civic places, and public spaces, especially in or adjacent to centers.
- **DP-38.** The county and cities should reduce disparities in access to opportunity for all residents through inclusive community planning and making investments that meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses.
- **ED-16.** The expeditious processing of development applications shall not result in the reduction of environmental and land use standards.
- **Env-2.** The county and cities should work collaboratively to identify, designate, and protect regional open space networks and wildlife corridors both inside and outside the UGA and across the jurisdictional boundaries.

LOCAL REGULATIONS

Monroe Municipal Code (MMC). The MMC poses design and development standards, land use allowances, and development permits to help mitigate and protect against impacts on these areas. Relevant provisions of the MMC adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect to land use, aesthetics, or parks, recreation, and open space are summarized below. These include:

- **Title 12 MMC, Public Improvements.** Title 12 establishes standards related to the provision of sidewalks and implementation of complete streets principles.
- **Title 14 MMC, Floodplain Regulations.** Title 14 includes flood hazard area regulations and requires compliance with standards for floodproofing for structures sited in flood hazard areas.
- **Title 15 MMC, Buildings and Construction.** In addition to including the building code, which incorporates the Washington State Building Code, Title 15 also includes lighting standards and requirements.
- **Title 22 MMC, Unified Development Regulations.** Title 22 includes development regulations for various zoning districts and the design standards that accompany them.

City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan (2015). Monroe is fully planning under RCW 36.70A.040 and must complete a periodic review every 10 years for the comprehensive plan and development regulations, including those related to critical areas and natural resource lands. This periodic review is necessary for compliance with revisions to GMA and other related planning regulations, including the VISION 2050 MPPs and Snohomish County's CPPs. The current periodic update review process must be completed on or before December 31, 2024. Compliance is necessary to be eligible for grants and loans from certain state infrastructure programs managed by PSRC and various state agencies. The City's 2015 Comprehensive Plan provides policies to guide Monroe's future growth and development through the year 2035.

Lake Tye Park and Cadman Master Plans (2019). These park grand plans provide concept designs and cost estimates for two large undeveloped park sites in Monroe. Park programming recommendations were incorporated into the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan and will help protect allocated lands.

Skykomish-Snohomish Rivers Recreation Concept Plan (2018). This plan provides a framework for coordinating recreation management and informs related activities on the Skykomish and Snohomish Rivers across jurisdictions and can help to protect these unique shorelines.



Skykomish and Snohomish Rivers Wayfinding Signage Design Intent (2019). This project provides a countywide sign package with guidelines for use associated with recreation and tourism projects along and adjacent to the Skykomish and Snohomish Rivers.

Infill, Multifamily, and Mixed Use Design Standards (2011). Updated in 2021, these standards expand beyond municipal code to encourage and accommodate for infill.

Monroe Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan (2022). The PROS Plan provides a detailed assessment of existing parks and recreation facilities and establishes goals and strategic actions to meet current and future needs. With new park and open space acquisitions proposed by the updated 2022 PROS Plan, almost all residents would reportedly live within a 10-minute walkshed of greenspace. This acquisition would also help the general LOS for community and neighborhood parks increase (as six parks and open space areas are included as park access opportunities in the updated plan).

3.1.3 Land Use

Monroe sits roughly 32 miles northeast of Seattle and 16 miles southeast of Everett, in southern Snohomish County. Neighboring cities include Sultton, Lake Stevens, Snohomish, and Duvall. According to the 2020 Decennial Census, the population of Monroe has grown to 19,699, an 11 percent increase since the last major Comprehensive Plan Update in 2015.

Monroe is situated at the foothills of the Cascade Mountain Range and is bordered by the Snohomish and Skykomish Rivers, making it a town with considerable access to nature. Other waterways include the Snoqualmie River, Lake Tye, and Lords Lake. The City also has an extensive trail network. More than 14 miles of trails serve bicyclists and pedestrians across the City, with plans for an extension into the regional trail network through the Centennial Trail and Snoqualmie Valley Trail.

The Monroe UGA includes approximately 6 square miles within the City corporate limits and approximately half of a square mile of land in unincorporated Snohomish County (2,090 square miles) (U.S. Census Bureau n.d.). Despite accounting for only 0.2 percent of the Snohomish County, Monroe is substantially more densely populated than the county, with nearly ten times the number of people per square mile.

Three main highways bisect the City and influence adjacent land uses: U.S. Route 2/Stevens Pass Highway (US 2), State Route 522 (SR 522), and State Route 203/Lewis Street (SR 203). Fryelands Boulevard, Main Street, Kelsey Street, Chain Lake Road, and Woods Creek Road provide access to visitors from the rest of the region. Transit services use US 2 to connect Monroe to Sultan, Everett, Snohomish, and Seattle.

The City of Monroe 2015 Future Land Use Map (**Figure 3-1**) is part of the Comprehensive Plan and expresses graphically the 20-year vision of preferred land use patterns to guide development in the City. The land use designations reflect a variety of future land use types and intensity of development. The 2015 Comprehensive Plan land use designations are implemented by a corresponding range of zoning districts and development regulations established in the Monroe Municipal Code. Forty-six percent of Monroe is currently designated for detached residential land uses, followed by educational, City-owned (e.g., parks), and other institutional lands.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

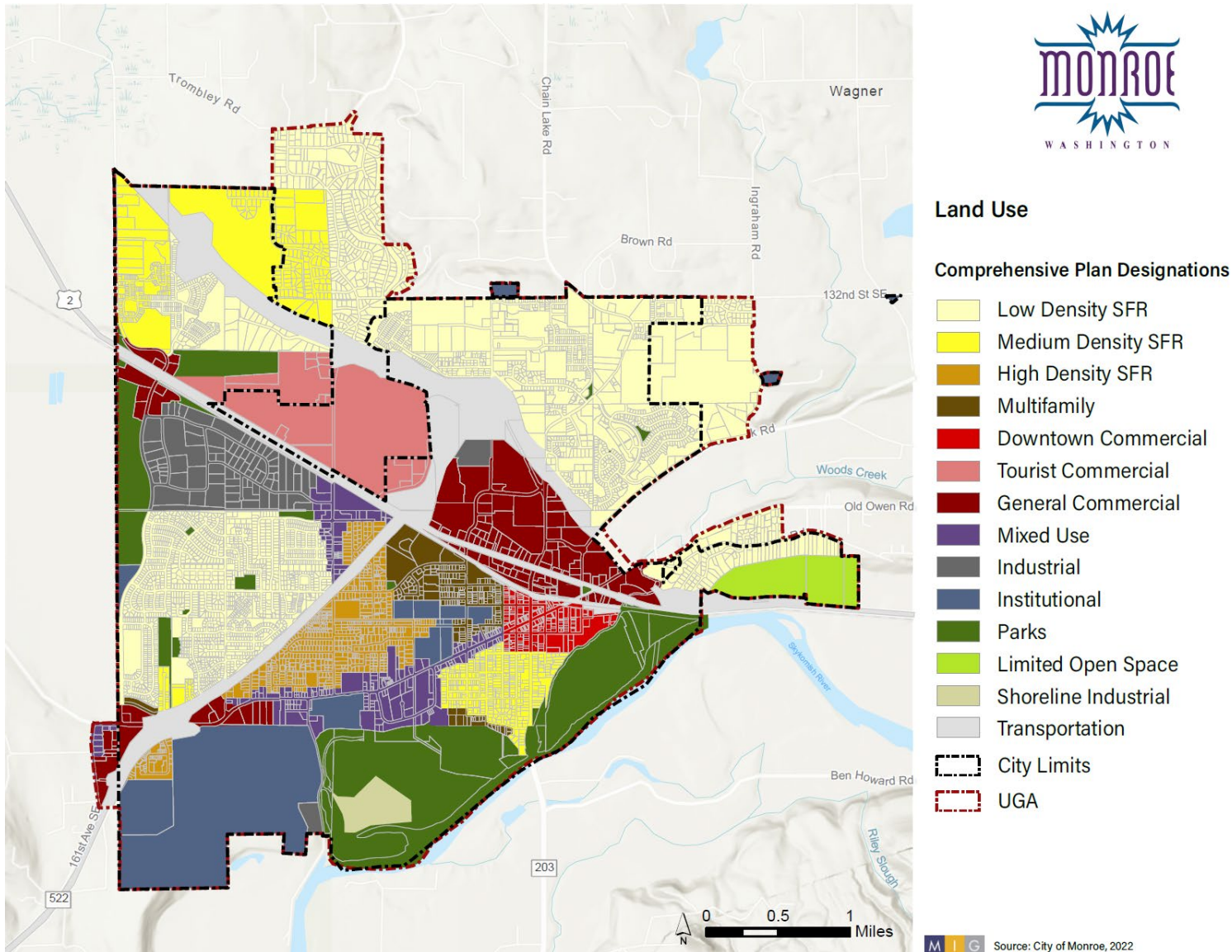
The following map identifies current Monroe land use designations under the 2015 Comprehensive Plan and the types of development allowed in each area of the City. The general land use categories are described below.

Low-Density Single-Family Residential (SFR)

Within the UGA, there are three types of detached housing designations: Low, Medium, and High-Density SFR. Low-Density SFR develops at an approximate gross density of three to five units per acre. Subdivisions in this designation may have individual lots ranging from about 9,000 square feet to 14,500 square feet, but individual lots may be smaller in more constrained areas.

Medium-Density Single-Family Residential

Medium-Density SFR areas can develop at a higher intensity, ranging from approximately five to seven units per acre. Where sites are unconstrained, this can result in individual lot sizes of about 6,000 square feet to 9,000 square feet. These areas are more typically located in the northwestern corner of the City or directly north of the Skykomish River or SR 522.



SOURCE: Prepared by MIG Inc. based on data provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 3-1 2015 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations

High-Density Single-Family Residential

High-Density SFR (generally east of SR 522, south of US 2, north of Main Street, and west of King Street) is intended to encourage redevelopment and bring large-scale transformation to an area. Development intensity is set at one unit for every 3,000 square feet of lot area, permitting higher density housing types, including attached housing like townhomes on parcels larger than 6,000 square feet. All SFR designations allow for parks, and most of the High-Density SFR can be found sandwiching SR 522, north and south of the highway.

Attached Residential

This designation provides for developments at densities between 12 and 25 dwelling units per acre. Generally, this designation is appropriate for land in proximity to principal arterials and to commercial centers. This designation is intended for areas of infill housing such as the Downtown and West Main Street corridor, and for senior housing and other special housing groups. Attached Residential is designated in areas south of the intersection of US 2 and SR 522.

General Commercial

This designation is characterized by retail, dining, entertainment, and businesses that are conducted primarily indoors. Commercial uses provide services or entertainment to consumers. Commercial uses may also include outdoor display and/or storage of merchandise and tend to generate noise as a part of their operations. Such uses include but are not limited to shopping centers, large retailers, grocery stores, retail sales, food and drink establishments, recreational vehicle sales or rental, and other related uses. Most general commercial spaces can be found at the edges of the UGA; on the western border and north of the historic Downtown, north of US 2.

Downtown Commercial

The Downtown Commercial designation is comprised of retail and service businesses that cater primarily to pedestrians. Mixed uses can occur within a single building or as multiple, individual structures on the same property.

Tourist Commercial

The Tourist Commercial designation anticipates a new generation of planning and development in the vicinity of the airport and Evergreen State Fairgrounds. It allows visitor accommodations,

events, additional commercial development, and permits business park or related development that may eventually replace the airport.

Mixed Use

The Mixed Use designation is characterized by a diverse mix of land uses; where there is the ability to develop land efficiently through the consolidation and infill of under-utilized parcels; and where infrastructure, transit, and other public services are available or easily provided. Mixed Use encourages office, retail, and light-industrial uses; compatible high-technology manufacturing; institutional and educational facilities; public and private parks and other public gathering places; entertainment and cultural uses; and attached residential units. The Mixed Use zone in the City of Monroe allows 8–12 dwelling units per acre.

Industrial

This designation applies to both light and general industrial uses and may include small-scale ancillary commercial uses. Light industrial includes non-polluting manufacturing and processing, wholesaling, warehousing and distribution, and other similar activities, which tend to require large buildings and generate more large-truck traffic than other types of land uses. General Industrial applies to more intensive manufacturing and processing operations. However, all industrial uses must meet the performance standards in the zoning ordinance to prevent undue and adverse environmental impacts. Industrial areas are mainly close to the Fryelands (a neighborhood of detached homes, a community park and trail system, and public schools), south of US 2.

Shoreline Industrial

This specific Shoreline Industrial designation refers only to the property hosting the existing Cadman Sky River Pit. It permits the processing of rock and acknowledges the continuation of the processing operations, even as the mining portion of the operation phases into reclamation.

Institutional

This designation includes county, state, or federally owned and operated facilities located within City limits or the UGA. These include the Washington State Reformatory (Monroe Correctional Complex), Public Library, and the Evergreen State Fairgrounds, all of which have regional uses and are located on large sites.

Parks

This designation includes public neighborhood, community and regional parks, recreational facilities, and natural open spaces preserved through acquisition by the City (or other public entity), transfer of development rights, dedication, or other mechanism. This designation includes Al Borlin, Lewis Street, and Lake Tye parks. Private parks are not included in this designation. Existing parks, recreation, and open space facilities are described further in this chapter under Section 3.1.5.

Limited Open Space

Slightly different than the parks designation, the Limited Open Space designation is appropriate for very low-intensity development because it may lack availability of public services and be constrained by critical areas. Limited Open Space areas can be suitable for buffers between development types or as low-intensity land use along the edge of the UGA. Limited Open Space areas can also provide for enhanced recreational facilities and linkages between trail networks.

Transportation

The Transportation designation is applied to large landholdings dedicated to regional transportation purposes. This includes the US 2 corridor, the SR 522 corridor, the railroad corridor, and the land owned by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for the future US 2 bypass.³ It does not include City-owned right-of-way.

ZONING DISTRICTS AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The 2015 Comprehensive Plan land use designations are implemented by a corresponding range of zoning districts and development regulations established in Title 22 MMC. Zoning classifies, designates, and regulates the development of land in Monroe. Monroe's Zoning Map, most recently updated in 2022, identifies several primary zoning designations: Single-Family (Detached) Residential; Multi-Family (Attached) Residential; Mixed Use; Commercial; Industrial; Institutional; Transportation; Parks; and Limited Open Space (**Figure 3-2**).

³ This is a three-phase project that was started in the 1960s to mitigate traffic overflow from population growth. It moves the SR 522 and US 2 interchange approximately 1.15 miles farther north of the city, to connect with Chain Lake Road. This project is part of the WSDOT 2007–2026 20-year State Highway System Plan (Washington State Legislature, *Monroe Bypass Summary*, 2011. [MonroeBypassSummary.pdf \[wa.gov\]](#)).

The City’s largest zoning district is detached residential, accounting for 46 percent of the land in Monroe. Most of the lowest-density, detached zoning is located in the northeastern corner and the western border of the City limits. The northwest corner and area along SR 522 allow for increased densities of detached residential uses. The next largest zoning districts encompass parks and open space (Limited Open Space and Parks) and public facilities like schools and rights of way (Institutional and Transportation). Industrial and commercial zoning rank third and fourth, but account for a significantly smaller share of the land use. The largest commercial spaces are located on both sides of US 2. The Fryelands industrial area contains most of the industrial land and development within the City.

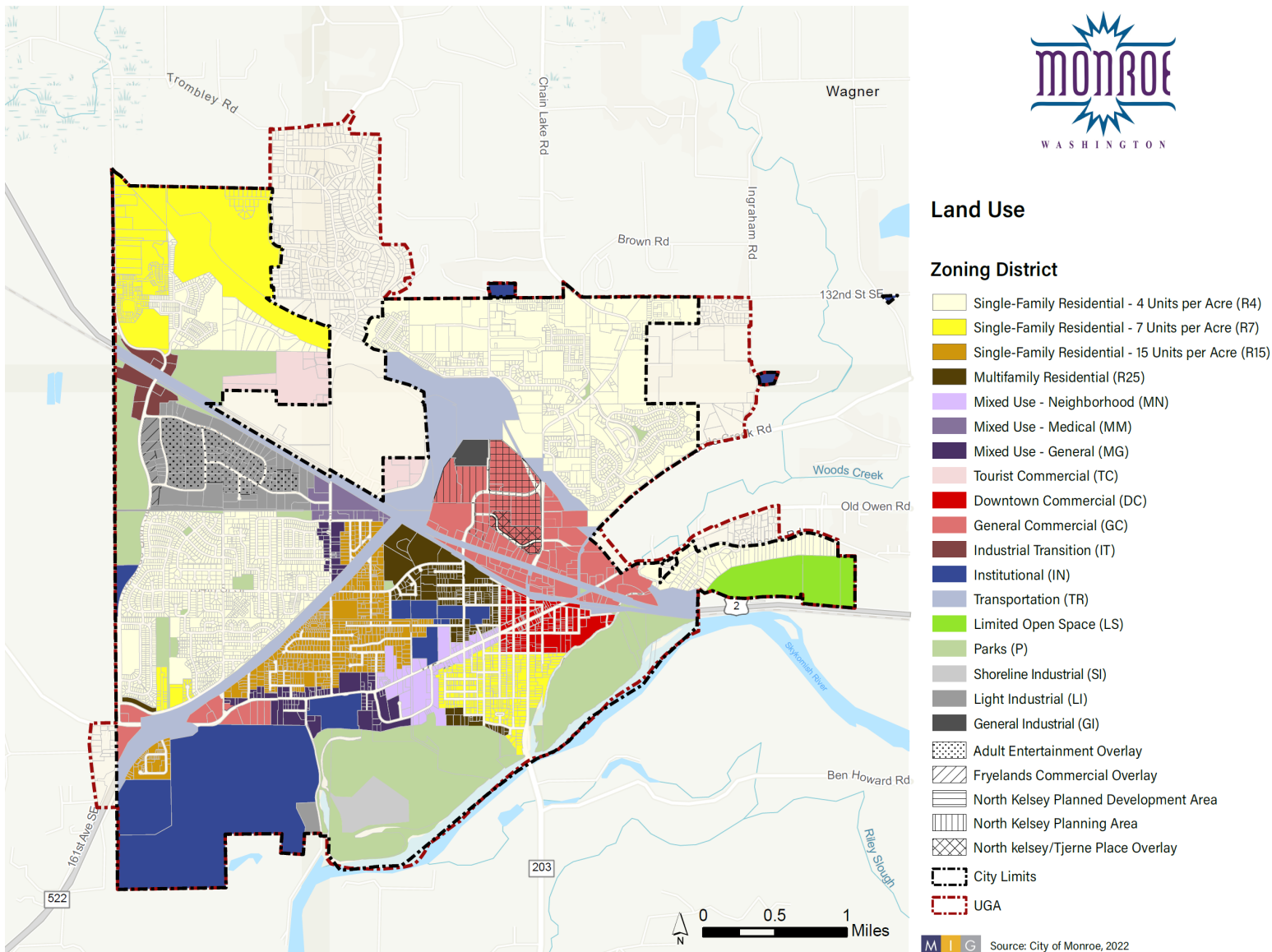
In areas located south of US 2, land use patterns typically follow a grid-like pattern of streets, focused on the Downtown corridor as its central location. There is limited development along the shorelines of the Skykomish River due to floodplains and the location of parks and natural areas.

Overlays

Several main development overlays in the City also determine development patterns: the North Kelsey/Tjerne Place Overlay District (NK/TP-O) and the Fryelands Commercial Overlay District (FC-O). The NK/TP-O is a commercial overlay that allows for expansion of commercial and residential uses in this traditional and well-established commercial zone. The FC-O designation allows certain commercial development in the Light Industrial zoning district.

URBAN CENTERS

The City of Monroe has identified two areas within the City as locally adopted urban centers. Downtown Monroe and the North Kelsey Subarea were identified locally as urban centers by the Monroe City Council in 2009 and 2003 (later amended in 2018). Downtown was designated as an urban center for increased residential development, including affordable housing. The North Kelsey Subarea was originally master planned by the City to support retail and office space, but regulations were later amended in 2018 to provide for a combination of horizontal and vertical mixed-use, attached housing, retail space, and a public village green in the plan area. While these areas are identified for concentrated growth within Monroe, they are not currently identified as regional growth centers by PSRC or Snohomish County.



SOURCE: Prepared by MIG Inc. based on data provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 3-2 Existing Zoning Districts

3.1.4 Aesthetics

This section describes the overall visual design and character of Monroe’s existing urban environment. Aesthetics also refers to the heights and design of structures. The City’s Municipal Code includes design and development standards that regulate development (Title 22 MMC). These standards lay out the physical character of the area and its immediate surroundings.

VISUAL CHARACTER

Monroe has several areas with notable visual features and neighborhood purpose, including the historic Downtown Monroe (**Figure 3-3**), North Kelsey Commercial Area (**Figure 3-4**), the Evergreen State Fairgrounds (**Figure 3-5**), and the Monroe riverfront (**Figure 3-6**).



Photo provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 3-3 Downtown Monroe

The historic *Downtown* serves as the City’s focal point. Starting at the intersection of Old Owen Road and US 2, Downtown transitions from a busy intersection with general commercial spaces into a commercial area catered to pedestrians, with an active street environment. The buildings are historic in nature and tend to be low-density mixed use developments that are typically no higher than two stories. Restaurants, coffee shops, and local businesses line West Main Street until Madison Street, where development transitions into more mixed use, attached housing, and high-density developments.



Photo provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 3-4 North Kelsey Commercial Area



Photo provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 3-5 Evergreen State Fairgrounds

Much of the development adjacent to US 2 is focused on large-format retail and auto-oriented commercial development. An example of this aesthetic is the North Kelsey Commercial Area, characterized by auto-oriented commercial spaces with large retail stores, healthcare facilities, fast-food and super centers, and large surface parking lots.

The Evergreen State Fairgrounds, recently renamed Fair Park, hosts the Washington State Fair, and is characterized by expansive, open fields and buildings.



Photo provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 3-6 Monroe Riverfront

Riverfront areas along the Skykomish River in Monroe are typically natural or designated as open space. These areas generally restrict development due to flooding potential.

Other locations within Monroe are typically contemporary detached residential subdivisions with limited architectural differences. Some older neighborhoods near Downtown and south of Main Street are characterized by gridded streets and smaller bungalows, intermixed with infill residential development.

BUILDING HEIGHT, BULK, AND SCALE

Building height, bulk, and scale vary depending on location. While building heights in the historic Downtown can reach up to five stories for mixed use buildings, they typically do not reach higher than two stories.

Density and lot coverage increase in the northwestern portion of the City. Directly to the east of Lake Tye are large industrial buildings that are no taller than three stories, but can cover up to 100 percent of their lot, leading to low and wide buildings and parking lots to support warehouse, wholesale, and distribution workers and freight. The Monroe Center shopping mall is equally broad in its structures, catering to visitors and residents who are more auto-centered, and ultimately promoting higher-density buildings in mixed use areas. The stated purpose of the development standards is to keep structures in adjacent zones similar in height and scale, while creating more walkable and connected neighborhoods where appropriate (**Table 3-1**).

TABLE 3-1 Bulk and Density Standards by Zone

Zone	Density	Maximum Height (Feet)	Maximum Coverage
(Single Family) Detached Housing Zoning (R4)	4 du/acre	35	50%
(Single Family) Detached Housing Zoning (R7)	7 du/acre	35	50%
(Single Family) Detached Housing Zoning (R15)	15 du/acre	35	50%
Attached Housing Zoning (R25)	12–25 du/acre	35–45	70–80%
Mixed Use Zoning (MG, MM, or MN)	8–12 du/acre	35–45	70–100%
Downtown Commercial Residential	11 du/acre	35	—
Downtown Commercial Historic Main	20 du/acre	55 (for mixed use)	—
Downtown Commercial East Downtown Neighborhood	20–28 du/acre	55 (for mixed use)	—
Downtown Commercial Downtown Promenade	—	55 (for mixed use)	—
Commercial (GC)	—	45	100%
Commercial (NK/TP-O)	26 du/acre	65 feet residential (45 other)	100%
Industrial (LI/FC-O)	—	35	100%
Industrial (SI/GI)	—	45	100%

SOURCE: Title 22 MMC

NOTE: du = dwelling unit

PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

Pedestrian-oriented development and spaces are required to comply with the City’s Infill, Multifamily, and Mixed-Use Design Standards (City of Monroe 2021), which include design criteria for pedestrian-oriented spaces (e.g., wider sidewalks, pedestrian access to buildings from the street, pedestrian-scale lighting, seating areas, and landscaping).

In the historic Downtown, sidewalks are wide and covered by store awnings, are landscaped, and offer ample lighting. Outside of this center and in the eastern portion of the City, sidewalks become narrow, with no seating, limited lighting, and limited availability. There are narrow sidewalks and auto-centered conditions near the large shopping center in northwest Monroe along US 2, which is indicative of that type of commercial zoning.

Residential areas generally have sidewalks, although some areas in the central portion of Monroe lack pedestrian amenities. The

pedestrian environment is also varied by location, with some areas having street trees, while others only have a sidewalk.

SCENIC VIEWS

Situated amongst the Cascade Mountains and between the Skokomish, Snohomish, and Snoqualmie Rivers, Monroe is host to many scenic views and scenic view corridors. Depending on the location, there are views of the Snoqualmie River Valley, Cascade Mountains, and Mount Rainier.

In the southern portion of the City, the Monroe Correctional Complex and Monroe High School have views of these surroundings, as they are higher in elevation than their surrounding developments. This is also the case for detached housing developments along Old Owen Road on the east side of the City and Woodlands/Roosevelt Ridge in North Monroe. The rest of Monroe is relatively flat, although views of the Cascades are often still possible, depending on tree canopy.

3.1.5 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Within the Monroe City limits, approximately 288 acres of park land is distributed amongst 17 sites (**Figure 3-7**). Fifteen of these parks (282 acres) are developed, providing places to play, gather, and experience the outdoors. Two sites (6 acres) are undeveloped, holding acreage in reserve for future park use. These open spaces range in size and function, from community parks to nature preserves to river greenbelts. Currently, community parks and river greenbelts occupy the most acreage in the City's inventory (at 114 and 105 acres, respectively) (**Table 3-2**).

The parkland acreage includes 14 sports fields and seven courts, 12 playgrounds, picnic shelters, and specialized facilities like dog parks and skate parks.

Monroe's trail system includes more than 14 miles of trails. Aside from the Al Borlin Park Pedestrian Trail and some of the Park Meadows Trail, most trails are surfaced with asphalt and serve as multi-purpose, accessible trails that support recreation and active transportation. These parks provide shoreline access and serve as connectors to other parts of the City.

In 2015, the existing Park LOS was 4.75 acres per 1,000 residents, which jumped to 16.6 acres per 1,000 residents in 2020. Assuming all parks are developed by 2035, the 2022 PROS Plan proposed an LOS of 20.6 acres per 1,000 residents (City of Monroe 2022).

Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan



Map 1: Existing Parks and Trails

City Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

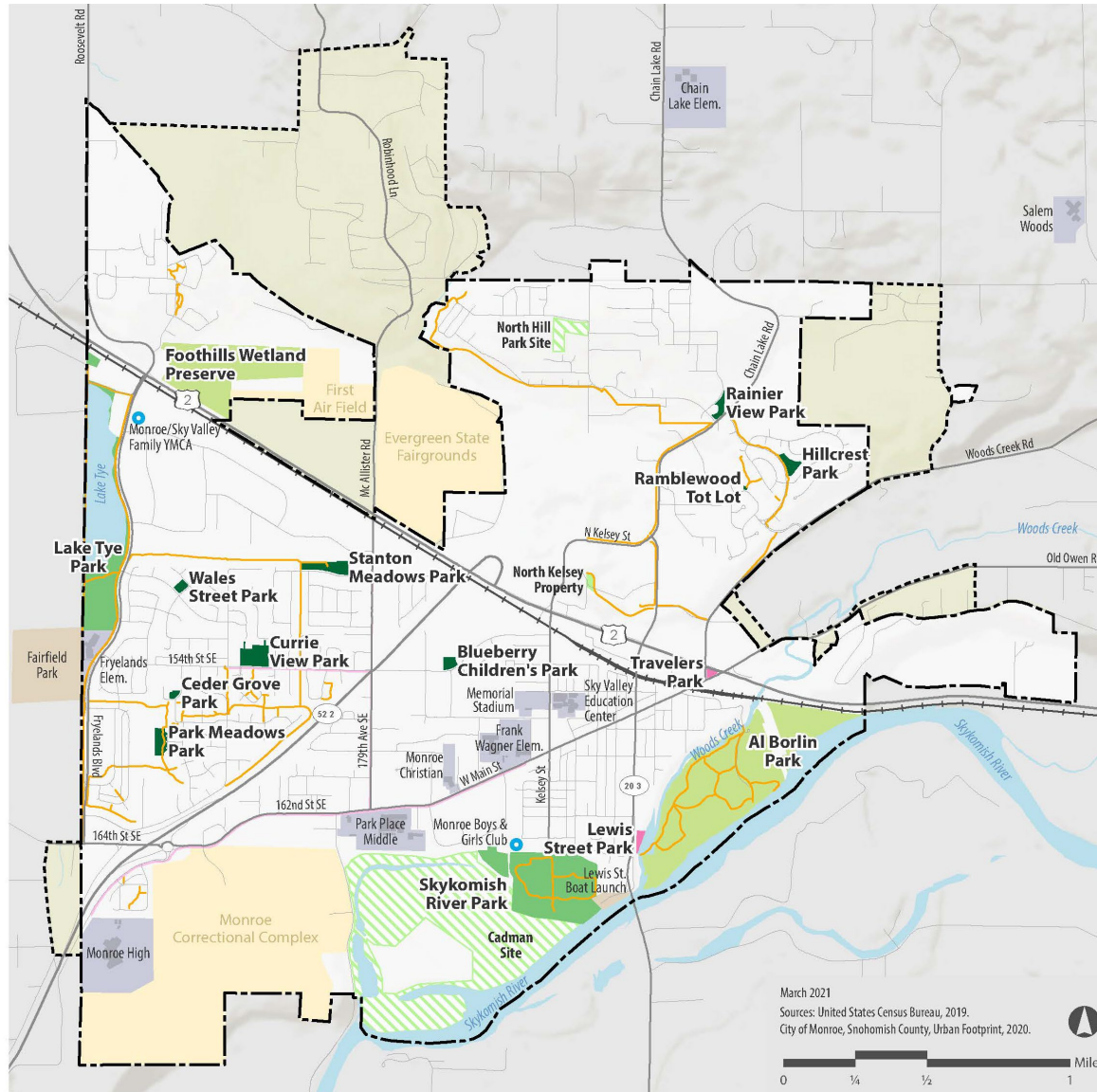
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Nature Preserve
- Special Use Park
- Undeveloped Site
- Bike Lane
- Trail

Other Parks/Recreation Facilities

- Recreation Facility
- Other Recreation Site

Base Map Features

- City of Monroe Boundary
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Burlington Northern SF Railway
- Snohomish County
- Waterbodies
- Schools
- Regional Facilities



SOURCE: City of Monroe 2022

FIGURE 3-7 Existing Parks and Trails in Monroe



TABLE 3-2 City Park Lands by Classification

Park Type	Acreage	Examples
Community Parks	114.3	Lake Tye and Skykomish River Parks
Neighborhood Parks	15.0	Currie View, Rainier View, and Wales Street Parks
Special Uses Sites	0.6	Travelers Park
Nature Preserves	46.7	Foothills Wetland Preserve
River Greenbelts	105.1	Al Borlin and Lewis Street Parks
Undeveloped Park Sites	6.0	North Hill Park Site and North Kelsey Property
Total	287.7	

SOURCE: City of Monroe 2022

When developing the City of Monroe Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan update in 2022, an Existing Parks and Trails Assessment revealed several significant gaps for access to parks and open space within the City’s north and east UGA. At the time of annexation, these areas will not meet the current citywide goal of park or open space access within ½ mile of all residents (**Figure 3-8**).

Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan



Map 2: Park Access

Walking Distance to Park Access

- Within 1/2-Mile of Developed Park
- Within 1/2-mile of Nature Preserve
- Within 1/2-Mile of Undeveloped Site

City Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

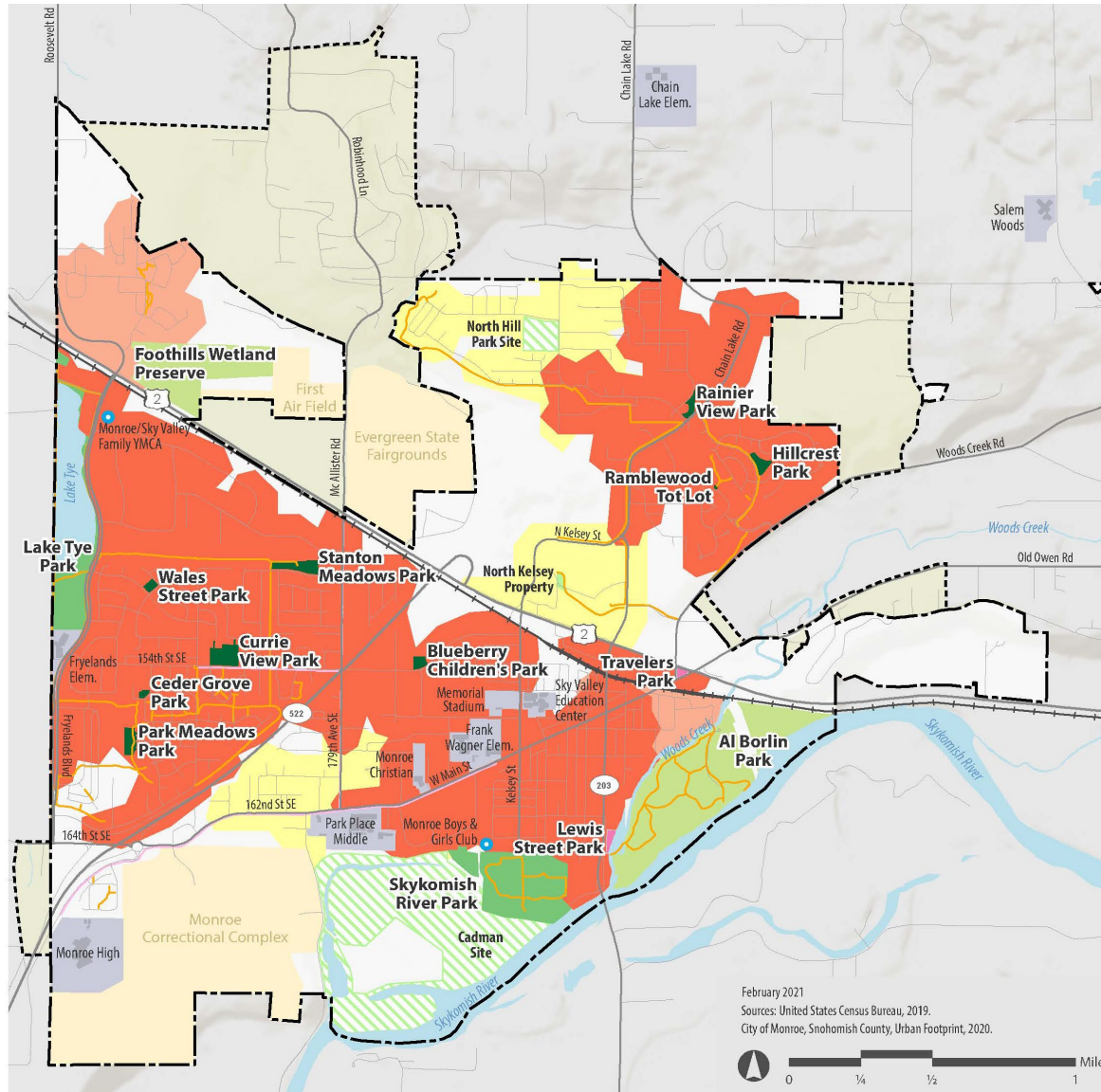
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Nature Preserve
- Special Use Park
- Undeveloped Site
- Bike Lane
- Trail

Other Parks/Recreation Facilities

- Recreation Facility

Base Map Features

- City of Monroe Boundary
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Burlington Northern SF Railway
- Snohomish County
- Waterbodies
- Schools
- Regional Facilities



SOURCE: City of Monroe 2022

FIGURE 3-8 Park Access in Monroe

3.2 Potential Impacts

This section describes the potential impacts of the City’s future growth and development on land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space.

3.2.1 Impact Assessment Methodology and Thresholds of Significance

No new development is authorized by this non-project SEIS as further actions would be required to implement the Proposed Action. Therefore, this SEIS identifies the possible environmental impacts on land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space that could occur as a result of reasonably foreseeable future actions that would implement the goals, policies, and actions of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update. Impacts may also result from the construction and operation of an additional 2,629 housing units and 2,359 jobs by 2044. (These are the housing and jobs allocations for 2044 for the Monroe UGA identified in the Snohomish CPPs.) The analysis that follows evaluates the significance of impacts that the alternatives could have on the environment. Alternatives are based on the availability of vacant, partially used, and redevelopable lands identified in the Snohomish County Buildable Lands Report. The project team utilized the Urban Footprint planning tool, which employs diverse types and intensities of development, to simulate the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action.

The type, magnitude, and likelihood of impacts were evaluated in relation to existing land use patterns, comprehensive plan designations, and zoning; aesthetic conditions; and parks, recreation, and open space. Thresholds of significance include:

- **Land Use:** The alternative would result in inconsistencies with current land use plans, policies, or regulations of an agency with jurisdiction.
- **Aesthetics:** The alternative would introduce new development types inconsistent with existing City design requirements or guidelines, obstruct or alter one or more scenic viewshed in the study area, or create a new source of substantial light or glare.
- **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space:** The alternative would increase the demand for parks, recreation, and open space services to the extent that the LOS (acres of park/recreation per person) could not be maintained, or LOS for walkability (providing open space within a 10-minute walk or within a ½-mile travel distance) would not be achieved.

3.2.2 Impacts Common to Both Alternatives

Table 3-3 summarizes the expected growth for the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action. The Snohomish CCPs identify growth allocations of 2,629 housing units and 2,359 jobs in the Monroe UGA in order to meet 2044 expected population growth (2,216 housing units and 2,324 jobs within the City limits).

TABLE 3-3 Citywide Housing and Jobs Capacities under the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action

Type	2020 Census	2044 Snohomish Countywide Planning Policies, Allocations	Net Capacity Needed	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action
Housing	6,163**	8,379	2,216	975*	2,471*
Jobs	10,096**	12,420	2,324	2,330	2,741

SOURCE: Snohomish County 2044 Housing Growth Allocations (Table PE-3 and HO-2).

* The City of Monroe is responsible for meeting housing unit allocations within the Monroe City limits. These numbers do not include pending and permitted projects, which roughly total 1,000 units.

** U.S. Census numbers for housing units are based on 2020 estimates (excluding seasonal units). U.S. Census numbers for jobs are based on 2019 estimates.

Regardless of the alternative chosen, the housing supply and employment opportunities would increase through the development of existing vacant land or through redevelopment of parcels with the existing City limits.

Both the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action meet GMA land use planning goals by encouraging development on vacant, partially developed, underdeveloped, or redevelopable parcels, as opposed to expanding the existing City limits or UGA (RCW 36.70A.020(1) and (2)). This encourages urban development and reduces the risk of urban sprawl.

Under both alternatives, changes in urban form, an increase in building height and bulk, and an increase in development intensity is expected to occur over time. Existing standards and policies



would continue to apply to the siting, massing, design, and orientation of new development. Chapter 15.15 MMC contains standards for exterior lighting of buildings and parking lots.

The actual pace and distribution of future growth would be influenced in part by the implementation of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update policies, regulations, and actions. Future housing and employment growth would be reviewed for adherence to the applicable development regulations and applicable functional plans (e.g., PROS Plan). Additionally, planning processes that currently consider and mitigate impacts on land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space (such as capital facilities planning, biennial budgeting, and operational planning) would continue under either alternative.

Both alternatives could affect viewsheds because both assume some level of housing and employment development, and with that increased building mass and height, compared to existing conditions. While no specific public viewsheds in Monroe are explicitly protected, Chapter 22.78 MMC (SEPA) establishes a framework for identifying, analyzing, and if necessary, mitigating environmental impacts associated with non-exempt development projects and adopting regulations and plans. Views are a consideration in this review process.

Both alternatives could increase light and glare as development is added and more building lighting and vehicle lights are present. This is particularly true for the Proposed Action, which would add the most capacity for growth. However, existing standards in the Monroe Municipal Code regulate exterior lighting, and it is unlikely these increases would result in a significant adverse impact.

As population increases in Monroe from new development, demand for parks, recreation, and open space would increase. Under both alternatives, parks and trails in Monroe would serve more people than they currently serve. The 2022 PROS Plan has identified a general park access goal of 20.6 acres per 1,000 residents for all park types collectively (Goal 4.2(d)) (City of Monroe 2022). In addition, Goal 4.3(a) of the 2022 PROS Plan specifies that *“neighborhood parks at a level of service of 1.4 acres per 1,000 residents and community parks at a level of service of 5.2 acres per 1,000 residents.”*

If all parks identified in the 2022 PROS Plan are developed, the City would reach its goal of 20.6 acres per 1,000 residents under its current LOS guidelines, assuming a UGA population of 22,652. While the 2022 PROS Plan population assumptions are lower than those



assumed by the county (26,670 people by 2044) in its growth allocations, the City continues to acquire additional land to meet or exceed its LOS goals. The PROS Plan is also required by state law to be updated every 6 years. In 2028, the City will reassess its PROS Plan, LOS standards, and parks inventory together with the County’s 2044 population estimates assumed through the Comprehensive Plan Update process.

As shown in **Table 3-4**, Monroe currently has a deficit for both neighborhood and community parks, and future deficits would continue to occur under both the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action. Assuming the higher 2044 county growth allocations and implementation of the 2022 PROS Plan, the City would nearly meet its LOS standards, with a deficit of less than 1 acre. As noted above, the 2022 PROS Plan will be updated to incorporate adopted growth allocations as part of its required 6-year update cycle. Therefore, impacts on parks would be **less-than-significant**.

TABLE 3-4 Current and Future LOS Based on Projected Park Acreage, 2020 and 2044

Park Type	Existing Acreage*	Current LOS	LOS Goal	Additional Park Sites and Acquisitions	2044 LOS*
Neighborhood Parks	5.0	0.9	1.38	North Hill (8.3 acres) UGA Site A and Site B (8 acres)	1.17
Community Parks	14.3	6.6	5.15	2.6 acres adjacent to Lake Tye	4.38

SOURCE: City of Monroe 2022

* 2044 LOS is determined using 2020 existing park acreage plus additional park sites and acquisitions through 2035. The population number used to calculate the 2044 LOS is the population determined by anticipated 2044 population growth.

According to the updated PROS Plan (2022), industry standards recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and Trust for Public Land (TPL) suggest providing parks within a 10-minute walk (½-mile travel distance) of all residents to maximize park use and associated benefits. Parks and open space acquisitions identified in the 2022 PROS Plan would provide most residents with a park or open space within a 10-minute walk, including areas where additional growth is assumed.

3.2.3 Impacts of the No Action Alternative

This section describes the impacts of the No Action Alternative.

LAND USE

Land Use Planning

According to the Snohomish CCPs, the City of Monroe is projected to grow to 24,302 people by 2044. This means that 2,216 housing units and 2,324 jobs are needed to accommodate the growth of the community.

With the No Action Alternative, the City of Monroe would not meet housing unit allocations with its current City limits (although it would meet jobs allocations within City limits), nor would it meet housing or jobs allocations within the UGA. Therefore, it would not meet the established CPPs and would be inconsistent with GMA. Additionally, the CPPs suggest that jurisdictions should reduce disparities by increasing opportunity and creating inclusive community planning (DP-38). By not intentionally planning to accommodate diverse income levels in housing, the No Action Alternative would not reduce disparities, and could potentially contribute to them. The lack of increased density also works against the goals of the CPPs and visions of connectivity for the City.

The No Action Alternative would also not fully align with the PSRC VISION 2050 strategy for jurisdictions in the four counties including Snohomish County. Goals in VISION 2050 include coordinating growth and development near transportation services to create vibrant, walkable, and affordable communities. With the focus of the No Action Alternative being on separate commercial and residential development (as opposed to mixed use spaces), it would not fully align with the Regional Growth Strategy set by VISION 2050.

The No Action Alternative would not fully meet the MPPs. VISION 2050 also outlines MPPs that establish guidance for achieving land use and park and open space goals, including the Development Patterns MPPs that outline ways to manage land use and growth through increasing diversity of housing types and promoting mixed use areas, creating walkable neighborhoods, and encouraging healthy communities through increased densities. The No Action Alternative's proposed development pattern does not entirely align with these MPPs. While the No Action Alternative does not encourage sprawl into rural areas, it would not maximize the

potential density to promote this vision. This would result in inconsistencies with current land use plans, policies, and regulations between Monroe and agencies with jurisdiction, a **significant impact** on land use planning.

Land Use Compatibility

In the No Action Alternative, Monroe would continue to build out its existing vacant and redevelopable land in accordance with the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, Comprehensive Plan Map (Future Land Use Map), and current zoning regulations. Unbuildable lands, such as critical areas and buffers, easements, rights-of-way, and capital facilities lands, are not assumed to develop and have been removed from the developable land calculations. With these land use designations and considerations for critical areas, **less-than-significant impacts** would be introduced to critical areas or other locations where development is not appropriate or permitted.

AESTHETICS

Visual Character

The No Action Alternative poses no conflict to residential or commercial design goals or standards. Although the No Action Alternative would not change City regulations or policies, it does anticipate that some parcels would be redeveloped to use the allowed building envelope more fully. Existing land uses would remain consistent with expected growth. Mass and scale would continue to be consistent with existing building types allowed within Monroe. Existing standards and policies would continue to apply to the siting, massing, design, and orientation of new development. Growth under the No Action Alternative would result in **less-than-significant impacts** on visual character.

Scenic Viewsheds

The No Action Alternative would permit some taller structures, such as in Downtown, but would not change permitted land uses or design requirements adopted through the existing Development Code. While there would be some risk of obstruction of private views for residential areas that are in the perimeter of these structures due to this change in height, the No Action Alternative would not increase the potential for visual impacts on scenic viewsheds as there would be no changes to existing development regulations, which already permit taller buildings in some part of Monroe. Impacts on scenic viewsheds would be **less-than-significant**.

Light and Glare

Additional building development and automotive-focused infrastructure pose the risk of increased illumination from cars, transportation infrastructure, external building illumination, new street lighting, and safety features. This would contribute to overall lighting in the area, which could affect residential neighbors. However, Chapter 15.15 MMC contains standards for exterior lighting of buildings and parking lots. This code section includes requirements for shielding to prevent glare, elimination of unneeded lighting, and limits on wattage to minimize light and glare effects, including potential for nuisance lighting. The No Action Alternative assumes compliance with these standards, which would ensure that impacts related to light and glare from future development would be **less-than-significant**.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

Level of Service

Under the No Action Alternative, Monroe parks and trails are expected to serve over 4,600 more people than they do currently by 2044. To meet current required levels of service for neighborhood and community parks in the City, additional park land would need to be acquired and developed. By acquiring the additional park access opportunities identified in the 2022 PROS Plan, this impact could be decreased to **less-than-significant**.

3.2.4 Impacts of the Proposed Action

This section describes the impacts of the Proposed Action.

LAND USE

Land Use Planning

The Proposed Action would meet Snohomish County CPPs and GMA requirements by exceeding 2044 citywide housing allocations by 255 units and employment capacity by 417 jobs. The Proposed Action would extend the Comprehensive Plan planning horizon to maintain at least a 20-year horizon (to 2044), consistent with GMA requirements.

The Proposed Action would also align with the VISION 2050 strategy. VISION 2050 focuses on coordinating growth and development near transportation services to create vibrant, walkable, and affordable communities. The Proposed Action is

focused more heavily on higher density and middle housing development north of US 2 and increasing job capacity along Main Street and near North Kelsey Street. This aligns with the Regional Growth Strategy set by VISION 2050.

The Proposed Action would also meet the MPPs. The MPPs set the guidance for achieving land use and park and open space development patterns and outline ways to manage land use and growth through increasing diversity of housing types and promoting mixed use areas, creating walkable neighborhoods, and encouraging healthy communities through increased densities. While the Proposed Action accommodates GMA requirements, it may increase the intensity of development, which would also increase connectivity between neighborhoods and communities, offering higher densities and services in proximity to affordable housing.

Proposed development under the Proposed Action would align with these MPPs, as it encourages building up instead of out to meet community needs. **No impact** to land use planning related to GMA, VISION 2050 Strategy, MPPs, or CPPs is expected under the Proposed Action.

Land Use Compatibility

The Proposed Action assumes a number of land use changes, including rezoning the R4 zone to R7, allowing for greater residential densities and a variety of housing types like duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes or townhomes. These types of housing are still subject to current setbacks, height limits, and lot coverage maximums, and other design standards applicable to the detached residential zones. Changes in land use are summarized in **Table 3-5**.

The Proposed Action also intensifies the existing mixed use zoning with more commercial and high-density residential areas along Main Street, North Kelsey Street, Chain Lake Road, and in current commercial areas east of the SR 522/US 2 interchange. Several parcels already designated as Mixed Use zones would be divided into two new zones: Mixed Use Neighborhood and Mixed Use General. The Mixed Use General would allow for more job and residential opportunities and spaces (at 20 dwelling units/acre or 15 jobs per acre). The Mixed Use Neighborhood (at 12 dwelling units/acre and 12 jobs per acre) would balance the intensity of development in the historic Downtown and along SR 522.

TABLE 3-5 Changes in Land Use

	No Action Alternative		Proposed Action	
	Acre	Percent	Acre	Percent
SF Residential	1,819.68	46.0%	1,782.62	45.1%
MF Residential	92.25	2.3%	87.86	2.2%
Commercial	345.80	8.7%	321.12	8.1%
Mixed Use	167.34	4.2%	233.47	5.9%
Industrial	193.02	4.9%	193.02	4.9%
Other	1,335.19	33.8%	1,335.19	33.8%
Total	3,953.30		3,953.30	

SOURCE: Prepared by MIG

Areas that would experience the most change would be (1) residential areas in Mixed Use zones, (2) detached housing zones, and (3) commercial zones. The Proposed Action proposes additions of Mixed Use zoning to previous detached residential zones along 179th Avenue (running north to south near the SR 522 and US 2 interchange), on Chain Lake Road, and along 154th Street Southeast. East of North Kelsey Street and along West Main Street, attached housing areas and Commercial spaces will transition into Mixed Use zones as well (**Table 3-5**).

The Proposed Action would also redesignate some General Commercial areas near Downtown to allow more density as a Downtown Commercial zone (24 dwelling units/acre or 39 employees/acre) versus the General Commercial zone, which allows for less than half of the employment at only 15 employees/acre. Newly designated Downtown Commercial parcels would not affect the existing urban form of the historic Downtown area.

Future development under the land use designations in the Proposed Action would result in new land uses located in proximity to existing land uses. Parcels rezoned under the Proposed Action are already intended to be developed. Additional land would not be required to meet the City’s growth allocations. Projected growth has the potential to create compatibility issues with existing lower density residential, small-scale commercial, or open space uses, particularly during the transition from semi-developed, suburban residential uses to mixed uses, which is an adverse impact. With greater housing densities allowed, there may be localized impacts in neighborhoods transitioning from more suburban to urban densities that include more closely spaced and a greater variety of

housing types, such as duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, stacked flats, and garden apartments. Growth within Monroe may also result in limited compatibility conflicts with rural uses on the other side of the UGA boundary. However, these potential impacts would continue to be addressed through compliance with existing development regulations, resulting in a **less-than-significant impact** on land use compatibility.

AESTHETICS

Visual Character

The Proposed Action would not conflict with residential or commercial design goals or standards related to urban form. The Proposed Action would change regulations and policies, allowing more density citywide and taller buildings in some areas. These changes could result in some existing viewsheds being obstructed.

Land uses and designations would change to incorporate infill development by increasing the amount of middle housing and mixed use land compared to the No Action Alternative. However, as the same policies and design standards apply to all mixed use development (i.e., contiguous building, consistency with mass and scale, and low-impact development, like water-permeable pavers), there would be no significant adverse impacts that cannot be avoided. Existing standards and policies would continue to apply to the siting, massing, design, and orientation of new development that would result in a **less-than-significant impact** on visual character under the Proposed Action.

Scenic Viewsheds

The Proposed Action would not substantially obstruct or alter scenic viewsheds in Monroe. Future development of multiple story buildings is generally assumed along main corridors in the City (US 2, SR 522, and Main Street). Taller or higher density development is already permitted in these areas under existing land use and zoning standards.

In flat locations, like the detached residential zones in the northeast quadrant of the City, potential changes in zoning could obstruct public views of surrounding scenic resources, but new or infill development is not assumed to be taller than what is permitted for existing detached housing development (typically limited to 35 feet in height). Tree canopies and other existing vegetation would also be more likely to obscure views than development in detached housing neighborhoods.

Any new development under the Proposed Action would still be subject to the same maximum height restrictions as identified in the current Development Code. There would be a **less-than-significant impact** on the scenic viewsheds under the Proposed Action.

Light and Glare

Compared to the No Action Alternative, the increase in housing units and employment from mixed use development could increase light and glare. However, Chapter 15.15 MMC contains standards for exterior lighting of buildings and parking lots. This code section includes requirements for shielding to prevent glare, elimination of unneeded lighting, and limits on wattage that minimize light and glare effects, including the potential for nuisance lighting. The Proposed Action’s compliance with these standards would ensure that impacts related to light and glare from future development would be **less-than-significant**.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

Level of Service

Under the Proposed Action, parks and trails in Monroe are expected to serve nearly 7,000 more people by 2044 than they currently serve. The City currently has an LOS deficit for both neighborhood and community parks. The 2022 PROS Plan addresses the majority of the LOS deficit, even with the assumed increased growth. Additionally, the ability to meet standards such as accessibility of parks and open space within a 10-minute walk would generally not be affected because the majority of growth would occur in areas already served by or areas that will be served by park and open space, as assumed in the 2022 PROS Plan. The 2022 PROS Plan will be updated every 6 years as required by state law. Impacts associated with parks and open space would be **less-than-significant**.

3.2.5 Summary of Impacts

Both alternatives have potential impacts on land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space. Many, if not all, of these impacts can be minimized, avoided, or mitigated through policies and supportive strategies.

The No Action Alternative would result in significant impacts on land use planning and parks, recreation, and open space. The lack of increased density would work against the CPPs and visions of

connectivity. The proposed development pattern would not entirely align with the MPPs.

Under the No Action Alternative, less-than-significant impacts on land use compatibility, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space may occur. The No Action Alternative would allow some parcels to be redeveloped to use the allowed building envelope more fully based on existing standards that would continue to apply to siting, massing, design, and orientation of new development, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on visual character. Some risk of view obstruction would occur in certain areas of Monroe due to changes in heights of structures allowed by existing development regulations, resulting in a less-than-significant impacts on scenic viewsheds. Development consistent with the No Action Alternative would comply with Chapter 15.15 MMC standards for exterior lighting of buildings and parking lots, which would ensure that increases in light and glare from future development would be less-than-significant.

The Proposed Action would align with VISION 2050, GMA requirements, the MPPs, and the CPPs, resulting in no impact to land use planning. Although future development could result in higher housing densities and more varied land uses near each other, housing types, closely spaced housing, and urban uses bordering the UGA boundary, development would comply with existing development regulations, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on land use compatibility. Existing standards would continue to apply to new development siting, massing, design, and orientation, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on visual character. Changes to views resulting from taller buildings in some areas of Monroe and increases in light and glare would be possible but limited due to maximum height restrictions and standards for exterior lighting of buildings and parking lots, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on scenic viewsheds and light and glare under the Proposed Action.

The Proposed Action would have a less-than-significant impact on parks, recreation, and open space.

3.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

Mitigation to address the expected significant impact on parks, recreation, and open space under both alternatives include specific measures to address gaps or barriers to greenspace set forth in the updated PROS Plan (2022). The City will use the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update and the PROS Plan to identify and accommodate gaps in service. The City would rely on future updates to the PROS Plan and funding to accommodate the need for increased parks, recreation, and open space under both alternatives. Washington’s Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) requires that park master plans include a 6-year capital improvement plan to identify short-term projects for implementation. To continue to be eligible for grant funding and comply with GMA and RCO requirements, the City of Monroe plans to regularly update the PROS Plan at least every 6 years. These updates would address ongoing gaps and opportunities in park access and parkland acquisition and development.

With the exception of a significant impact on land use under the No Action Alternative, no unavoidable, significant adverse impacts on land use and aesthetics are expected under either the No Action Alternative or the Proposed Action. No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures are recommended. Development under either alternative would be guided by existing regulations and policies that minimize potential impacts on land use, aesthetics, and parks, recreation, and open space (see Section 3.1.2).

3.4 Significant, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

The No Action Alternative would result in a significant unavoidable adverse impact on current land use plans, policies, and regulations. No other significant unavoidable adverse impacts would result from the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action would not result in unavoidable significant adverse impacts.

With the mitigation identified in Section 3.3, impacts on parks, recreation, and open space under both alternatives would be less-than-significant.

4

CHAPTER 4 Shorelines and Natural Environment

As part of the City of Monroe SEPA programmatic SEIS evaluation of probable impacts relating to the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, this chapter describes shorelines and the natural environment within the study area and assesses potential impacts associated with the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative. Topics addressed include earth (soils and geologic hazard areas), water resources (wetlands, streams, rivers, lakes, floodplains, and critical aquifer recharges areas), Monroe’s Shoreline Master Program (SMP), plants, and animals.

4.1 Affected Environment

Monroe’s natural environment, including features such as wetlands, streams, lakes, and shoreline areas, plays an important role in the development of the City by influencing community character and quality of life. These areas also support plant and animal species and provide refuge for wildlife in the largely developed environment. Ongoing development within and outside of the Urban Growth Area (UGA) boundaries has contributed to habitat degradation. The adverse effects of development include an elevated risk of introducing and allowing invasive species to establish and impact native vegetation. Increases in impervious surfaces have impaired stream habitat and functions. This section presents existing shoreline and natural environment conditions in the study area, which is defined as the incorporated City of Monroe.

4.1.1 Methodology

Information about current conditions was collected using existing, publicly available sources such as geographic information system (GIS) data, aerial imagery, City of Monroe documents and websites, and other existing resources including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (WDFW) Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) database, and Washington Natural Heritage Program (WNHP) online maps. No formal delineation of jurisdictional wetlands and waters of the U.S. or State of Washington, or priority habitats, or other critical areas was conducted as part of this SEIS analysis.

4.1.2 Regulatory Setting

The following regulations, plans, and policies apply to shorelines and the natural environment:

FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND LAWS

- **Endangered Species Act (ESA):** Regulates and protects species listed at the federal level. This includes a requirement to provide a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Habitat Assessment for any work within a floodplain that has the potential to affect listed species. FEMA requires this to demonstrate conformance with the 2008 Federal Biological Opinion on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) concerning impacts on species listed under the ESA (NMFS 2008).

Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) and bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*), which are federally listed as “threatened” and a candidate for state listing, respectively, are known to occur in the Skykomish River. Based on a review of the USFWS’ Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website, other federally listed species that may occur in the City include North American wolverine (*Gulo gulo luscus*), marbled murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*), and yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*). However, due to the extensive development in the City, it is unlikely that habitat that supports these species is present within City limits.

- **Migratory Bird Treaty Act:** Prohibits the take (includes the killing, capturing, selling, trading, and transport) of protected migratory bird species without prior authorization by USFWS.
- **Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act:** Prohibits the take of any bald eagle or golden eagle without prior authorization by USFWS.

STATE REGULATIONS AND LAWS

- **Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA):** The state requires an HPA for construction or other work activities in or near state waters that will impact the natural flow or bed of waters of the state. HPAs are intended to ensure that construction is done in a manner that protects fish and their aquatic habitats. Waters of the state include lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, inland waters, underground waters, salt waters, and all other surface waters and watercourses within the jurisdiction of Washington.
- **Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Plan – WRIA 7:** The Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 7 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Plan (Ecology 2022) identifies projects and actions necessary to offset potential impacts to instream flows and result in a net ecological benefit to instream resources within the Snohomish watershed.

LOCAL REGULATIONS

- **Project-level SEPA Review:** Chapter 22.78 Monroe Municipal Code (MMC) establishes the process for project-level environmental review, including required compliance with applicable mitigating measures to address identified impacts.
- **City of Monroe Shoreline Master Program (SMP):** The primary purpose of the Washington Shoreline Management Act is to manage and protect the state’s shoreline resources by planning for their reasonable and appropriate use. The intent of the Monroe SMP is to carry out the responsibilities assigned to the City by the Shoreline Management Act and to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community by providing regulations for the future development of shoreline resources.
- **City of Monroe Development Standards for Wetlands:** MMC 22.80.090 identifies development standards for construction in wetlands and associated buffers.
- **City of Monroe Fish and Wildlife Habitat Development Standards:** MMC 22.80.110 identifies development standards for construction in Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCAs) and corridors, and associated buffers.
- **City of Monroe Floodplain Development Standards:** Chapter 14.01 MMC identifies development standards for floodplains with the purpose of promoting public health, safety, and general welfare, and to minimize public and private losses.
- **City of Monroe Geohazardous Areas Standards:** MMC 22.80.130 identifies development standards for areas susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geological events.
- **City of Monroe Landscaping Standards:** Chapter 22.46 MMC identifies landscape standards to preserve the aesthetic

character of the community, improve the aesthetic quality of the built environment, promote retention and protection of existing vegetation, and reduce the impacts of development on storm drainage systems and natural habitats.

- **City of Monroe Stormwater Management:** MMC 23.40.010 adopted stormwater regulations identified in the 2019 Washington Department of Ecology Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington (Ecology 2019).
- **City of Monroe Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO)** and associated regulations are being updated in 2024 and will require the use of best available science (BAS).
- **Snohomish County 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan, Volumes 1 and 2:** Snohomish County and planning partners maintain a Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). Last updated in 2020, the HMP identifies resources, information, and strategies for reducing risk from natural hazards. The plan guides and coordinates mitigation activities throughout Snohomish County.

4.1.3 Earth

SOILS

Most of the City is underlain by alluvium soils, primarily Sultan silt loam and Puget silty clay loam (NRCS 2023). Alluvial soils are deposited by surface water during flood events and can remove sediments and nutrients. They also absorb water at a rapid rate and provide most of the recharge to Monroe’s aquifer system. Soils along the Skykomish River are commonly Pilchuck loamy sand and Puyallup fine sandy loam, also considered to be alluvial soils, and commonly found on floodplains.

Soils sloping up to the plateau are primarily McKenna gravelly silty loam, which has a parent material of basal till, which are sediment deposits laid down by glacial activity. These soils are poorly drained and commonly found in depressions and drainageways.

Soils in the southwest extent of the City are primarily Tokul gravelly medial loam. This soil type has a parent material of volcanic ash mixed with loess over glacial till. These soils are moderately well drained and frequently found on hillslopes and till plains.

GEOLOGICAL HAZARDOUS AREAS

Geologically hazardous areas include areas susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geological events. Such areas can pose a threat to the health and safety of community members, and development can exacerbate risks when not properly regulated. Geologically hazardous areas regulated by the City include erosion

hazard areas, landslide hazard areas, seismic hazard areas, and other areas subject to geological events including tsunami, mass wasting, debris flows, rock falls, and differential settlement.

Topographic analysis indicates that approximately 222 acres of land in the City are constrained by slopes of 15 to 40 percent gradient, and 56 acres of land are in slopes of 40 percent gradient or greater (City of Monroe 2015a). All areas with slopes steeper than 40 percent are considered landslide hazard areas. Areas with slopes steeper than 15 percent that have groundwater seepage and relatively permeable sediment overlying a relatively impermeable sediment or bedrock, are considered landslide hazard areas.

Geological hazard areas in Monroe are primarily located to the north of US 2 (**Figure 4-1**). Steep slopes occur along Woods Creek Road, south of Old Owen Road, and within the forested areas near the Lakeside Industry's Asphalt Plant, currently zoned for transportation, and adjacent to the Walmart development. South of US 2, steep slopes are primarily along the Woods Creek corridor, along the SR 522 corridor, along the western pond at the Cadman Sky River Pit, and along a forested hill in the Monroe Correctional Center property.

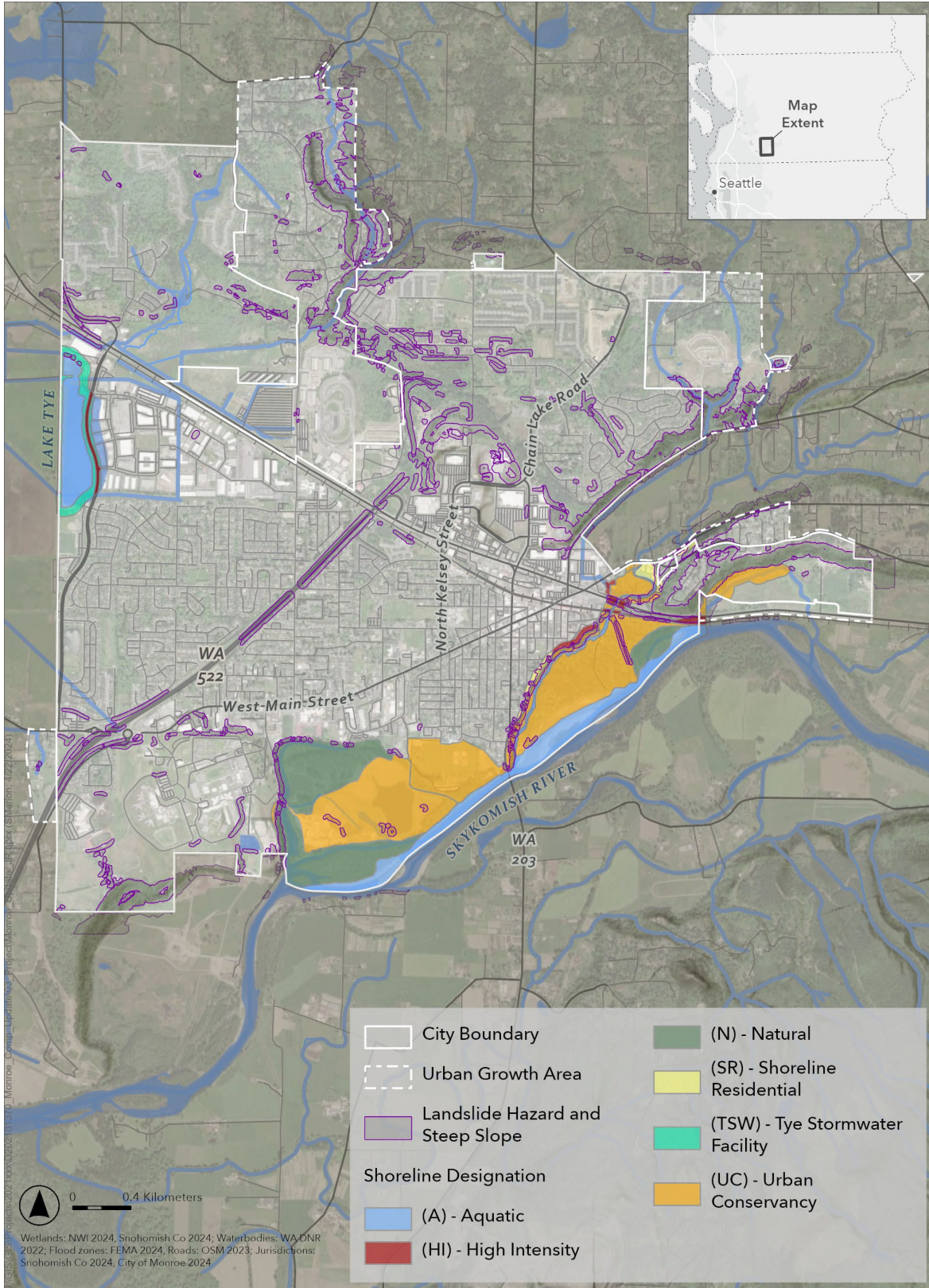
4.1.4 Water Resources

Monroe is located within Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 7, the Snohomish River basin. Water resources within the City include wetlands, rivers and streams, lakes, floodplains, and shorelines and are located across the three watersheds within the City: the French Creek Watershed, the Woods Creek Watershed, and the Skykomish River Watershed.

WETLANDS

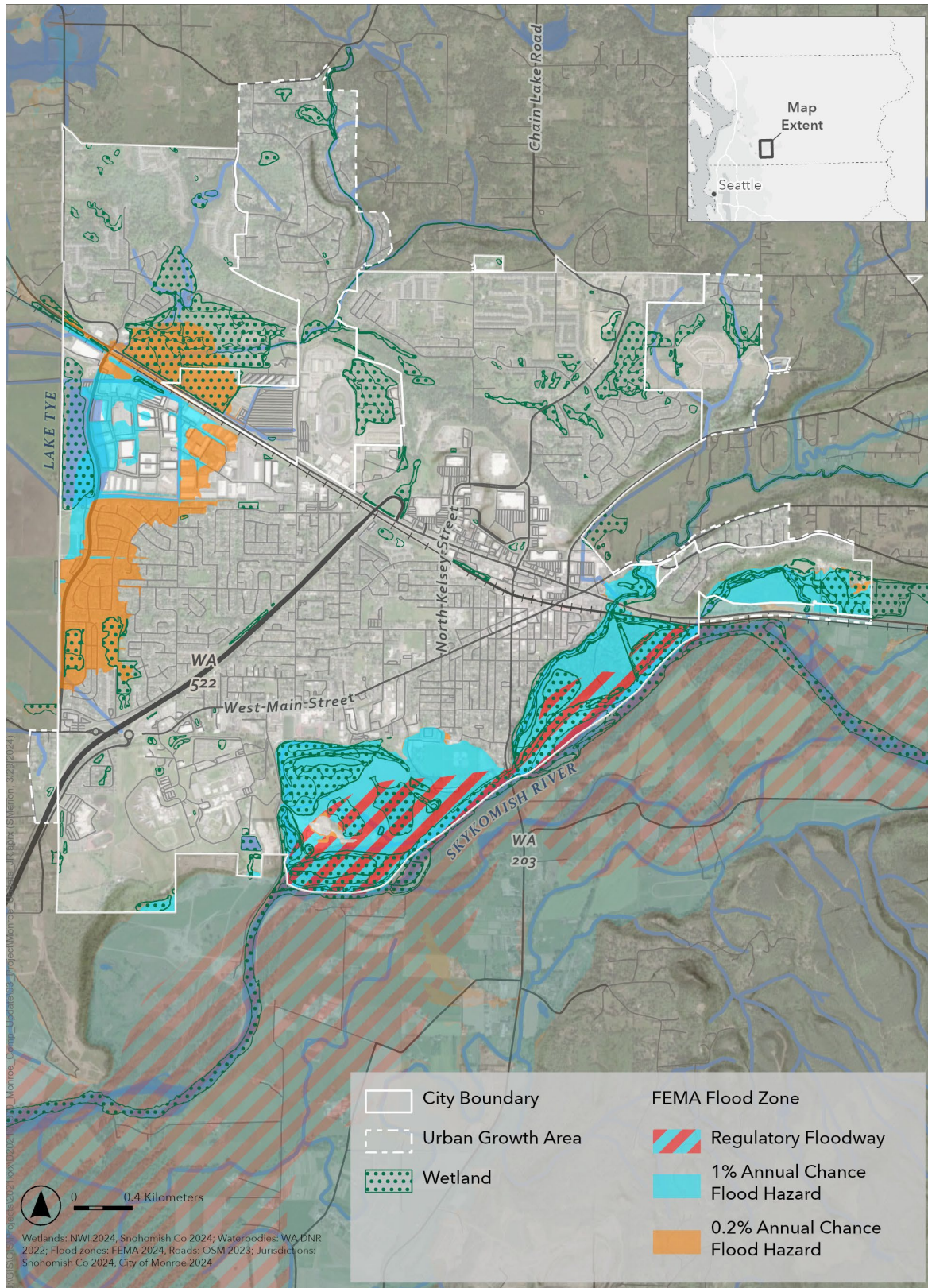
Wetlands are areas where the presence of water determines or influences most, if not all, of an area's biological, physical, and chemical characteristics (Sheldon et al. 2005). Many wetlands are transitional zones between upland and aquatic ecosystems, although others are scattered across the landscape in upland depressions that collect water or in zones where groundwater comes to the surface. Wetlands filter our water, protect our coastal communities from floods, and provide habitat for fish and other wildlife.

Although wetlands are present throughout the incorporated area (**Figure 4-2**), the central commercial and residential areas of the City south of US 2 are not known to have large wetland systems (City of Monroe 2015b). Important forested wetlands occur along the Skykomish River and within the southern boundary of the City



SOURCE: Prepared by Environmental Science Associates based on data provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 4-1 Shoreline Designations and Geological Hazard Areas



SOURCE: Prepared by Environmental Science Associates based on data provided by the City of Monroe

FIGURE 4-2 Wetlands and Flood Hazard Areas

adjacent to Al Borlin Park, Woods Creek, and along the Skykomish River Park. There are also several large ponds within the Cadman Sky River Pit, likely created by gravel extraction. A large wetland associated with Cripple Creek exists west of the Evergreen State Fairgrounds. Undeveloped upland forest within the northern extent of the City connects the Cripple Creek wetland to another wetland mapped east of the Evergreen Speedway and associated with Arena Creek. Notable emergent and forested wetlands exist near Park Meadows Park, near the western boundary of the City (USFWS 2023).

STREAMS, RIVERS, AND LAKES

Three watersheds comprise the City of Monroe:

- **French Creek Watershed** – The majority of the City lies within the French Creek Watershed. French Creek originates in the Cascade foothills to the northeast and is a major tributary to the Snohomish River. French Creek does not flow within the City limits; however, Cripple Creek and several other tributaries to French Creek (e.g., Homestead Creek, Creation Creek, Arena Creek, Backhoe Creek) flow into the City from the north and northeast.
- **Woods Creek Watershed** – Woods Creek originates in the Cascade foothills near Lake Roesiger to the northeast and is the largest lowland tributary of the Skykomish River (Snohomish County 2013). Woods Creek enters the City limits south of Old Owen Road and joins the Skykomish River at Al Borlin Park in the eastern extent of the City. Two additional tributaries to Woods Creek, Cutthroat Creek, and Brown Road Creek, are also within the City’s UGA.
- **Skykomish River Watershed** – The Skykomish River Watershed is located along the Skykomish River in the southern extent of the City. Although only a small portion of the City limits are within this watershed, it is the largest of the three watersheds and also contains the Town of Sultan and the City of Gold Bar to the east of Monroe. No other streams occur within the portion of the Skykomish River Watershed within City limits.

Lake Tye is a 42-acre man-made stormwater facility that also provides recreation such as swimming and boating. Two additional lakes are located at the Cadman Sky River Pit, and are also man-made, created during the operation of the quarry.

FLOODPLAINS

Flood hazard areas are defined as land in the floodplain subject to a 1 percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year (commonly known as the 100-year flood). Flood hazard areas are an important element of the natural environment because of the

risk they pose to humans, and the natural and built environments. Additionally, historic losses of salmon habitat have occurred as a result of development encroaching into floodplains. In addition to minimizing adverse effects to human health, safety, and infrastructure, floodplains are ideal locations for salmon habitat restoration. Flood hazard areas are identified by FEMA on their Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

In Monroe, the following areas are identified as flood hazard areas (**Figure 4-2**):

- Areas immediately adjacent to the Skykomish River
- Woods Creek
- Lake Tye

In general, floodplains in the City are undeveloped and include open spaces and agricultural fields. Buck Island Park, the Cadman Sky River Pit, and Skykomish River Centennial Park are all located within the Skykomish River floodplain (City of Monroe 2015c).

The City has recently updated Chapter 14.01 MMC, as required by FEMA’s Community Rating System (CRS) to receive a 25 percent discount on flood insurance premiums. The CRS is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management practices that exceed the minimum requirements of the NFIP.

CRITICAL AQUIFER RECHARGE AREAS

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas (CARAs) are geographic areas that have a “critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water” (RCW 36.70A.030[11]). They are areas that have been identified as sole sources aquifers, areas that have a high susceptibility to groundwater contamination, or areas that have been approved by the state as wellhead protection areas for municipal or district drinking systems. No known CARAs exist within the City. Therefore, they are not further addressed in this analysis.

SHORELINE MANAGEMENT ACT

In accordance with Washington’s Shoreline Management Act (SMA), regulated shorelines of the state in the City include:

- Portions of the Skykomish River and Woods Creek within the City’s municipal boundary.
- The upland area landward 200 feet of the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM) of the Skykomish River and Woods Creek.

- Tye Stormwater Facility and shorelands 200 feet from its OHWM.
- All associate wetlands.

The Skykomish River is further designated as a “shoreline of statewide significance” (**Figure 4-1**). This designation is applied to recognize this shoreline as a major resource from which all people in the state derive benefit.

The City most recently updated its SMP in June 2019 in accordance with the Shoreline Management Act (Chapter 90.58 RCW), Growth Management Act (GMA), and Ecology’s requirements. The City’s shoreline management regulations can be found in Chapter 22.82 MMC, *Shoreline Management*. Ecology conditionally approved the 2019 SMP Update in October 2020. However, following their initial determination, Ecology required that additional changes to the SMP be included to ensure consistency with the SMA and SMP Guidelines. In December 2023, the Planning Commission presented the proposed additional amendments, which included shoreline jurisdiction clarifications, critical areas regulations references, updates to water typing, adding a “Fish Habitat” definition, and correcting a mapping error. The City completed their SMP approval process, and Ecology issued its final letter of approval of Monroe’s SMP amendments on March 1, 2024.

The City’s SMP contains a system to classify shoreline areas into specific shoreline environment designations (SEDs), as required by the SMA. The City’s classification system is based on the existing use pattern, the biological and physical character of the shoreline, and the goals and aspirations of the community as expressed through the Comprehensive Plan. The City has adopted six environment designations for its shoreline areas, as summarized in **Table 4-1**. It is important to note that under the City’s current (2015) Comprehensive Plan, the Cadman Sky River Pit had a shoreline environment designation (SED) of Urban Conservancy Mining. However, the 2019 SMP has revised the SED of the site to Urban Conservancy.

TABLE 4-1 Summary of Shoreline Environment Designations in Monroe

SED	Summary	Example Shoreline
Natural	Applied to ecologically intact shorelands providing important and irreplaceable functions (e.g., undisturbed wetlands, estuaries,) where new development or uses could likely result in significant adverse impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Along Al Borlin Park, between the main channel of the Skykomish River and the side channel as it meanders over time. • Wetlands and forested upland habitat to the north, west, and south of the Cadman Sky River Pit.
Aquatic	Applied to aquatic areas and established to protect, manage, and (where feasible) restore these aquatic areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skykomish River. • Woods Creek. • Lake Tye.
High-Intensity	Applied to shorelands that are currently used for or planned for industrial, commercial or other high-intensity, nonresidential uses; established to provide for these higher scale and intensity uses where they are suitable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial development on the south side of Old Owen Road, west of Woods Creek. • Rights-of-way of active transportation corridors and the active BNSF railroad lines. • Ongoing industrial use area east of 177th Street SE (Cadman Sky River Pit).
Urban Conservancy	Applied to shorelands appropriate and planned for development that are compatible with maintaining or restoring the ecological functions of the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most land along Woods Creek. • Skykomish River Centennial Park. • Open space at Cadman Sky River Pit.
Shoreline Residential	Applied to shoreline areas that are predominantly detached or attached residential development or are planned and platted for residential development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three residential parcels along the top of the bluff west of Woods Creek. • Two residential parcels between Old Owen Road and Calhoun Road. • Three existing residential parcels east of Woods Creek and south of Old Owen Road.
Tye Stormwater Facility	Established to encourage and enhance recreational uses, public access, and appropriate development while accomplishing the waterbody’s primary function: storing and treating stormwater runoff from nearby lands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoreline areas adjacent to Lake Tye.

SOURCE: City of Monroe 2019

4.1.5 Plants and Animals

PLANTS

The City of Monroe is in the Puget Trough ecoregion, which extends from the western extents of the county, east, to approximately 1,000 feet in elevation in the Cascade foothills. Historically, coniferous forests dominated the vegetation in this ecoregion, along with a mix of riparian habitats, oak woodlands, and prairies. The vegetation in most of the ecoregion has now been altered by managed forests, agricultural lands, and the development of cities, suburbs, and industrial lands (LandScope America 2023). Native forests are primarily Douglas-fir, western redcedar, and western hemlock. Riparian habitats are dominated by red alder and bigleaf maple. In more recently developed areas, the plant palette typically includes younger and more diverse urban (non-native) tree species and common native volunteer species, including red alder and black cottonwood.

Current WNHP maps do not identify the presence of any rare plants within the boundaries of Monroe (WNHP 2024).

ANIMALS

Throughout Monroe, the developed habitat sustains a diverse range of animal species, both native and non-native, that have successfully adapted to urban environments and human disturbances. Among the common species are raccoons, coyotes, eastern gray squirrels (non-native), European starlings (non-native), and various bat species. Noteworthy is the presence of a communal roost and nesting site for Vaux's swifts, a priority species designated by WDFW, within a chimney at Monroe Elementary School, just south of W Main Street (WDFW 2023).

Monroe lies within the Pacific Flyway, which covers the majority of Western Washington, and can attract substantial numbers of wintering raptors that utilize its agricultural lands as hunting grounds. Additionally, WDFW has identified Lake Tye as a regular wintering site for waterfowl such as northern shovelers, wood ducks, common mergansers, and green-winged teals. A substantial wetland complex north of US 2, and associated with Cripple Creek, also provides important habitat for waterfowl and other migratory bird species. The Skykomish River, along with its adjacent riparian areas, wetlands, and waterbodies, serve as breeding grounds for bald eagles and potentially offer habitat for the federally proposed threatened species, western pond turtles. The remaining forested

areas in Monroe, including Al Borlin Park, generally support species like black-tailed deer, black bear, and red fox.

FISH SPECIES

Monroe’s waterways support populations of several fish species, including species listed as threatened or endangered by the state or federal government. Streams with documented presence of anadromous fish species occur within the City and are designated FWHCAs, with the largest being the Skykomish River. **Table 4-2** lists the documented fish species within the portion of the Skykomish River within the City limits (NWIFC 2023).

TABLE 4-2 Priority Fish Species within the Skykomish River in Monroe

Species Common Name (<i>Scientific Name</i>)	Fish Use
Chinook Salmon ^T (<i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i>)	Occurrence and Migration
Pink Salmon (<i>Oncorhynchus gorbuscha</i>)	Occurrence and Migration
Steelhead ^T (<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i>)	Occurrence, Migration, and Breeding Area
Chum Salmon (<i>Oncorhynchus keta</i>)	Occurrence, Breeding Area
Coho Salmon (<i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i>)	Occurrence, Rearing, and Migration
Bull Trout ^{TC} (<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>)	Occurrence, Breeding Area
Pink Salmon (<i>Oncorhynchus gorbuscha</i>)	Occurrence, Breeding Area
Cutthroat Trout (<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii</i>)	Occurrence and Migration

SOURCE: NWIFC 2023

NOTES: T = Federally listed as Threatened; C = Candidate for State Listing

Woods Creek provides migratory areas and spawning grounds for coho, Chinook, chum, and pink salmon, and steelhead, coastal cutthroat, bull, and Dolly Varden trout species. No anadromous species are documented as occurring within any of the streams in the French Creek Watershed.

4.2 Potential Impacts

This section describes the potential impacts of the City of Monroe’s future growth and development on shorelines and the natural environment, including earth, water resources, plants, and animals.

4.2.1 Impact Assessment Methodology and Thresholds of Significance

Impacts on shorelines and natural resources were assessed qualitatively, based on the descriptions of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative and on the affected environment. The type, magnitude, and likelihood of impacts were evaluated in relation to the presence of shorelines and natural environments, including critical areas and wildlife habitat.

Thresholds of significance include:

- **Earth:** The alternative would result in a greatly elevated chance of a geologic hazard that would affect infrastructure and life safety such that substantial changes in the way these hazards are currently mitigated would be required.
- **Water Resources:** The alternative would (1) result in substantial loss of habitat or (2) prevent efforts to enhance water quality through policies, programs, or funding.
- **Floodplains:** The alternative would result in a greatly elevated chance of risk to humans and the natural and built environment that a substantial change in the way flood hazards are currently mitigated would be required.
- **Shorelines:** The alternative would not meet the goals and policies of the City’s SMP.
- **Plants and Animals:** The alternative would result in: (1) loss of habitat; (2) fragmentation of wildlife habitat; (3) a high likelihood of jeopardizing a plant or animal population that is not currently vulnerable or; (4) a large-scale take (mortality, injury, or deleterious behavioral changes on more than a few individual organisms) of fish or wildlife species listed under the federal ESA or species classified as Threatened or Endangered by WDFW.

Desired equity outcomes based on the equity and health metrics are woven into the impact analysis, including (1) ensuring that mitigation measures are in place to encourage retention of the existing natural environment (such as tree canopy and earth resources) as new development occurs and (2) prioritizing conservation of public and open spaces that mitigate the impacts of climate change.

4.2.2 Impacts Common to Both Alternative

Under both SEIS alternatives, Monroe would experience additional development within the City and its UGA. Both alternatives involve some degree of population growth and associated new and infill development and redevelopment throughout Monroe. The natural environment in the City has been adversely affected by urbanization in the past, and areas planned for growth in both alternatives are already highly developed. Many of these areas are currently developed with high-intensity residential or commercial land uses. The increased impacts of additional development on natural resources, including earth, water resources, plants and animals, and shorelines, are expected to be similar for the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action; and therefore, are discussed together below.

EARTH

Increased growth, wherever it occurs, has the potential to cause or suffer the effects of geologic hazards. Geologically hazardous areas are those susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquake, and/or other geologic events. Impacts would vary depending on the severity of the geologic hazard and the proximity of the hazard. The areas planned for growth in both alternatives are already highly developed. Many of these areas are currently in high-intensity residential or commercial land uses. Under both alternatives, an overall increase in population and job growth in the City will increase the time people spend in geologically hazardous areas and therefore may increase the risk. However, development or redevelopment of existing structures could result in a net benefit by bringing the older developments up to code.

New development, redevelopment, and jobs associated with the alternatives would not result in a greatly elevated chance of adverse effects from geologic hazards that would require substantial changes in the way these hazards are currently mitigated; therefore, impacts on earth resources, with compliance with the City's CAO and development regulations, would be **less-than-significant**. Under both alternatives, all development proposals in areas susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geological events are subject to City regulations in MMC 22.80.130, *Geologically Hazardous Areas*, and evaluated at the project-level according to the City's current CAO.

WATER RESOURCES

Growth and development under both alternatives would result in an increase in impervious surface, which can impact water resources through an increase in flooding and/or a decrease in water quality. Construction activities associated with increased development may also have a temporary effect on these resources through increased sediment transport to downstream water resources, increased soil erosion, and an increased potential for hazardous material spills.

Wetlands

Wetlands will be protected by local, state, and federal regulations and stormwater standards under both alternatives. However, population increase is expected to add pressure to wetland areas. Water quality functions will be stressed, with more input of pollutants from vehicles, fertilizers, and pet waste. Hydrologic functions will be impacted as additional impervious surface increases stormwater runoff into wetlands. Habitat function will be impacted as development encroaches. In general, impacts are likely limited to buffer areas, but direct impacts may be occasionally involved.

Under both alternatives, the potential for development to impact wetlands would be greater north of US 2, where most of the wetlands in the City are located. Additionally, the No Action Alternative may result in the development of detached homes near mapped wetland areas that are currently undeveloped, primarily near Roosevelt Road. However, under both alternatives, all development proposals that may impact wetlands and/or their buffers are subject to regulations under MMC 22.80.090, *Wetland Development Standards*, and would be evaluated at the project-level. Growth in Monroe is expected to result in permitted wetland and buffer impacts with mitigation. Therefore, new development, redevelopment, and jobs associated with both alternatives, in compliance with the CAO, would be **less-than-significant** and not result in a substantial loss of wetland habitat or prevent efforts to enhance water quality.

Streams, Rivers, and Lakes

Under both alternatives, streams, rivers, and lakes will be protected by local, state, and federal regulations and stormwater standards. However, population increase is expected to add pressure to waters throughout the City. Both alternatives would increase human activity with some land conversion in an already-urbanized watershed. Urbanized watersheds are prone to more frequent and bigger floods as stormwater traveling over impervious surfaces is

delivered rapidly to receiving waters. This results in increased “flashiness” of stream systems and a reduction in summer base flows. Rapid runoff may also increase flooding in Lake Tye. Rapid runoff can also erode and incise stream channels, which disconnects them from their floodplains. With an increase in impervious area, concentrations of pollutants in streams and lakes can degrade water quality. Common urban pollutants include pesticides, bacteria, nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen, heavy metals, and other contaminants that can impact fish and aquatic habitat.

Under both alternatives, the potential for development to impact streams would be greater north of US 2, where most of the streams in the City are located outside established parks or City- and state-owned lands. Under both alternatives, all development proposals that may impact streams, rivers, or lakes will be subject to regulations under MMC 22.80.100, *Stream Development Standards*, and/or MMC 22.80.110, *Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas Standards*, and evaluated at the project level. Growth in Monroe is expected to result in permitted stream and buffer impacts with mitigation. Therefore, new development, redevelopment, and jobs associated with both alternatives, in compliance with the CAO, would be **less-than-significant** and not result in a substantial loss of stream, river, or lake habitat or prevent efforts to enhance water quality.

Floodplains

Possible impacts from the development of floodplains would be the greatest along the Skykomish River, Woods Creek, and adjacent to Lake Tye. Neither of the alternatives proposes intensive development along the Skykomish River or Woods Creek. Both alternatives proposed some level of development, and an increase in employment, in the areas within the floodplain zoned as Industrial adjacent to Lake Tye. However, this area is already largely developed and impacts are expected to be minimal. Under both alternatives, any additional proposed development within the floodplains would be subject to regulations under Chapter 14.01 MMC, *Flood Hazard Area Regulations*, which identifies development standards for floodplains to promote public health, safety, and general welfare, and to minimize public and private losses. Therefore, new development, redevelopment, and jobs associated with the alternatives, in compliance with the CAO, would not result in a greatly elevated chance of risk to humans and the natural and built environment where a substantial change in the way flood hazards are currently mitigated would be required. The impacts on floodplains would be **less-than-significant**.

Shorelines

Substantial changes in allowed uses per the City’s existing SMP are not proposed under either alternative. Additionally, no substantial development is proposed within City shorelines under either alternative. Both alternatives would continue to provide public access to Monroe’s shorelines from Al Borlin Park, Skykomish River Centennial Park, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) boat launch, Lewis Street Park, Lake Tye Park, and the Cadman Sky River Pit. Comprehensive Plan policies are proposed to improve access to shorelines and open spaces, building upon Monroe’s relationship with natural features and the Skykomish River. Any increase in access to the City’s shorelines would likely increase impacts on these areas; however, any access improvements would be required to be consistent with shoreline regulations. Additionally, neither alternative proposes substantial development within the shoreline jurisdiction. Therefore, new development, redevelopment, and jobs associated with the alternatives, in compliance with the City’s SMP, would meet the goals and the policies of the City’s SMP and therefore, impacts would be **less-than-significant**.

PLANTS AND ANIMALS

Plants

Potential impacts under both alternatives include the loss and reduced function of plant communities as a result of population growth and conversion of vegetated lands to non-vegetated lands and impervious surface. Loss of vegetated land would reduce habitat for wildlife, which is already limited. Plant species diversity would decline as areas dominated by native species are converted to residential areas composed of lawns and non-native landscaping. Infestations by invasive and/or non-native species, (e.g., Scotch broom, Himalayan blackberry, bull thistle) can also occur when natural habitats are disturbed or converted to developed lands. Loss of tree canopy would also decrease forest patch size and result in a loss of stored carbon. However, under both alternatives, most of the proposed development would occur primarily within the already built environment, and the likelihood of either alternative jeopardizing a plant population or species is minimal. Therefore, the impacts on plants under both alternatives from new development, redevelopment, or job growth would be **less-than-significant**.

Animals

Under both alternatives, wildlife habitat could be lost, simplified, or degraded as a result of population growth and development. A reduction in habitat could result in decreased species abundance, and wildlife habitats would become more fragmented, making it more difficult for species to travel between or access areas needed for breeding, rearing, feeding, and refuge. The reduced habitat values for some wildlife species would result in an increase in populations of those species adapted to more urban habitats (e.g., raccoon, coyote, Norway rat). Under both alternatives, most of the proposed development, especially dense development, would occur in already highly developed areas. Population growth in these developed areas would still result in an increase in light and noise, which are both disturbances to animals, and negative human and wildlife interactions, such as vehicle collisions. However, the likelihood of either alternative jeopardizing an animal species or resulting in a large-scale take of an ESA-listed species is minimal. Therefore, the impacts on animals under both alternatives from new development, redevelopment, or job growth would be **less-than-significant**.

Fish Species

Increased development throughout the City will result in more impervious surface. Impervious surface means more stormwater runoff, generally resulting in flashier streams that cause erosion and damage fish habitat. An increase in population throughout the City would also likely create more traffic and pollution, which can also degrade fish habitat and affect their life cycles.

Development under either alternative will be subject to various state, federal, and local laws designed to minimize impacts on plants and animals, including on sensitive terrestrial and aquatic fish and wildlife species and habitats. The likelihood of either alternative jeopardizing a fish species, primarily an ESA-listed fish species, is minimal. Therefore, the impacts on fish species under either alternative from new development, redevelopment, or job growth would be **less-than-significant**.

4.2.3 Impacts of the No Action Alternative

This section describes the impacts of the No Action Alternative.

The No Action Alternative would continue the current plan for growth in the City and UGA, including (1) the adopted zoning and planning designations in the 2015–2035 Comprehensive Plan and

Future Land Use Map and (2) the use of existing tools already in use by the City to meet housing-related state mandates. Impacts on shorelines and the natural environment would be similar to impacts under Impacts Common to Both Alternatives, although development intensity would be less in certain areas, reducing the potential for and intensity of impacts. Natural resources and critical areas will be protected by local, state, and federal regulations.

Growth areas are already highly developed, and the City's critical areas regulations would reduce impacts from geologic hazards and to public health and safety, resulting in **less-than-significant** impacts on earth resources.

Growth is expected to result in permitted wetland, stream, and buffer impacts with mitigation resulting from development. With CAO compliance, **less-than-significant** impacts to wetlands and streams would occur.

Development and new jobs are proposed in already largely-developed industrial zones in the floodplain adjacent to Lake Tye. Future development in the floodplain would comply with Chapter 14.01 MMC, *Flood Hazard Area Regulations*, and would not result in a greatly elevated chance of risk to humans and the natural and built environment where a substantial change in the way flood hazards are currently mitigated would be required. The impact on floodplains would be **less-than-significant**.

Substantial changes in allowed uses per the City's existing SMP are not proposed, nor is substantial development proposed in City shoreline jurisdiction. With SMP compliance, **less-than-significant** impacts to shorelines would occur.

Impacts could include loss or reduced function of plant communities, loss of vegetated land and wildlife habitat, declines in plant species diversity, infestations by invasive or non-native species, or loss of tree canopy and forest patch size. Most future development would occur in the already built environment. The likelihood of jeopardizing a plant population or species is minimal. Impacts on plants would be **less-than-significant**.

4.2.4 Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would allow more housing and jobs and a greater diversity of housing types compared to the No Action Alternative. Impacts would be similar to those described above under Impacts Common to Both Alternatives and under Impacts of the No Action Alternative, although, development intensity would be greater in some areas under the Proposed Action, increasing the

potential for and intensity of impacts. Shorelines and the natural environment would be protected by local, state, and federal regulations. Therefore, impacts on shorelines and the natural environment under the Proposed Action would be **less-than-significant**.

4.2.5 Summary of Impacts

Under both alternatives, increased growth has the potential to cause or suffer the effects of geologic hazards including erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geologic events. The areas planned for growth in both alternatives are already highly developed, and the City's critical areas regulations provide the mechanism that limits impacts from geologic hazards and to public health and safety. Both alternatives would result in less-than-significant impacts on earth resources.

The increase in development under each of the two alternatives would lead to an increase in impervious surface (including pollution-generating impervious surface), surface water runoff, and pollutants (including the use of fertilizers and pesticides). In general, an alternative that concentrates new development in already high-density areas or re-developable lands is expected to result in fewer impacts on water resources. Although the Proposed Action concentrates dense growth on already-developed land (e.g., Downtown and General Commercial Areas), the overall development of both alternatives is generally the same; therefore, impacts on water resources are expected to be the same. Under both alternatives, water resources will be protected by local, state, and federal regulations, and local and state stormwater standards. Both alternatives would result in less-than-significant impacts on water resources.

Growth and development can affect animals in a myriad of ways. Impacts can be direct, such as through direct removal of habitats or species, resulting in reduced wildlife species abundance, diversity, composition, and movement patterns; or indirect such as through increased stormwater runoff from pollution-generating impervious surface, increased sediment transport and decreased water quality, and increased noise and light. In general, alternatives that allow for the greatest amount of new development across a broader area have the largest potential to affect wildlife habitat. However, under both alternatives, most of the development is planned to occur in the built environment. Additionally, much of the higher habitat forested areas within the City are associated with wetlands and streams and, therefore, already protected by local, state, and federal regulations. Furthermore, development under

either alternative will be subject to various state, federal, and local laws designed to minimize impacts on plants and animals, including on sensitive terrestrial and aquatic fish and wildlife species and habitats. Both alternatives would result in less-than-significant impacts on plants and animals.

4.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures could be implemented under either the alternative to reduce impacts on shorelines and the natural environment, in addition to compliance with regulations, including the Endangered Species Act, state regulations, and local regulations (CAO, SMP, and MMC). The CAO, which will be updated in 2025, requires the use of BAS.

- The Comprehensive Plan Update goals, objectives, policies, and action items are designed to mitigate earth-related impacts, impacts on wetlands and streams, flooding impacts, and impacts on the floodplain and shoreline. The City could continue to invest in the City stormwater system by installing, maintaining, and repairing its pipes, catch basins, ditch lines, and stormwater ponds. In addition, continuing programs that educate residents, students, and businesses on ways they can prevent pollutants from reaching Monroe’s waterbodies could reduce stormwater impacts.
- The City could continue to engage community volunteer and stewardship groups in activities and events that support stormwater management and water quality, and continue to participate in the Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum.
- The Monroe Parks Department could continue its relationship with the Stilly-Snohomish Fisheries Enhancement Task Force, which is a member of the Woods Creek Coalition. The Task Force has completed several vegetation enhancement projects in the past along the banks of Woods Creek, along park trails, and isolated pockets in the forest.

4.4 Significant, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Unavoidable impacts include increased human activity associated with more dense development, which could result in long-term disturbance to shorelines and the natural environment. While these impacts cannot be wholly avoided, they can be minimized and mitigated. Therefore, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts on shorelines or the natural environment are expected with compliance with regulations and implementation of mitigation measures.

5

CHAPTER 5 Population, Employment, & Housing

As part of the City of Monroe’s SEPA programmatic SEIS evaluation of probable impacts relating to the Comprehensive Plan Update, this chapter describes population, employment, & housing within the study area and assesses potential impacts associated with the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action.

This chapter provides an assessment of the projected population and employment estimates for the City of Monroe and statistics for household demographics, job sectors, and the current housing supply and affordability. The analysis also lists protections that may be used to mitigate adverse impacts.

5.1 Affected Environment

5.1.1 Methodology

Much of the information for this analysis was gathered from the United States Census Bureau, the Washington Department of Commerce, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS), and predictive land use forecasting from the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Land Use Vision, or LUV-it dataset (PSRC 2023b).

This section also relies on the most recent American Community Survey (ACS) data provided by the Census Bureau, typically from 2020–2022, and land use information from the Snohomish County Tomorrow’s Buildable Lands Report from 2021. Geospatial data from PSRC provide the basis for economic justice, opportunity, and displacement risk analysis for vulnerable communities in Monroe.

5.1.2 Regulatory Setting

The following documents and regulations guide and direct population, employment, and housing as they pertain to growth and development.

STATE REGULATIONS

Washington Growth Management Act (GMA). GMA is a series of statewide regulations that are codified, mainly, under Chapter 36.70A RCW (Revised Code of Washington), although it had been modified and integrated into other sections of the RCW and the Washington Administrative Code (WAC). GMA focuses on 15 planning goals that serve as a guide for counties required to create comprehensive plans. Goals related to housing and employment are included below.

- **RCW 36.70A.020 (4) Housing.** Plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.
- **RCW 36.70A.020 (5) Economic Development.** Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with the regional goals, promote economic opportunity for all (especially for unemployed and disadvantaged members), promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state’s natural resources, public services, and public facilities.

Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (HB) 1220 (Chapter 254, Laws of 2021). This bill amended GMA and how cities plan for housing by strengthening the bill from “encouraging” affordable housing to “requiring” accommodations for affordable housing available to all income levels. Jurisdictions are now required to:

- Include goals, policies, objectives, and mandatory provisions for protection, provision, rehabilitation, and development of housing, including moderate density housing (like duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes) in urban growth areas.
- Create an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth, as provided by the Department of Commerce, including:
 - Units for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households; and
 - Emergency housing, emergency shelters, and permanent supportive housing.

- Identify sufficient capacity of land for housing including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing; housing for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households; manufactured housing; attached housing (e.g., apartment buildings, duplexes, triplexes); group homes; foster care facilities; emergency housing; emergency shelters; permanent supportive housing; and within an urban growth area boundary, consideration of duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes.
- Make adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community, including low, very low, extremely low, and moderate-income households; emergency housing and shelters, and permanent supportive housing (PSH).
- Document programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability including gaps in local funding, barriers such as development regulations, and other limitations.
- Identify local policies, regulations, and areas that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing, including zoning with a discriminatory effect, disinvestment, infrastructure availability, and work to begin to undo racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing caused by local policies, plans, and actions.

Engrossed House Bill (HB) 1337 (Chapter 334, Laws of 2023). This bill amended GMA to require local jurisdictions to adjust regulations to allow for the inclusion of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) within urban growth areas (UGAs).

RCW 36.70A.070. GMA also states that a comprehensive plan of a county or city that is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 shall consist of a map or maps, and descriptive text covering objectives, principles, and standards used to develop the comprehensive plan. The plan shall be an internally consistent document, and all elements shall be consistent with the future land use map. A comprehensive plan shall be adopted and amended with public participation as provided in RCW 36.70A.140. Each comprehensive plan shall include a plan, scheme, or design for each of the following:

- **Housing Element.** A housing element ensuring the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods that manages projected population growth utilizing current land use capacity and preventing sprawl, provides housing for all income segments, creates emergency and permanent supportive housing, invests in walkable neighborhoods, implements anti-discriminatory and anti-displacement policies, and identifies racially disparate impacts and works to undo their harm.
- **Economic Development Element.** An economic development element establishing local goals, policies, objectives, and provisions for economic growth and vitality and a high quality of life. A city that has chosen to be a residential community is

exempt from the economic development element requirement of this subsection.

REGIONAL REGULATIONS

Puget Sound Regional Council’s Regional Growth Strategy, VISION 2050 (2021). The Regional Growth Strategy looks to align the use of resources, services, and infrastructure across the region, including Snohomish, King, Kitsap, and Pierce counties. VISION 2050 includes GMA-required Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs) for the four counties and a regional strategy for accommodating growth through 2050. The MPPs provide direction for updating comprehensive plans so that they align with one another, and work toward the same regional strategy.

The MPPs are extensive, pertaining to nine different areas, including transportation, development patterns, economic development, and climate change. The most pertinent policies regarding population, housing, and employment growth patterns are included below:

- **MPP-DP-1.** Develop high-quality, compact urban communities throughout the region’s UGA that impart a sense of place, preserve local character, provide for mixed uses and choices in housing types, and encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use.
- **MPP-H-1.** Plan for housing supply, forms, and densities to meet the region’s current and projected needs consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and to make significant progress toward jobs/housing balance.
- **MPP-H-2.** Provide a range of housing types and choices to meet the housing needs of all income levels and demographic groups within the region.
- **MPP-H-3.** Achieve and sustain—through preservation, rehabilitation, and new development—a sufficient supply of housing to meet the needs of low-income, moderate-income, middle-income, and special needs persons and households that is equitably and rationally distributed throughout the region.
- **MPP-H-4.** Address the need for housing affordable to low- and very low-income households, recognizing that these critical needs will require significant public intervention through funding, collaboration, and jurisdictional action.
- **MPP-H-6.** Develop and provide a range of housing choices for workers at all income levels throughout the region that is accessible to job centers and attainable to workers at anticipated wages.
- **MPP-H-7.** Expand the supply and range of housing at densities to maximize the benefits of transit investments, including affordable units, in growth centers and station areas throughout the region.

- **MPP-H-8.** Promote the development and preservation of long-term affordable housing options in walking distance to transit by implementing zoning, regulations, and incentives.
- **MPP-H-9.** Expand housing capacity for moderate density housing to bridge the gap between detached housing and more intensive attached housing development and provide opportunities for more affordable ownership and rental housing that allows more people to live in neighborhoods across the region.
- **MPP-H-10.** Encourage jurisdictions to review and streamline development standards and regulations to advance their public benefit, provide flexibility, and minimize additional costs to housing.
- **MPP-H-12.** Identify potential physical, economic, and cultural displacement of low-income households and marginalized populations that may result from planning, public investments, private redevelopment, and market pressure. Use a range of strategies to mitigate displacement impacts to the extent feasible.
- **MPP-RGS-2.** Use consistent countywide allocation processes for population and employment growth consistent with the regional vision, including establishing (a) local employment allocations, (b) local housing allocations based on population projections, and (c) local growth allocations for each designated regional growth center and manufacturing/industrial center.

Snohomish Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs). GMA (RCW 36.70A.210) requires that all jurisdictions within a county have consistency amongst their comprehensive plans. The CPPs enable cities to coordinate across jurisdictions and align with MPPs, VISION 2050, and GMA requirements. GMA requires that jurisdictions focus on coordinated regional growth efforts for economic development and employment (RCW 36.70A.210(3)(g)). The CPPs focused on housing and employment development are included below:

- **CPP-DP-6.** City and county comprehensive plans should locate employment areas and living areas in close proximity to maximize transportation choices, minimize vehicle miles traveled, optimize the use of existing and planned transportation systems and capital facilities, and improve the jobs-housing balance.
- **CPP-DP-38.** The county and cities should reduce disparities in access to opportunity for all residents through inclusive community planning and making investments that meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses.
- **CPP-ED-2.** The county and cities should foster an equitable business and regulatory environment that supports and encourages the establishment and growth of small and startup

businesses, especially those that are woman- and minority-owned.

- **CPP-ED-5.** Jurisdictions should promote economic and employment growth that creates a countywide economy that consists of a diverse range of living wage jobs for all of the county's residents.
- **CPP-ED-6.** As a part of the overall countywide economic development strategy, jurisdictions should focus on economic development activities that improve access to economic opportunity for residents that historically have low and very low access to opportunity.
- **CPP-ED-13.** Jurisdictions should recognize, where appropriate, the growth and development needs of businesses of local, regional, or statewide significance and ensure that local plans and regulations provide opportunity for the growth and continued success of such businesses.
- **CPP-ED-14.** The county and cities should promote an appropriate balance of jobs-to-housing to support economic activity, improve housing options, increase mobility, and respond to climate change challenges.
- **CPP-HO-1.** The county and cities shall make provisions in their comprehensive plans to accommodate existing and projected housing needs, consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and Snohomish County growth allocations. Those provisions should consider the following strategies:
 - Avoid further concentrations of low-income and special needs housing.
 - Increase opportunities and capacity for affordable housing in regional, countywide, and local growth centers.
 - Increase opportunities and capacity for affordable housing close to employment, education, shopping, public services, and public transit.
 - Increase opportunities and capacity for affordable and special needs housing in areas where affordable housing is currently lacking.
 - Support affordable housing opportunities in other Snohomish County jurisdictions, as described below in CPP-HO-3.
 - Support the creation of additional housing options in detached housing neighborhoods to provide for more diverse housing types and choices to meet the various needs of all economic segments of the population.
- **CPP-HO-2.** County and city comprehensive plans shall include policies to meet affordable housing goals consistent with VISION 2050. Jurisdictions should demonstrate within their land use and housing elements that they can accommodate needed housing consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and Snohomish

County growth allocations. These efforts should include facilitating the regional fair share of affordable housing for very low, low, moderate, and middle-income households and special needs persons. Housing elements of comprehensive plans shall be periodically evaluated for success in facilitating needed housing.

- **CPP-HO-3.** The county and cities should participate in multi-jurisdictional affordable housing programs and engage in other cooperative efforts to promote and contribute to an adequate supply of affordable, special needs, and diverse housing countywide.
- **CPP-HO-4.** The county and cities should implement policies that allow for the development of moderate density housing to help meet future housing needs, diversify the housing stock, and provide more affordable home ownership and rental opportunities. This approach should include code updates to ensure that zoning designations and allowed densities, housing capacity, and other restrictions do not preclude development of moderate density housing.
- **CPP-HO-6.** The county and cities should implement policies and programs that encourage the rehabilitation and preservation of existing legally established, affordable housing for residents of all income levels, including but not limited to mobile/manufactured housing and single-room occupancy (SRO) housing.
- **CPP-HO-9.** To improve the jobs-to-housing balance in Snohomish County, jurisdictions shall adopt comprehensive plans that provide for the development of:
 - A variety of housing choices, including affordable housing, so that workers at all income levels may choose to live in proximity to existing and planned employment concentrations and transit service; and
 - Employment opportunities in proximity to existing and planned residential communities.
- **CPP-HO-10.** Jurisdictions should encourage the use of environmentally sensitive housing development practices and environmentally sustainable building techniques and materials to minimize the impacts of growth and development on the county’s natural resource systems. This approach should also consider the potential costs and benefits to site development, construction, and building maintenance to balance housing affordability and environmental sustainability.
- **CPP-HO-11.** The county and cities should consider the economic implications of proposed building and land use regulations so that the broader public benefit they serve is achieved with the least additional cost to housing.
- **CPP-HO-13.** Jurisdictions should ensure that their impact fee programs add no more to the cost of each housing unit produced

than a fairly-derived proportionate share of the cost of new public facilities necessary to accommodate the housing unit as determined by the impact fee provisions of GMA cited in Chapter [82.02](#) RCW.

- **CPP-HO-14.** The county and cities should incentivize and promote the development and preservation of long-term affordable housing through the use of zoning, taxation, and other tools, including height or density bonuses, property tax incentives, and parking requirement reductions. The incentives should apply where feasible to encourage affordable housing.

Snohomish County Housing Characteristics and Needs Report (2023). This analysis calculates the projected housing needs for jurisdictions in Snohomish County for 2044, assesses the available capacity for each housing-type in designated cities or towns, and looks at mitigation measures.

LOCAL REGULATIONS

Monroe Municipal Code (MMC) (2005). The MMC establishes development regulations and requirements for land use decision-making, environmental standards, and protection against adverse impacts to the city.

- **Chapter 22.52 MMC Affordable Housing.** This chapter outlines affordable housing and land use goals that align with GMA requirement to include housing for all economic segments of the community (RCW 36.70A).

City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan (2015). Jurisdictions that are under the “fully planning” designation, in accordance with RCW 36.70A.040, are required to complete a periodic review and update to their comprehensive plan and development regulations every 10 years. Monroe is considered to be a “fully planning” city under GMA. The next iteration of comprehensive plan updates is required to be completed by December 31, 2024. The City's current Comprehensive Plan, which was updated in 2015, provides policies to guide Monroe's future growth and development through the year 2035. To be considered for grants and additional funding, Monroe must complete the updates within the allotted time period.

City of Monroe Economic Development Strategy (2015). Written by the Leland Consulting Group and Studio Cascade, this plan provides strategic themes and concepts generated from the previous 2015 Comprehensive Plan update. The Economic Development Strategy focuses on Downtown development, local business development, Monroe being an outdoor and adventure destination, efficient infill, using US 2 as a regional retail center, and investing in more walkable communities.



City of Monroe Downtown Revitalization Strategy (2016).

This plan strategizes ways to focus development on and revitalize Downtown Main Street and local business development, while preserving historic elements.

City of Monroe Housing Action Plan (2021). This plan makes recommendations for increasing affordable housing in Monroe.

5.1.3 Population

Monroe accounts for 2.5 percent of the population in Snohomish County, including approximately 1,500 inmates at the Monroe Correctional Complex (Snohomish County 2021). Snohomish County Tomorrow’s Buildable Lands Report (2021) projects the City of Monroe to have a 2044 population of 24,302 people (within the City limits), which would be a 23 percent increase from the estimated 2020 Census population (19,699 within the City limits).

AGE

The median age of Monroe residents in 2020, according to the ACS 5-year estimates, was 33.9 years (U.S. Census Bureau 2020). In 2022, the median age increased to 35.8 years (U.S. Census Bureau 2022c). Compared to the county, whose median age was 38.3 years in 2020, Monroe generally has a younger population. While 68 percent of the population is between 18 and 64 years old, roughly 57 percent of those participate in the workforce. Twenty-three percent of the population is 18 or younger. Just 9 percent of the population is ages 65 years and older (U.S. Census Bureau 2020b). However, between 2010 and 2020, Monroe had higher percentages of growth occurring in residents ages 50–69, and the total share of aging residents increased from 14 percent in 2010 to 21 percent in 2020. While residents ages 20–39 moderately increased their share of the population during this time, residents under 20 had the largest decrease in the share of total population, declining 4 percent from 28 to 24 percent of the population in the last decade.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

Monroe is predominantly white (67 percent), with the second largest racial or ethnic group identifying as Hispanic/Latino (16 percent) (**Table 5-1**) (U.S. Census Bureau 2020a). However, this varies by neighborhood with areas north of US 2 (Census Tracts 522.03 and 522.04), and directly east of Lake Tye in the Fryelands ranging from 74 to 86 percent white (U.S. Census Bureau 2022a). Compared to these neighborhoods, areas south of SR 522, including

Downtown, are more diverse in terms of race and ethnicity. Census tract 522.11, in particular, has higher rates of residents that self-identify as Black/African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or other race (U.S. Census Bureau 2022b). This tract also intersects with higher rates of Limited English Proficiency, higher rates of people without a high school degree, and generally has fewer resources and capacity to overcome impacts on health, social, and economic conditions, as determined by the Census Community Resilience Estimates (2019).

TABLE 5-1 Race and Ethnicity

Race or Ethnicity	Monroe	Percent (%)	Snohomish County	Percent (%)
Asian	875	4.5	91,482	11.3
Black or African American	799	4.1	25,918	3.2
Hispanic or Latino	3,177	16.4	85,321	10.5
Other race*	1,542	7.9	56,338	6.9
White	13,010	67.1	552,513	68.1
Total	19,403		811,572	

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau 2020, Table DP05

* Other race includes people who self-identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, another race (Other), and two or more races and are not Hispanic or Latino.

Compared to the rest of the county, Monroe tends to have a much higher representation of residents that identify as Hispanic/Latino or other race (**Table 5-1**). Others identifying as other race include American Indian or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.

LANGUAGE PREFERRED AT HOME

While 80.5 percent of the population in Monroe speaks only English or English “very well,” 19.5 percent speaks a language other than English. Spanish-speaking households account for the majority of residents that speak a language other than English, at 11.9 percent (4 percent speak Asian and Pacific Island languages and 3.6 percent speak another Indo-European language). This percentage of Spanish-speaking households accounts for roughly 4 percent more households than either Snohomish County or Washington as a whole (U.S. Census Bureau 2022f).

EDUCATION LEVELS

Roughly 22 percent of the population in Monroe has a bachelor’s degree or post-graduate education (U.S. Census Bureau 2022e). That is significantly less than Snohomish County, which stands at 33 percent (**Table 5-2**). The percentage of the population without a degree is also higher in Monroe than in Snohomish County (11 percent and 8 percent, comparatively). The lower percentage of people with a bachelor’s degree or higher can indicate a lack of access to higher education in Monroe.

TABLE 5-2 Education Attainment

Education	Monroe	Percent (%)	Snohomish County	Percent (%)
No Degree	1,698	11.0	50,728	7.9
High School	4,153	27.0	156,574	24.3
Some College	6,204	40.3	223,640	34.7
Bachelor’s Degree	2,339	15.2	143,509	22.9
Post-Graduate	993	6.5	69,363	10.1
Total	15,387		643,814	

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau 2022, Table S1501

INCOME

The 2020 mean household income for the City of Monroe was \$98,095, which is approximately 6 percent lower than the average for Washington (\$103,669). Snohomish County mean household income proved to be even higher at \$109,417.

The per capita income (which is the total household income divided by the population of the area) in Monroe is roughly \$7,000 less than both the County and the state (**Table 5-3**). The percentage of the working population in Monroe that is earning below \$50,000 sits at 20 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2020d).

In the Puget Sound region, an annual income of \$160,000 is required to purchase a median-priced home. Comparing this to the per capita incomes for Monroe and Washington, homeownership may not be feasible for those earning well above even the median household income in Monroe (PSRC 2023c).



TABLE 5-3 Income

Income	Monroe	Snohomish County	Washington
Per Capita Household Income	\$33,607	\$40,863	\$40,899
Mean Household Income	\$98,095	\$109,417	\$103,669

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau 2020, Tables S1902 and DP02.

Note: Per capita household income does not include incarcerated persons.

5.1.4 Employment Considerations

According to the Snohomish County CPPs and Buildable Lands Report, there are 10,096 jobs estimated within the City limits of Monroe in 2019 (Snohomish County 2011). Employment tends to be focused Downtown and in the commercial-focused northwest corner of the City. The exception to this is the healthcare sector, which is located at the interchange of SR 522 and US 2.

As of 2021, Monroe’s largest industries included public administration (2,080 jobs), retail trade (1,610 jobs), and manufacturing (1,470 jobs), which represented more than 50 percent of Monroe’s total employment. The City has a greater share of employment in the public administration and retail trade sectors compared to the county and region, but a lower share in manufacturing. Monroe’s higher share of public administration employment is due primarily to jobs at the Monroe Correctional Complex. Other significant industries within Monroe include accommodation and food services (10 percent), healthcare and social assistance (9 percent), and construction (9 percent), which represented an additional 28 percent of Monroe employment in 2021.

Since 2016, the educational services industry has seen the highest annual growth, with a rate of nearly 4 percent. The educational services industry in Monroe experienced greater growth than Snohomish County and the Puget Sound region’s educational services industries, which experienced growth rates of 1.9 percent and 0.7 percent, respectively. Healthcare and social assistance (-2.8 percent) and retail trade (-3.2 percent) have seen the greatest annual declines since 2016.

COMMUTE FLOW

When it comes to employment opportunities in the City, only 1,066 people who live in Monroe (roughly 12 percent), work in the City. Most people who live in Monroe seek employment outside of Monroe (almost 88 percent) (**Figure 5-1**).



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau 2021b

FIGURE 5-1 Commute Flows Into and Out of Monroe

The major sectors or industry clusters that draw people to work in Monroe are manufacturing (18 percent), healthcare (12 percent), and retail (about 14 percent).

EMPLOYMENT LANDS

Based on the 2021 Snohomish County Buildable Lands data, employment in the City of Monroe is expected to grow by 2,324 jobs by 2044 and would therefore surpass Monroe’s current employment capacity by roughly 40 jobs (**Table 5-4**). The Buildable Lands Report identified primarily commercial and some manufacturing lands available for development or redevelopment (**Figure 5-2**). Expected job types could be manufacturing, retail and service, or professional services, depending on how land develops.

TABLE 5-4 Employment Capacity and Allocations, City of Monroe

Area	Est. Emp (2020)	Projected Emp. (2044)	Increase	Percent Increase (%)	City Capacity	Surplus (+) Deficit (-)
City of Monroe	10,096	12,420	2,324	23.0	2,330	-6
Unincorporated UGA	164	199	35	21.3	0	-35
Total	10,260	12,619	2,359	23.0	2,330	-41

SOURCE: Snohomish County 2021

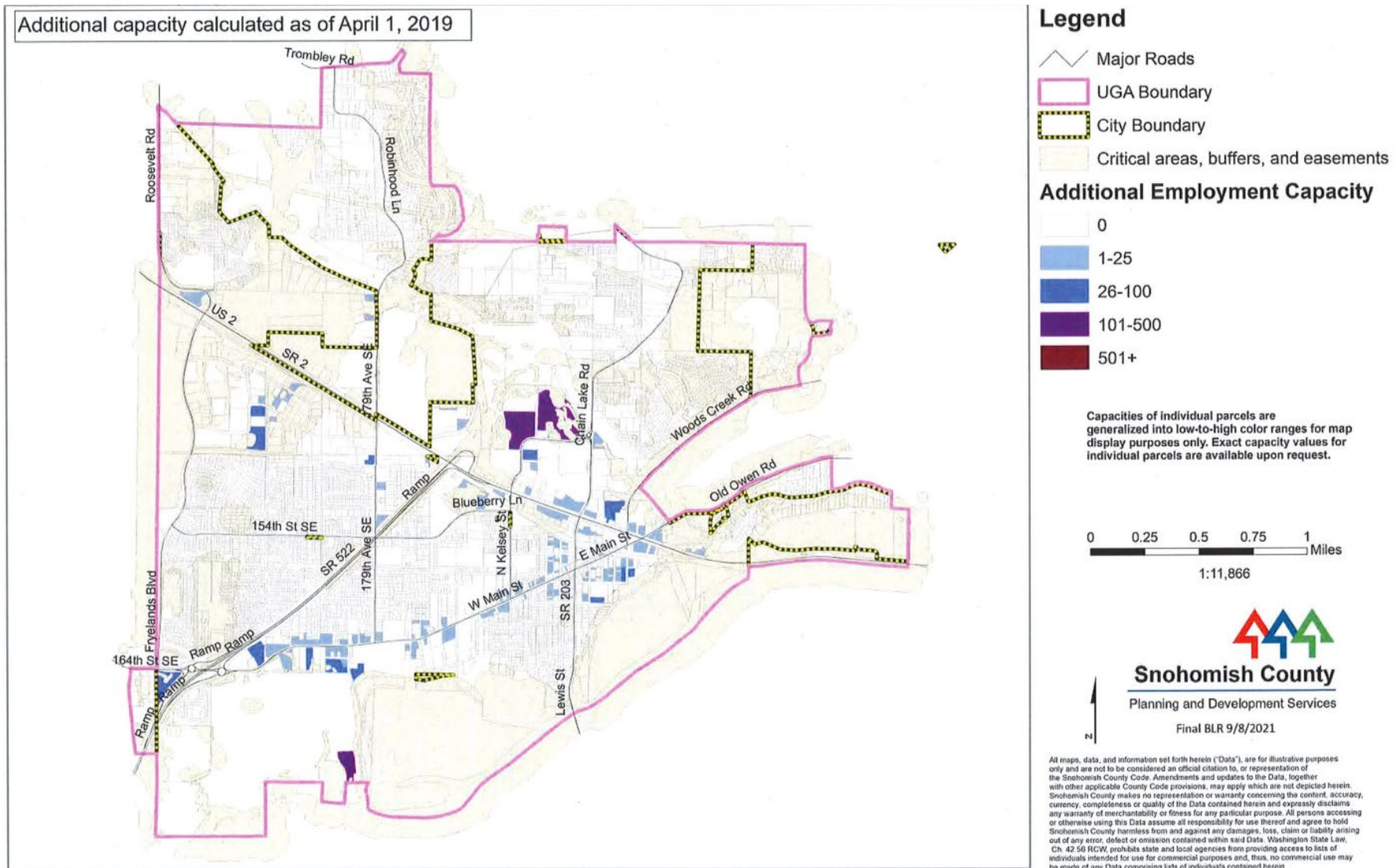
The Buildable Land Report identified vacant and redevelopment parcels throughout the City. However, employment-oriented land uses are primarily north of US 2, along Main Street/Old Owen Road, and east of SR 522 (Snohomish County 2021). These areas are designated as Light Industrial, Generalized Commercial, and Mixed-Use zoning districts. Additional commercial and industrial spaces will be helpful in supporting continued growth for manufacturing and retail, while Mixed Use spaces will offer opportunities for employment and affordable housing in Monroe (U.S. Census Bureau 2021b).

ACCESS TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

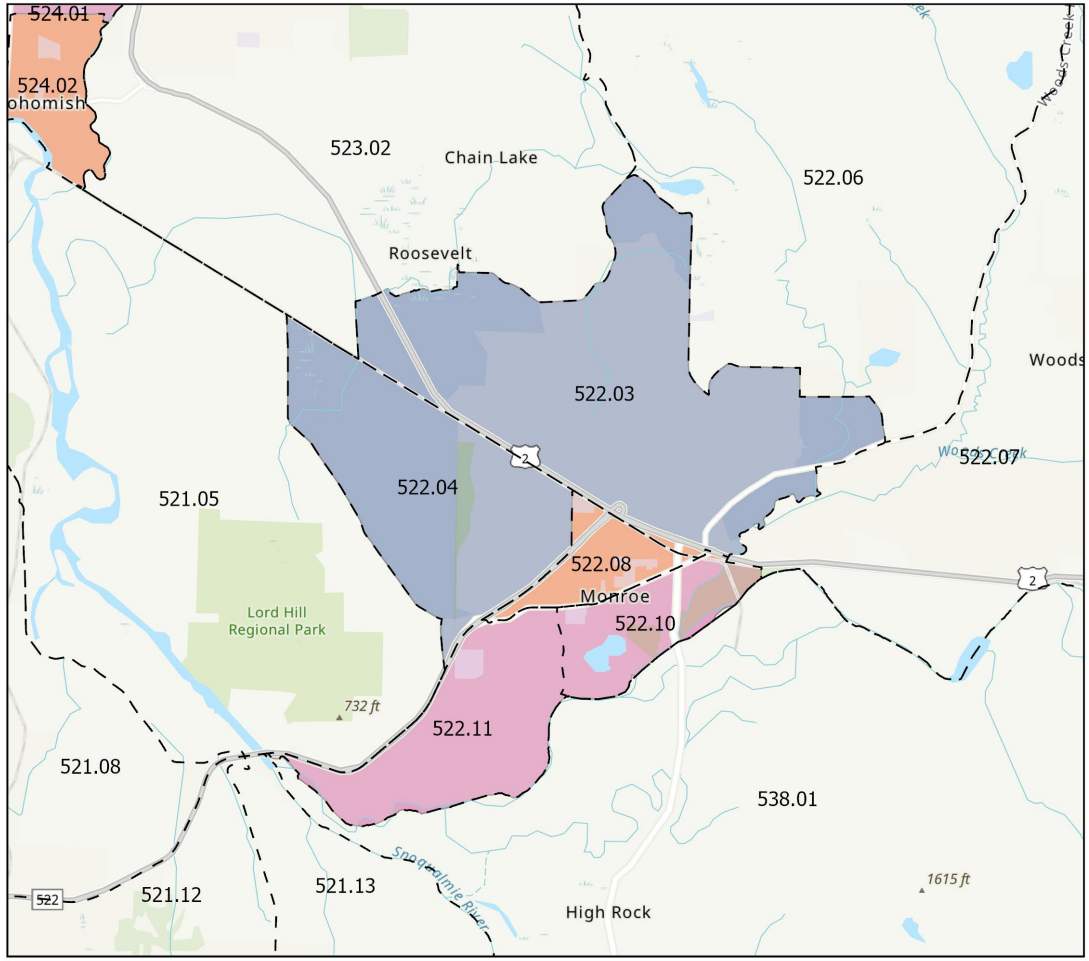
PSRC developed an interactive tool, called the Opportunity Index, which assesses the level of access to opportunity throughout the region (**Figure 5-3**). Opportunity in this instance refers to, “a situation or condition that places individuals in a position to be more likely to succeed or excel” (PSRC, n.d.).

The tool considers five indicators that are determinants of success and lead to increased opportunity in cities: education, economic health, housing and neighborhood quality, mobility and transportation, and health and environment. The economic health indicator alone considers access to living wage jobs, potential for job growth, and unemployment rates.

Areas in Monroe marked orange (Census Tract 522.08) indicate areas with very low opportunity or access to economic opportunities. Blue or purple Census Tracts (522.03 and 522.04) are higher than orange but still indicate low access, and the highest opportunity in Monroe is marked as pink (522.10 and 522.11), although those Census Tracts still only indicate a moderate level of opportunity. Increased access or opportunity, for example, means closer proximity between housing and jobs, increased livable wage jobs, low unemployment rates, and increased opportunities for economic growth and vitality.

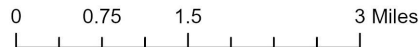


SOURCE: Snohomish County 2021
FIGURE 5-2 Areas of Additional Employment Capacity



Economic Opportunity

- 1 - Very Low
- 2 - Low
- 3 - Moderate
- 4 - High
- 5 - Very High



SOURCE: PSRC 2022b; plotted on 2020 U.S. Census Tracts

FIGURE 5-3 PSRC Economic Opportunity Index, by Census Tract

The tracts (**Table 5-5**) in “very low” opportunities in Monroe are also associated with the lowest household income levels in the City (below \$48,300 median household income) and the highest levels of limited English-speaking ability (8.6–11.5 percent). Inversely, the tracts with “moderate” opportunity are associated with the highest prevalence of limited English-speaking households, highest median home values (\$337,400–\$469,700), and highest household incomes (\$87,000–\$145,000) (U.S. Census Bureau 2021a).

TABLE 5-5 Opportunity Ratings by Census Tract

Location ^a	Rating
Census Tract 522.03 (North Monroe)	Low
Census Tract 522.04 (West Monroe)	Low
Census Tract 522.08 (Central Monroe)	Very Low
Census Tract 522.10 and 522.11 (South Monroe)	Moderate

SOURCE: PSRC 2022b

a. Census Tract geographies do not align with Monroe’s City boundary. Some Census Tracts may extend outside of the City’s boundary.

5.1.5 Current Housing Conditions

In 2022, the number of households in the City totaled 6,038, with an average household size of 2.8 persons per household. That number is expected to grow to 7,791 in 2044, a 29 percent increase in households (U.S. Census Bureau 2022d; PSRC 2023c).

CURRENT INVENTORY AND DIVERSITY

According to the 2020 Census estimates, the current housing stock in the Monroe UGA was approximately 6,700 units. The Snohomish County housing growth allocations assume that approximately 2,600 housing units would be needed within the UGA to accommodate projected growth through 2044, which is almost a 39 percent increase over the next 20 years (**Table 5-6**).

TABLE 5-6 Housing Units and Allocations, 2020 and 2044

Area	2020 Census Inventory	2044 Allocation	Increase	Percent Increase (%)
City of Monroe	6,163	8,379	2,216	36
Unincorporated UGA	551	964	413	74
Total	6,714	9,343	2,629	39

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau 2020; Snohomish County 2021

As units are added, however, it will be important to consider affordability and diversity of the housing stock to meet demand by income levels.

The current inventory of housing in Monroe is primarily detached homes (82 percent), with most being detached units (**Table 5-7**).

TABLE 5-7 Current Housing Types

Type of Structure	Total Units	Share of Total Units (%)
SF Detached	4,572	74
Attached	506	8
Duplex	110	2
Attached Housing 3-19	658	11
MF 20+	326	5
Mobile Home	7	0.1

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau 2022, Table DP04

AGE OF HOUSING

In 2022, the largest share of homes was built between 1990 and 1999. Compared to 2011, the housing stock is getting older. In 2011, only 15 percent of the housing stock was 50 years old or older, but in 2022, nearly 20 percent of the housing stock was older than 50 years (**Table 5-8**).

TABLE 5-8 Age of Housing Units in Monroe, 2011 and 2022

Land Designation	Total Units (2011)	Total Units (2022)	Percent Change (%)	Share of Total Units (%)
2020 or later	—	93	—	1.5
2010–2019	320	834	161	13.5
2000–2009	804	1,274	58	20.6
1990–1999	2,282	2,228	-2	36.1
1980–1989	473	504	7	8.2
1970–1979	535	214	-60	3.5
1960–1969	30	339	1,030	5.5
1950–1959	101	136	36	2.2
1940–1949	185	90	-51	1.5
1939 or earlier	571	467	-18	7.6
Total	5,301	6,179		

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau 2022, Table DP04

This is important as the older the unit, the increase in associated negative health outcomes (PSRC 2022c). Additionally, poor

neighborhood and housing conditions can lead to a decrease in home value and increases in home maintenance costs, leading to increased financial burdens. According to PSRC, while the region is at a 20-year high in terms of housing production, especially for attached housing, the population growth still outpaces housing production. Housing production will be necessary to provide a wide range of income levels.

HOUSING COST BURDENS AND OVERCROWDED HOUSEHOLDS

Housing costs in Washington, particularly in urban areas, have been rising faster than median household incomes (**Table 5-9**).

TABLE 5-9 Mortgage Rate Impact on Housing Affordability, 2023

	June 2021	June 2023	Percent Change
Mortgage Rate	2.99%	6.79%	127%
Median Home Price	\$635,000	\$695,000	9%
Monthly Mortgage Payment	\$2,700	\$4,200	56%
Required Household Income	\$105,000	\$164,000	56%

SOURCE: PSRC 2022c

According to the US HUD 5-year estimates (2015–2019), the overall share of cost-burdened households across race and ethnicity is close to 30 percent (which means that 30 percent of households are paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing). Among minority groups, African American or Black households are disproportionately impacted, with 75 percent being cost burdened (**Table 5-10**).

TABLE 5-10 Percentage of Households by Housing Cost Burden (2019)

	Total Households		Distribution of Cost-Burdened Households of Color			
	Households of Color	White	African American/ Black	Asian	Hispanic/ Latino	Other Race
Not Cost-Burdened	72%	69%	25%	81%	67%	94%
Cost-Burdened	28%	30%	75%	19%	33%	6%

SOURCE: HUD 2019

Overcrowding rates vary in the City of Monroe. Overcrowding translates to having more than one person per room in a housing unit. While this can be indicative of cultural preferences, it may also be a symptom of a lack of living wages, lack of affordable housing, or units that cannot easily accommodate multi-generational housing needs. South Monroe has a higher percentage of overcrowding compared to the rest of the City (U.S. Census Bureau 2021a). In areas defined by low opportunity, this may mean a lack of livable wages or unaffordable housing in proximity to work locations.

HOMEOWNERSHIP AND HOME VALUES

Homeownership is an important pathway to wealth building and economic stability. It can lead to intergenerational wealth transfer, improved access to credit, and provide greater stability in housing expenses. Homeownership can also have positive effects on neighborhood and community development as homeowners have a vested interest in the maintenance and improvement of their properties, which contributes to the overall stability and desirability of the neighborhood.

TENURE

In Monroe, most homes are owner-occupied (68 percent), which is similar to rates in Snohomish County and Washington (U.S. Census Bureau 2020c). However, there is a disparity in homeownership between different racial and ethnic groups. American Indian or Alaska Native and Hispanic or Latino households are more likely to rent rather than own their home (**Table 5-11**).

TABLE 5-11 Monroe Share of Owner and Renter Households by Racial/Ethnic Group, 2019

	Share of Owners (%)	Share of Renters (%)
American Indian or Alaska Native	21	79
Asian	81	19
Black or African American	75	25
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	43	57
Other Race	66	34
Pacific Islander	0	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	21	79

SOURCE: HUD 2019a

Housing type and affordability are highly variable in Monroe. Availability of living-wage employment and income adds to this variability in housing and increases the risk of displacement.

As housing prices increase, residents may face challenges in maintaining their housing and may be forced to move to more affordable areas. High housing costs relative to household incomes can also have an impact on the workforce and economy. When housing costs are high relative to income, it becomes challenging for employers to attract and retain qualified employees.

5.1.6 Displacement Risk

Displacement is the forced movement or relocation of residents due to physical, economic, or cultural transitions that make their current neighborhood an unwelcome or unaffordable place (PSRC 2022a). While displacement can be from investments made in an area, leading to economic or social displacement (i.e., either leaving because housing is unaffordable or leaving because an area has been gentrified and residents no longer feel welcome in an area), this assessment focuses on displacement risk due to unaffordability of housing and lack of employment in proximity to transit or housing.

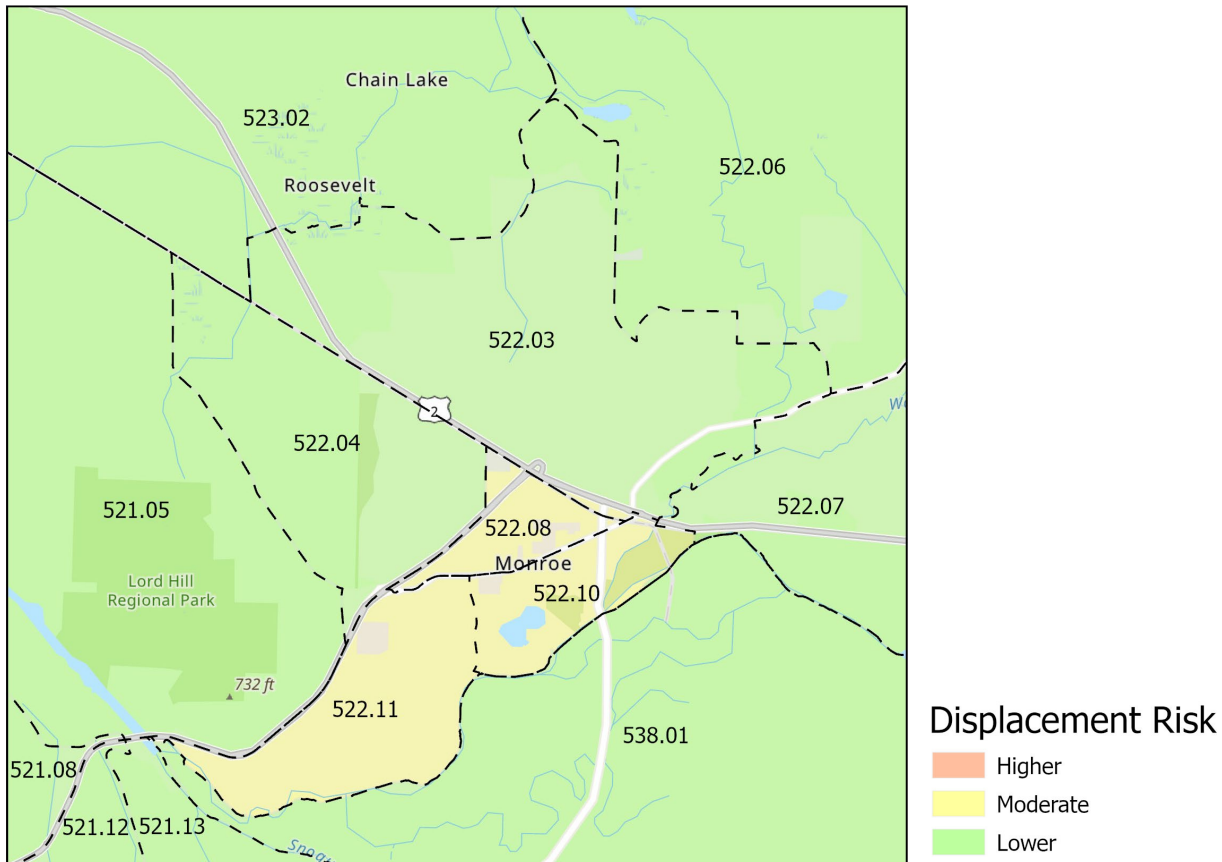
PSRC developed a mapping tool to identify places in Puget Sound where people and businesses may be at an increased risk of displacement. The tool combines five elements of neighborhood risks into a composite index that classifies areas as having lower, moderate, or higher risk of displacement based on current neighborhood conditions. The five elements include socio-economic, transportation qualities, neighborhood characteristics, housing, and civic engagement. **Figure 5-4** shows the Census Tracts experiencing moderate risk of displacement and those with lower risk (also shown in **Table 5-12**).

TABLE 5-12 Displacement Risk by Census Tract

Location ^a	Rating
Census Tract 522.03 (North Monroe)	Low
Census Tract 522.04 (West Monroe)	Low
Census Tract 522.08 (Central Monroe)	Moderate
Census Tract 522.10 and 522.11 (South Monroe)	Moderate

SOURCE: PSRC 2023a

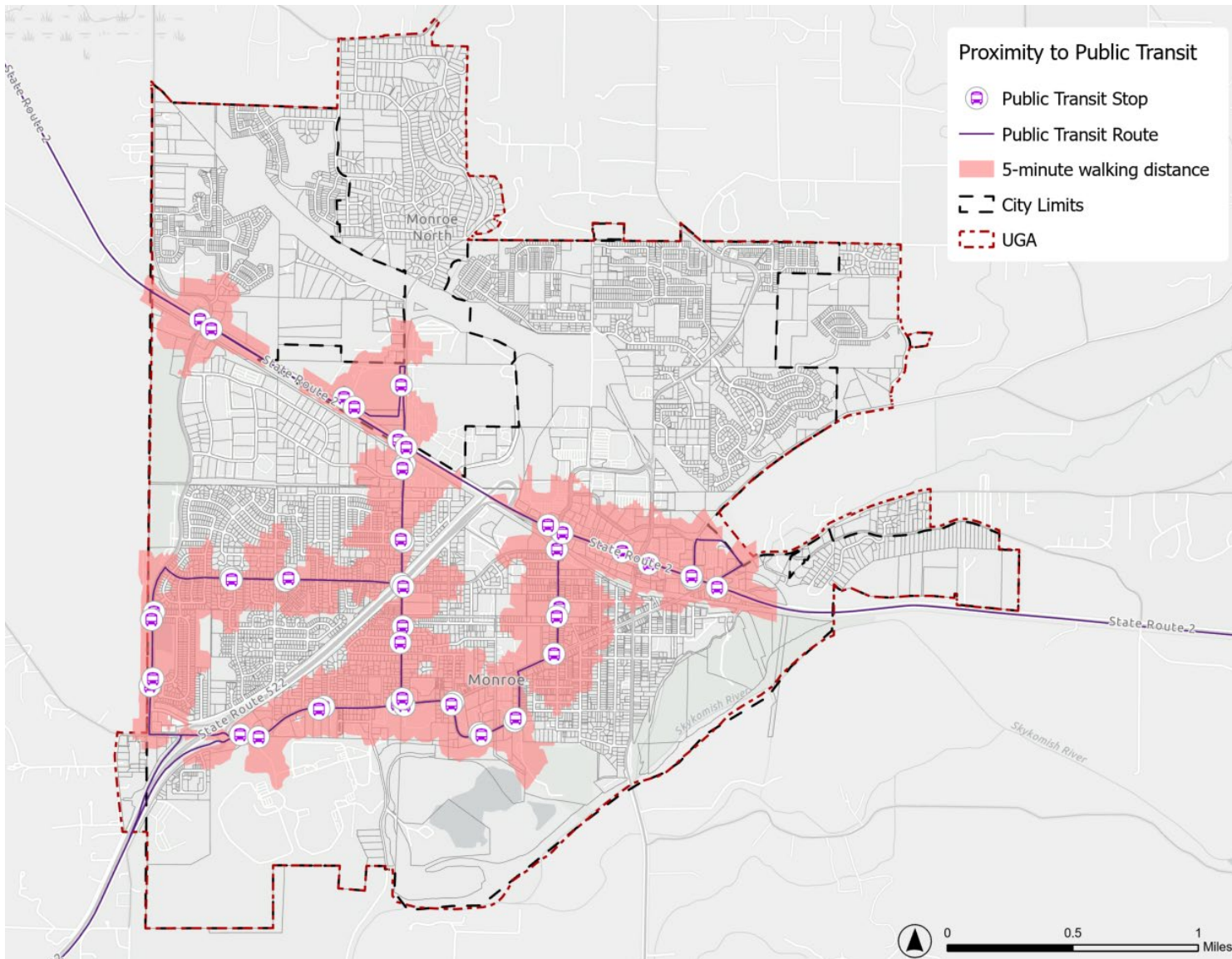
a. Census Tract geographies do not align with Monroe’s City boundary. Some Census Tracts may extend outside of the City’s boundary.



SOURCE: PSRC 2023a; plotted on 2020 U.S. Census Tracts

FIGURE 5-4 PSRC Displacement Risk Map Assessment

South and Central Monroe are at higher risk compared to North and West Monroe (**Table 5-12**). Tracts in South and Central Monroe represent the lowest household incomes in the City, ranging from \$78,000 to less than \$48,300 annually. These locations also have the highest number of renter-occupied units (182+ per tract), the highest percentage of residents with limited English proficiency (between 4.6 and 11.5 percent) and crowded occupied units (U.S. Census Bureau 2021b). Central Monroe (Census Tract 522.08) was also a tract that was identified as having “very low” economic opportunity. This may mean that affordable housing is not prominent in this tract or area, that there is not sufficient transit offered for people in this location to get to work elsewhere (**Figure 5-5**), and that they are at increased risk of needing to relocate.



SOURCES: Snohomish County 2021; Urban Footprint, MIG Analysis

FIGURE 5-5 Proximity to Public Transit, Monroe

One of the factors, proximity to transit, is an indicator for high rates of displacement, and is also identified by the Regional Growth Strategy as a goal. While Monroe does not have frequent transit, it does have limited transit that serves the City. Currently, only 31 percent of housing units within the UGA are within a 5-minute walkshed of a public transit stop. By increasing affordable units that bring more community members in proximity to routes, especially in Central Monroe, it increases opportunity and decreases the potential risk for displacement.

5.2 Potential Impacts

This section describes the potential impacts of the City’s future growth and development on population, employment, and housing.

5.2.1 Impact Assessment Methodology and Thresholds of Significance

The following thresholds of significance were used to determine whether the No Action Alternative or the Proposed Action would have a significant impact on the City’s population, employment, or housing. The descriptions of the alternatives were used together with the affected environment to evaluate impacts. Significant impacts consider the magnitude, duration, and likelihood of occurrence.

Thresholds of significance include:

- **Population:** The alternative would increase risk for involuntary residential displacement, particularly in areas at a moderate risk of displacement.
- **Employment:** The alternative would not meet expected or projected allocated employment growth for the UGA.
- **Housing:** The alternative conflicts with federal, state, or local policies or plans regarding the provision of housing; it would result in (1) insufficient capacity to accommodate affordable housing across economic income segments or provide a range of housing types; (2) a decrease in the supply and diversity of market-rate housing; and (3) a decreased proportion of housing within ¼ mile of the frequent transit network.

5.2.2 Impacts Common to Both Alternatives

POPULATION

The anticipated 2044 growth allocations for the City of Monroe and its UGA are 2,359 housing units and 2,629 jobs. Citywide, the



allocations are 2,324 housing units and 2,216 jobs, respectively. Regardless of the alternative, there would be an increase in the housing stock and supply and employment opportunities; however, the amount of capacity and geographic distribution vary between the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action (**Table 5-13**).

TABLE 5-13 Housing and Job Net Capacity by Alternative

	2020 Census	2044 Allocations	Net Capacity Needed	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action
Housing	6,163	8,379	2,216	975*	2,471*
Jobs	10,096	12,420	2,324	2,330	2,741

SOURCE: Snohomish County 2021

* The City of Monroe is responsible for meeting housing unit allocations within the Monroe City limits. Net capacity does not include existing pending and permitted (but not yet constructed) projects, which would account for an additional approximately 1,000 units.

Potential impacts identified for the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action assume a full build-out of housing unit and job capacity.

EMPLOYMENT

Both alternatives would support increases in jobs and housing units but would work toward this goal in varying distributions.

HOUSING

Regardless of the alternative, an assumed net growth of 2,216 housing units is projected within the City limits. Growth in the City would be distributed differently, depending on the alternative.

Each alternative could increase affordable housing. Adopting policies to preserve existing affordable housing and using focused incentives or funding to build new affordable housing are some ways to mitigate affordability concerns and meet growth allocations.



HB 1220 requires providing housing for various levels of area median incomes (AMI), including emergency housing and PSH. The specific income segments include extremely low (0–30 percent AMI), very low (30–50 percent AMI), low (50–80 percent AMI), moderate (80–120 percent AMI), and above moderate (greater than 120 percent AMI) (see Section 5.1.2, *Regulatory Setting*). Each jurisdiction is required to analyze and assess whether it has sufficient land capacity to provide for these housing types. **Table 5-14** describes the potential distribution of extremely low, very low, low, and moderate housing units, and permanent supportive housing across both the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action.

The actual pace of development, distribution of future housing, and changes in the housing variety would be influenced in part by the implementation of Comprehensive Plan policies, related regulations and actions, and decisions made by individual property owners and developers. Impacts on population, employment, and housing are discussed in more detail under each alternative.



TABLE 5-14 Affordability and Supply of Housing by Alternative

Income Level	Percent Area Median Income	Projected Housing Need	Zone Categories Serving These Needs	Aggregated Housing Needs	No Action Alternative		Proposed Action	
					Total Capacity	Capacity Surplus or Deficit	Total Capacity	Capacity Surplus or Deficit
Extremely Low	0–30% PSH	154	Low-Rise, Mid-Rise attached housing + ADUs	716	344	(372)*	913	196
	0–30% non-PSH	319						
Very Low	>30–50%	243						
Low	>50–80%	0						
Moderate	>80–100%	0	Moderate Density	381	226	(155)*	425*	44
	>100–120%	381						
Above Moderate	>120%	1,118	Low Density	1,118	405	(713)*	1,134*	16
Total		2,216		2,216	975	(1,240)*	2,471*	256

SOURCE: UrbanFootprint, MIG analysis

NOTES: PSH = permanent supportive housing

* These numbers do not include pending and permitted projects, which roughly total 1,000 units in the moderate and above moderate income brackets. There would still be a deficit of Extremely Low, Very Low, and Low housing units under the No Action Alternative.

5.2.3 Impacts of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, growth is assumed to occur without changes to existing zoning within the City limits. This would translate to a net capacity for 975 new housing units (1,241 housing units fewer than the 2,216 Snohomish County CPP housing allocation for the City limits)¹ and 2,330 jobs. This level of employment would meet citywide employment allocations, but if no jobs are projected to increase in the unincorporated areas, the UGA would result in approximately 40 fewer jobs than the Snohomish County CPP employment allocation for the UGA.

POPULATION

Displacement

As described in Section 5.1.6, displacement risk in Monroe is moderate to low. The tracts located in Central and South Monroe (southeast of SR 522, 179th Avenue SE, and US 2) are at the highest risk of displacement in the City of Monroe and have the potential to remain at moderate displacement risk due to the removal of existing housing units if redevelopment were to occur with market rate housing. The No Action Alternative would not likely reduce the distance to daily amenities for residents. Without additional affordable housing or increased proximity to living-wage job opportunities being introduced into these areas, there could be a risk that residents would be required to move if affordable housing options are replaced with market rate housing, further increasing the cost-burden to renters and low-income households. As future development occurs, some residents could be displaced through redevelopment or priced out as land prices and rents increase.

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be less integration of Monroe’s 2021 Housing Action Plan strategies and fewer opportunities for homeownership (which is an anti-displacement strategy). Without the creation of affordable housing units or living-wage jobs in proximity to these residential spaces, there is an inherent increased risk of economic and cultural displacement (i.e., being priced out of an area or having the neighborhood change past recognition and not feeling welcome or at ease in the surrounding community). The addition of policies, plans, and regulations that

¹ The deficit in capacity under the No Action Alternative could be slightly less when including housing units developed in the unincorporated UGA. Additionally, these numbers do not include pending and permitted projects within the existing City limits, adding approximately 1,000 units, if constructed.

support anti-displacement practices and that begin to undo racially disparate impacts and harm would not be required with the No Action Alternative. The No Action Alternative would have the potential to result in a **significant impact** on population through the displacement of community members.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment Growth Allocations

Under the No Action Alternative, growth is assumed to occur without changes to existing zoning. Employment in Monroe is projected to grow slightly more than 1 percent annually between 2021 and 2044. The No Action Alternative would continue to focus employment growth Downtown, in the North Kelsey area, and in the existing industrial area south of US 2 near the City's western boundary. Employment allocations would not be met through the No Action Alternative, resulting in the City not meeting the Snohomish County CPP allocations (described in Section 5.1.2, *Regulatory Setting*), for the entire UGA of Monroe. Jobs capacity under the No Action Alternative would be 2,330 jobs, a deficit of 71 jobs within the UGA compared to CPP allocations. However, within the City limits, the No Action Alternative would meet employment allocations by a surplus of six jobs. Utilizing the unincorporated areas of the City would be critical in meeting employment allocations.

GMA requires that jurisdictions focus on coordinated regional growth efforts for economic development and employment (RCW 36.70A.210(3)(g)). VISION 2050 and the MPPs narrow this focus to specifically increasing a range of living wage jobs, better balancing the match between jobs and housing, encouraging investment in affordable housing, community assets, and the quality of life for people (Snohomish County 2011). The No Action Alternative would not fully align with the VISION 2050 strategy or MPPs. Under the No Action Alternative, it is expected that current growth and development trends would continue, which would not include additional supportive policies working towards these goals.

Employment and land use patterns are predicted to remain the same under the No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, Census Tracts with low opportunity (West and Central Monroe, in the areas between West Main Street and the Skykomish River), parcels would be dedicated to parks and open space, low-density detached residential buildings, and institutional purposes (i.e., correctional facilities and high schools) (**Figure 5-3**). In West and Central Monroe, a small number of parcels would be reserved

for high-density detached housing buildings, limited Mixed Use, and some Downtown commercial buildings. This could limit opportunities close to the historic Downtown, where much of the economic development and local businesses are concentrated and could also limit neighborhood activity centers in which people can live and work in close proximity. New affordable housing options could be limited in these areas, and households would have to travel farther to gain access to job opportunities, contributing to already existing wealth gaps.

While the No Action Alternative does not conflict with Monroe’s economic vision in ways that could not be mitigated, it does not meet adopted employment growth allocations and, therefore, would result in a **significant impact** on employment growth.

HOUSING

Housing Policy

The No Action Alternative would not comply with HB 1220 or statewide GMA requirements (RCW 36.70A.020, planning goals 4 and 5). Although the number of affordable housing units would grow, the No Action Alternative would not include additional language or provisions for diverse income bands. Recent housing affordability trends would continue in the City, and housing cost would continue to outpace income. The No Action Alternative would not amend the policies to match state requirements and would not amend detached housing zoning to include certain types of moderate-density housing.

While the No Action Alternative would encourage development on vacant, partially developed, and redevelopable parcels, using the current community assets that are available to them, this alternative would not focus efforts on increasing affordable housing in proximity to low opportunity or vulnerable areas (i.e., Central Monroe). The No Action Alternative would also constrain the capacity for development of a diversity of housing types, potentially leading to further housing price increases. The No Action Alternative would result in a **significant impact** with regard to housing policy.

Housing Affordability and Supply

The No Action Alternative would not add policies or regulations that accommodate sufficient housing for various income levels or adopt the new housing requirements set by GMA.

The smaller supply of affordable housing units under the No Action Alternative, and fewer types of housing available, could mean an

increase in housing costs and the potential for economic displacement. Housing types, including potential homeownership opportunities, would also continue to be limited in detached housing areas, although pressure to convert homes with lower intensity development could also be lower as fewer development types would be allowed in these areas.

As shown in **Table 5-14**, the No Action Alternative would not have the capacity to provide sufficient housing for extremely low, very low, or low-income households. However, it would likely meet moderate and above moderate housing needs (>80–120 percent AMI).²

The No Action Alternative would provide fewer housing typologies that offer ownership opportunities like townhouses, condominiums, or other middle housing types. It would provide lower intensity development conducive to the Multi-family Tax Exemption (MFTE) incentives for affordability although it would provide a lower supply of housing units overall that could take advantage of the MFTE program compared to the Proposed Action.

The No Action Alternative would continue to implement the policies, strategies, and development plan set by the current (2015) Comprehensive Plan and would not accommodate language or requirements for housing for varying income levels. The No Action Alternative could have a **significant impact** with respect to housing supply and affordability.

Proximity to Transit

The No Action Alternative would not align with the Regional Growth Strategy or VISION 2050 focus of increased proximity to transit. With the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, 31 percent of the housing units are within a 5-minute walkshed of a public transit station or hub. The No Action Alternative would not increase the amount of housing within a 5-minute walk or ¼ mile of the existing transit network. The No Action Alternative would result in a **less-than-significant impact** with regard to transit proximity.

² These numbers do not include pending and permitted projects, which roughly total 1,000 units in the moderate and above-moderate income brackets. With the addition of these developed parcels, the No Action Alternative would still not meet HB 1220 requirements for lower income bands.

5.2.4 Impacts of the Proposed Action

This section describes the impacts of the Proposed Action.

The Proposed Action would meet housing and jobs allocations within the City limits (and exceed the allocations to meet those within the UGA). The Proposed Action would have capacity for 2,471 new housing units (255 units above the citywide housing allocation) and 2,741 jobs (417 jobs above the employment allocation within the City limits), with additional housing and jobs capacity in unincorporated areas of the UGA.³ The Proposed Action would introduce greater mixed use development and increased densities to previously commercial areas and very-low-density detached housing zoning, increasing opportunities for affordable housing, employment, and walkability.

POPULATION

Displacement

The Proposed Action would accommodate increased affordable housing units that include provisions for all income levels, particularly in the areas along West Main Street (east of SR 522) and in the historic Downtown (south of US 2). Mixed use and attached residential would be permitted in these areas. Greater allowance for attached housing and other housing types would increase housing choices, reduce cost burden, increase affordable housing units, and increase opportunities for living-wage jobs in proximity to residential spaces.

Under the Proposed Action, middle housing opportunities would increase, providing more diverse housing options. New opportunities for infill and redevelopment could adversely impact neighborhoods where land and building values make redevelopment attractive. As investment in these areas increases, neighborhood changes in areas that are already defined by moderate-risk of displacement could lead to gentrification and may cause displacement. However, redevelopment with middle housing will likely increase the cumulative number of living options in the City as one unit would be replaced with at least two units. Policies and regulations that support anti-displacement practices and that begin to undo racially disparate impacts and harm would be included with the Proposed Action. With anti-displacement policy compliance (as

³ These numbers do not include pending and permitted projects, which total roughly 1,000 units.

required by the HB 1220 update), the Proposed Action would result in a **less-than-significant impact** on displacement risk.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment Allocations

The Proposed Action would exceed the employment allocation set by the Snohomish County CPPs by a surplus of 417 jobs within the City limits, and a total of 382 jobs within the UGA. The Proposed Action would have capacity for additional jobs with the proposed land use designation amendments.

GMA requires that jurisdictions focus on coordinated regional growth efforts for economic development and employment (RCW 36.70A.210(3)(g)). VISION 2050 also focused on an increased opportunity for community members, encouraging investment in affordable housing, community assets, and the quality of life for people. The Proposed Action would provide increased mixed-use development opportunities in low-opportunity locations (i.e., Central Monroe), along with affordable housing in relatively close proximity to employment opportunities, compared to the No Action Alternative.

The Proposed Action would meet Snohomish County CPPs by fostering linkages between centers and improving access to a variety of employment opportunities, particularly in places with low or very low opportunity, and by looking to increase to housing-to-jobs balance identified by the county in ED-14.

The Proposed Action would also align with the VISION 2050 strategy and MPPs. VISION 2050 focuses employment development on equitable access to living-wage employment (MPP-Ec-13). With the focus of the Proposed Action being increased density and proximity between housing and employment in highly populated areas, the goals of the Proposed Action would align with VISION 2050.

Compared to the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would increase employment opportunities in these areas along West Main Street, near the historic Downtown, and across US 2. Along West Main Street, mixed use, high-density residential and neighborhood commercial spaces would bring a mixture of housing units and additional employment opportunities into shared spaces.

Additionally, the historic Downtown would bring in a greater intensity of development through mixed use and high-density residential spaces. North of US 2, mixed use and attached housing zoning would be introduced where commercial spaces previously

were located. Although north of US 2 is not identified as an area of low opportunity, by increasing the spaces in which people can work and live, people would potentially have to travel shorter distances to living wage jobs and have access to affordable housing closer to where they work. Under the Proposed Action, there would be **no impact** on employment growth, and possibly a beneficial effect.

HOUSING

Housing Policy

The Proposed Action would exceed the housing growth allocation set by the Snohomish County CPPs.

The Proposed Action would include affordable housing for all income brackets and would comply with HB 1220 and statewide GMA requirements. The Proposed Action would provide increased housing through mixed-use and attached housing opportunities and proposing rezoning detached housing zones west of SR 522 to allow for more units on a single lot. This Proposed Action would also allow for middle housing in traditionally detached housing areas north of US 2 to comply with HB 1110. This Proposed Action would result in **no impact** on housing policy and has the potential to have a beneficial effect through amendments to housing policy.

Housing Affordability and Supply

Compared to the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would adopt inclusionary policies and regulations that would accommodate housing for all income levels and would meet the new housing requirements set by GMA and HB 1220. The Proposed Action would provide changes to detached housing zoning that would allow for additional housing types that offer increased density and ownership opportunities, like townhomes, condominiums, or other middle housing types.

The Proposed Action would provide more than 900 housing units in the extremely low, very low, and low median income levels, which is approximately 196 housing units more than identified by aggregated housing needs in these economic segments. It would also exceed moderate and above moderate housing (>80–120 percent AMI) capacities by more than 60 units. The Proposed Action would meet and exceed the requirements for total housing units by 256 units (**Table 5-14**). The Proposed Action would have **no impact** on housing affordability or supply and has the potential to have a beneficial effect through amendments to housing policy.

Proximity to Transit

The Proposed Action would provide increased housing units with access to public transportation and would be more aligned with VISION 2050's focus of increased proximity to transit and connectivity when compared to the No Action Alternative. Thirty-five percent of the housing units are expected to be within a 5-minute walkshed of a public transit station or hub (which is 4 percent more than the No Action Alternative). Additionally, new transportation planning requirements would increase walkability and access to non-automobile types of transportation. The Proposed Action would result in **no impact** on transit proximity.

5.2.5 Summary of Impacts

Both alternatives would have the capacity to meet at least a portion of the growth allocations, but only the Proposed Action would fully meet the allocated growth allocations and fully address housing affordability requirements.

Under the No Action Alternative, displacement risk would remain due to less integration of Monroe's 2021 Housing Action Plan strategies, fewer opportunities for homeownership, fewer affordable housing and living-wage jobs created near residences, and fewer policies that encourage anti-displacement practices. The result is a significant impact on population.

The No Action Alternative would not meet the Snohomish County CPP allocations for the UGA or fully align with the VISION 2050 strategy or MPPs, resulting in a significant impact to employment growth. The No Action Alternative would not comply with HB 1220 or statewide GMA requirements, resulting in a significant impact related to housing policy.

The No Action Alternative would not comply with GMA housing requirements and would not have the capacity to provide sufficient housing for extremely low, very low, or low-income households, resulting in a significant impact with respect to housing supply and affordability. The No Action Alternative would not support the VISION 2050 focus of increased proximity to transit, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on transit proximity.

The Proposed Action would accommodate increased affordable housing units that include provisions for all income levels and would provide middle housing opportunities. Although risk of displacement would remain, policies and regulations that support anti-displacement practices would be in place under the Proposed Action, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on population.

The Proposed Action would exceed the CPP employment and housing allocation; comply with HB 1110, HB 1220, and statewide GMA requirements; and align with the VISION 2050 strategy and MPPs, resulting in no impact to employment growth or housing policy. The Proposed Action would allow for more housing types with increased density and ownership opportunities and provide more than 900 housing units in the extremely low, very low, and low median income levels. It would also exceed moderate and above moderate housing capacities. The result would be no impact on housing affordability and supply.

The Proposed Action would provide more housing close to public transportation and would align more with VISION 2050's focus of increased proximity to transit and connectivity compared to the No Action Alternative, resulting in no impact to on transit proximity.

5.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

The following measures would help avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts on population, employment, or housing related to the alternatives.

Adopting policies to preserve existing affordable housing is one way to discourage and prevent residential displacement as redevelopment occurs. Implementing updates to ADU regulations, similar to HB 1337, could help expand opportunities for housing stock and reduce risk of displacement. Under both alternatives, Monroe could use public investment or a transfer of development rights to encourage landlords and owners of current affordable housing structures to keep them and maintain them at affordable rates to prevent displacement. Exploring other funding or community-owned land options like community land trusts could also offer increased options for affordable homeownership opportunities. In addition to these anti-displacement and homeownership measures, Monroe could offer protections against landlord-tenant issues, eviction, and income discrimination. Monroe could work to distribute community resources that help residents learn about affordable housing and protect their rights.

Creating a regular monitoring system to evaluate the effectiveness of housing programs and strategies could help Monroe identify which programs are most effective and redistribute resources accordingly.

Aligning capital funding sources like Community Revitalization Funding (CRF), Local Infrastructure Financing Tools (LIFT), and

maintenance funding sources like Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) could create motivation for neighborhood and Main Street revitalization. Implementing Monroe’s Economic Development Strategy could provide additional guidance for recruiting businesses Downtown, identify funding opportunities to promote Monroe as an outdoor destination, bring more revenue to places outside of Downtown, and offer support to boost business growth, especially for small or locally owned businesses and for businesses owned by women or minority business owners (Leland Consulting Group & Studio Cascade 2015).

Creating changes to development standards and zoning regulations to permit middle housing in detached housing zones for additional infill, coupled with increased flexibility in setbacks, pedestrian infrastructure, parking, and street widths could encourage middle housing. Other tactics like smaller minimum lot sizes and the allowance of micro apartments near high-employment areas could reduce the cost burden and increase proximity to these areas. Monroe could implement inclusionary zoning policies for some types of residential development and provide incentives for constructing housing for incomes of less than 80 percent AMI.

5.4 Significant, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

With mitigation measures identified in Section 5.3, *Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures*, impacts on population, employment, and housing under the No Action Alternative would be less-than-significant. Neither alternative would result in significant unavoidable adverse impacts on population, employment, and housing.



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CHAPTER 6 Capital Facilities and Utilities

As part of the City of Monroe SEPA programmatic SEIS evaluation of probable impacts relating to the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, this chapter describes capital facilities and utilities within the study area and evaluates potential impacts associated with the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative. Capital facilities evaluated in this chapter include potable water, stormwater, wastewater, municipal buildings, police, fire/emergency medical services (EMS), and schools. Utilities addressed in this chapter include electricity, natural gas, solid waste, and communications and data.

6.1 Affected Environment

This section documents existing staffing and equipment, levels of service or capacity, and capital facilities and infrastructure for agencies and utilities serving the study area. The study area is the incorporated City of Monroe.

6.1.1 Methodology

Existing policies, plans, and regulations listed in Section 6.1.2, *Regulatory Setting*, were collected from the websites of federal, regional, and local agencies having jurisdiction. The Affected Environment presents information available in spring 2024, including the 2015 Utility Systems Plan (OMD 2015) and City departmental websites. System plan updates for potable water, stormwater, and wastewater are in process and will be adopted by December 31, 2024. Updated standards and information in those system plans will be incorporated into this impact analysis section in the Final SEIS.

6.1.2 Regulatory Setting

Capital facilities and utility providers comply with the policies, plans, and regulations described in this section as they manage services for the customers. This section describes current Washington and City of Monroe codes, which could change over the 20-year planning horizon.

FEDERAL REGULATIONS

- **Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Energy Policy Act of 2005** addresses energy production in the United States, including electricity, and gave FERC additional responsibilities as outlined and updated in the FERC Strategic Plan (FERC 2006).
- **FERC Strategic Plan Fiscal Year 2022–2026** defines FERC’s mission, long-term goals, objectives to achieve those goals, strategies planned to address specific national problems, needs, challenges, and opportunities related to its mission (FERC 2022).
- **Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 192.** Puget Sound Energy (PSE) is subject to full compliance with the applicable provisions of Title 49, CFR Part 192, which address federal safety standards related to the transportation of natural gas.
- **Clean Water Act (CWA)** is a federal law governing water pollution. The CWA is administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in coordination with state governments and establishes the structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States and regulating quality standards for surface waters (EPA 2023a).
- **CWA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Program.** Washington currently issues and enforces NPDES permits related to industrial, construction, and municipal stormwater general permits. The NPDES Permit allows municipalities to discharge stormwater runoff from municipal drainage systems into the state’s waterbodies. Permits are based on state surface water quality standards, which can be more stringent than federal water quality standards (Ecology 2024b).
- **The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA),** administered by EPA, regulates household industrial and manufacturing solid and hazardous waste. RCRA’s goals are to protect people from the hazards of waste disposal; conserve energy and natural resources by recycling and recovery; reduce or eliminate waste; and clean up waste that has been spilled, leaked, or improperly disposed (EPA 2023b).

STATE REGULATIONS

- **Chapter 51-54A Washington Administrative Code (WAC)** governs fire prevention in Washington.
- **WAC 296-307-09512** is related to the provision of potable water resources.
- **Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) Strategic Business Plan 2021–2023** presents goals that support its mission to protect Washington residents by ensuring investor-owned utility and transportation services are safe, available, reliable, and fairly priced (WUTC 2021).
- **WUTC Pipeline Safety Program** provides standards for natural gas pipeline operations and inspects natural gas pipelines operating in Washington in accordance with federal standards. WUTC is the primary agency responsible for the regulatory oversight of natural gas pipelines in Washington (WUTC 2024b).
- **Washington Department of Commerce 2023 Biennial Energy Report** updates the 2021 State Energy Strategy, which was developed and published by the State Energy Office at the Washington Department of Commerce. Designed to provide a roadmap for meeting the state’s need for affordable and reliable energy supplies and its greenhouse gas emissions limits, the strategy outlines the path to a clean, inclusive energy economy by 2050 (Commerce 2023).
- **Washington Municipal Water Law** administered by the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) and the Washington Department of Health relates to municipalities’ water rights, how much water they have, and where they can use it; ensuring safe and reliable drinking water; and regulation of the planning and engineering component of water systems (Ecology 2024a).
- **2019 Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington.** The Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington (Stormwater Manual) provides guidance on the measures necessary to control the quantity and quality of stormwater. Local municipalities use the Stormwater Manual to set stormwater requirements for new development and redevelopment projects. The Stormwater Manual is mostly used for NPDES stormwater permits and compliance (Ecology 2019).
- **Ecology’s Solid Waste Management Program** implements laws addressing plastics, recycling, and litter. Four new laws were added to the solid waste program in 2021, addressing single-use plastic items, the solar panel takeback program, and reimbursing local governments for litter clean-up on highway ramps (Ecology 2024c).
- **Chapter 36.58 RCW Solid Waste Disposal** sets regulations at the state level for solid waste. Regulations address topics such as acquisition of waste or recycling sites, waste/recyclables

handling, fees, disposal, facilities, contracts, disposal districts, and collection/transportation of waste and recyclable material.

REGIONAL REGULATIONS

- **Snohomish Regional Fire and Rescue (SRFR) 2021–2026 Strategic Plan** establishes SRFR values, background, and objectives (SRFR 2021a).
- **SRFR 2021 Standards of Coverage Report** is updated annually to reflect current performance against benchmark statement and baseline performance and policy recommendations to address gaps in performance or desired outcomes (SRFR 2021b).
- **Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC) 2021 Northwest Power Plan’s** strategy contains elements including (1) energy efficiency, (2) demand response, (3) renewable resources, (4) existing resources, and (5) regional collaboration for Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington (NPCC 2021).
- **PSE 2023 Gas Utility Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)** uses supply and demand forecasts to plan for future resource needs (PSE 2023a).

LOCAL REGULATIONS

- **City of Monroe Capital Facilities Plan** plans for future capital facility needs based on population and employment projections, needed facility improvements, and budgets (MPWD 2023).
- **Title 9 Monroe Municipal Code (MMC)** addresses Offenses against Peace, Morals and Safety.
- **Chapter 13.04 MMC** sets forth regulations for water, including rates, supply, connections, meters, etc.
- **The City of Monroe Utility Systems Plan** for sanitary sewer, water and stormwater utilities was developed to support the City of Monroe 2015 Comprehensive Plan and is mandated by Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 36.70A.130 (5a). This Plan consists of utility system plans for the City-provided and City-owned utilities and addresses sources of supply, storage facilities, pump stations, transmission mains, and the distribution system (OMD 2015).

6.1.3 Capital Facilities

POTABLE WATER

The City of Monroe Public Works Operations & Maintenance Division (OMD) owns and operates the Monroe Water System, which serves the City of Monroe and unincorporated areas west, north, and east of the City. The City’s OMD is composed of approximately 29 full-



time equivalents (FTEs) that include a combined crew for water, sewer, and stormwater maintenance (OMD 2015).

The City of Monroe Public Works Director coordinates system analysis and design work and develops policies and goals for the water system. According to the 2015 Monroe Utility Systems Plan (OMD 2015), the Monroe Water System served 6,697 connections in 2013, including 6,216 residential connections and 481 non-residential connections (18,513 residents and approximately 2,000 people working at non-residential locations like employees, students in daycares, etc.). The City estimates that the water system served 8,000 temporary and transient users. In 2013, average water demand was determined to be 163 gallons per day (gpd) per detached housing unit connection (50 gpd per person) and 125 gpd per attached housing unit connection (49 per employee, excluding the Monroe Correctional Complex) (OMD 2015).

The OMD has completed major capital improvements to respond to growth in Monroe since the mid-1990s. These improvements include the Ingraham Hill Reservoir, Department of Corrections (DOC) reservoir, Tester Road Booster Pump Station, North Hill Reservoir and Booster Pump Station, Wagner Road Transmission Main Replacement Phase I, and Reservoir #5 Trombley Hill Reservoir and Booster Station. The water distribution system has also been expanded in the west area of the City and along Chain Lake Road (OMD 2015).

In 2013 and 2014, Monroe acquired the Sky Meadow Water Association, which includes four reservoirs, two pump stations, and the Sky Meadow distribution system piping, hydrants, valves, and pressure reducing valve stations. With this acquisition, the OMD's water service area increased approximately 80 percent. While the City installs transmission facilities and storage reservoirs, developers generally install distribution mains (OMD 2015).

The City of Monroe's water service area has been consistent since the Sky Meadow Water Association acquisition in 2013 and 2014. Since the 2015 Water System Plan and EIS, OMD has constructed an additional tank at the DOC reservoir campus, the 199th Avenue pressure reducing valve (PRV), the 204th Avenue PRV, and pipe replacements across the system.

The City of Monroe provides potable water to about 615,000 people or approximately 75 percent of the business and households in Snohomish County (MPWD 2022). Customers can also fill containers with potable drinking water from the 24-hour bulk water filling station at 843 Village Way (OMD 2024a).



The OMD purchases its water wholesale from the City of Everett. The water is supplied through three connections to the Everett Transmission Main #5, located approximately 3 miles north of Monroe. Transmission Main #5 has a capacity of 50 million gallons per day (mgd). Everett's water supply is Spada Reservoir in the Sultan River Basin. Transmission pipelines extend westward from the reservoir. The distribution system includes 4- and 10-inch pipes and mains (OMD 2015). While the City of Everett operates the water treatment plant, the City of Monroe monitors water supply, system pressures, and water quality as it enters the Monroe Water System (OMD 2024b).

The City of Everett expects being able to supply Monroe's municipal water needs until at least 2050, and its Comprehensive Water Plan, included as part of the Utility System Plan, indicates that the City of Everett plans on meeting Monroe's future water demands (OMD 2015). The City of Monroe considered both the City of Monroe and the Snohomish County comprehensive plans when preparing the 2015 Utility Systems Plan (OMD 2015) and will do the same with the 2024 Water System Plan Update, which will be prepared concurrent with the 2024 update to the City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan. The Monroe Water System Plan is also developed and updated to be consistent with the North Snohomish County Coordinated Water System Plan and the Washington DOC Statewide Water System Plan (DOC 2014, OMD 2015).

Projections of residential and employment population were developed for the City's Retail Water Service Area for the first 10 years following the 2015 Utility Systems Plan (2015 through 2024, and 2035). Monroe plans to implement water use efficiency methods such as water pricing, education, indoor and outdoor water use efficiency kits, and toilet and washer rebates, and therefore assumes that demand for potable water will decline in the future (per unit) (OMD 2015).

The 2015 Utility Systems Plan projects 2035 average daily demand for Monroe at 2.56 mgd and maximum daily demand of 5.12 mgd. No source improvements were determined to be necessary in 2015. Similarly, a storage analysis in the 2015 Utility Systems Plan found that storage facilities were sufficient, except for the DOC reservoir. Pump station capacity was found to be sufficient through 2035. The 2015 Utility Systems Plan predicted that mechanical and electrical upgrades would be needed at water pump stations before 2035 and established an 8-year capital improvement program to address system upgrades expected in the future (OMD 2015).

The City of Monroe co-adopted a regional goal as part of the group of Everett Water wholesale customers. The regional conservation goal is to reduce the regional demand for water by 1.4 mgd by 2029 (OMD 2024c).

STORMWATER

The City of Monroe manages stormwater runoff in the 5.8-square-mile service area including the City of Monroe incorporated area. The City's Public Works and Utilities Department is composed of approximately 29 FTEs that includes a combined crew for water, sewer, and stormwater maintenance. Of those 29 FTEs, approximately six FTEs are assigned to stormwater system operations and maintenance (OMD 2015).

The stormwater system includes constructed facilities and natural channels that convey and treat stormwater runoff prior to discharge into receiving waters. The system includes catch basins, pipes, culverts, ditches, swales, ponds, vaults, and infiltration facilities. In certain areas, permeable soils infiltrate stormwater runoff. The stormwater system is owned and maintained by the City; however, privately owned and maintained systems also exist within City limits (OMD 2024d).

The City owns approximately 50 miles of stormwater pipe that discharge stormwater to three watersheds: French Creek, Skykomish River, and Woods Creek. The Skykomish River watershed drains the southern and eastern portions of Monroe. The Woods Creek watershed drains the eastern portion of Monroe, and the French Creek watershed drains the central and western portions of Monroe. Monroe currently has Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements (the maximum amount of a pollutant that a body of water can receive while still meeting water quality standards) and therefore water quality sampling programs for Cripple Creek, French Creek, Lake Tye, Lords Lake, and Woods Creek (City of Monroe 2023a; OMD 2015).

EPA, Ecology, and the following chapters of City code and state code govern or affect how stormwater is managed: Chapter 13.32 MMC (Stormwater Management Utility), Chapter 13.34 MMC (Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination), Chapter 14.01 MMC (Flood Hazard Area Regulations), Chapter 15.02 MMC (Storm Water Maintenance), Chapter 15.04 MMC (Building Code), Chapter 173-200 WAC (water quality standards for groundwater), Chapter 173-201A WAC (water quality standards for surface water), Chapter 173-204 WAC (sediment management standards), and Chapter 173-220 WAC (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

permit program). Ecology and EPA set policies for how to manage a stormwater system. The City of Monroe is required to maintain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit, which requires managing stormwater to avoid downstream pollution in accordance with the Clean Water Act. With fewer than 100,000 residents, the City of Monroe is considered a Phase II community. As a Phase II community, Monroe operates in compliance with Ecology's Phase II NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit as a small/medium municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4 permit) (City of Monroe 2023a). The MS4 permit authorizes the discharge of stormwater runoff to surface waters of the state and groundwater as long as the City meets water quality standards and/or implements BMP. Preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Management Program is required as part of MS4 permit conditions. The City's current permit expires at the end of 2024 and will be renewed for 2025 (OMD 2024d).

One of the City's performance measures is to coordinate with long-range plan updates, including the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, related to stormwater management needs and receiving water health (City of Monroe 2023a). New development is required to provide stormwater control in accordance with Ecology's Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington (Ecology 2019).

In 2015, the City encompassed approximately 6 square miles. The incorporated area and the UGA total almost 8 square miles, which would represent a 25 percent increase if UGA areas are annexed (OMD 2015). The City is considering continued use of pervious pavement, the possibility of using utility funds on private property to maintain drainage infrastructure, and the continued use of low-impact development (LID) alternatives in future planning. In recent years, the City has implemented LID measures, such as pervious pavement in the Downtown area and regional infiltration systems along Blueberry Lane. Also in 2015, the City predicted the need to add 1 or 2 more employees for design, construction, operations, and maintenance (OMD 2015).

City stormwater managers identified four Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects in 2015 to resolve localized drainage problems. These projects were planned to occur in the northwest part of the City (Lake Tye A, B, and C subbasins), the western part of the City (Lords Lake subbasin), and the central area of the City (Intersection and Blueberry subbasins) (OMD 2015).

SANITARY SEWER

The City of Monroe provides wastewater collection and conveyance services to certain areas of the City and one area outside the City and UGA. The City Public Works Operations and Maintenance Department employs 12 FTEs for the sewer utility, seven of which are assigned to the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) Division of Public Works (OMD 2015). Approximately 1.7 mgd of wastewater are screened, treated, and discharged into the lower Skykomish River. The existing wastewater system includes 56 miles of gravity lines, 6.5 miles of force mains, 10 operating lift stations, the WWTP, and the Skykomish River outfall. The collection system includes pipes, pumps, manholes, and clean-outs. The WWTP has been maintained and improved since its 1950s-era construction to comply with water quality regulations, add capacity, and improve energy efficiency (OMD 2015, 2024e).

The NPDES permit provides the regulatory framework that drives the wastewater treatment processes. Compliance with the permit ensures that the quality of the water discharged from the plant is consistent with standards. The WWTP operates under the terms of NPDES Permit No. WA-002048-6, last re-issued on December 1, 2018. The permit expired on November 30, 2023, and will remain active until a new permit is issued by Ecology (OMD 2015, BHC 2024).

The 5,227-acre wastewater service area is comprised of an estimated 23,410 people, including 12,109 residents, 7,561 non-residential users, and 3,740 DOC inmates and employees. The 2015 City of Monroe Utility Systems Plan reports that the 2013 average of daily wastewater flow was 67.4 gallons per capita (gpc) for residential uses, 48.6 gpc for non-residential uses, and 159.4 gpc for DOC. Service area population projections for 2035 are 19,865 residents, 10,345 non-residential users, and 4,186 DOC inmates and employees. For build-out of the existing wastewater system, service area population projections are 26,925 residents, 12,140 non-residential users, and 4,560 DOC inmates and employees. The City has assumed that current per capita flows will remain unchanged in the future (OMD 2015).

The capacity analysis completed in 2015 as part of the City of Monroe Utility Systems Plan estimated that the WWTP capacity will reach 85 percent of the permitted capacity in 2023 and surpass the permitted capacity in 2032. Another WWTP capacity study will be completed prior to the next NPDES permit renewal. These studies are used to plan for the future and re-rate the WWTP NPDES permitted loads. The WWTP has sufficient capacity to treat the

projected loads throughout the planning period (of 2035). WWTP improvements are likely necessary in the next 10 years due to structure and equipment age or conditions and the need for improvements to process performance and efficiency (OMD 2015).

The 2015 City of Monroe Utility Systems Plan recommended improvements totaling more than \$5 million for inclusion in the 6-year WWTP capital improvement plan, including collection and conveyance projects. Several collection, conveyance, and WWTP projects were listed in the 2015–2021 CIP and the 2022–2035 CIP (OMD 2015). Projects completed in the last decade include combined sewer separation projects (at Lewis Street, W Main, and Madison), Powell Street Sewer project, WWTP Effluent Outfall Repair, utility replacement projects (Smith Street & Park Street, S Taft, Adams Lane, and 177th Avenue), and a WWTP pH control project.

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

The City of Monroe operates the Municipal Campus, including City Hall and the Municipal Court, Police Station, and Public Works/Parks Operations Building. The City developed long-range plans in 2008 for the Municipal Campus to continue to serve the growing population and employment base in Monroe. Construction of the Monroe emergency operations center and Public Works shop facility was completed in 2018. In 2023, Monroe City Council authorized a remodel of City Hall and Municipal Court (collectively known as the Administrative Wing) and its funding. Construction began in January 2024. Funding sources have included general obligation bonds, utility bonds, adopted budgets and Capital Facilities Plans (CFPs), and a state grant for court facilities (City of Monroe 2024a).

POLICE

The City of Monroe Police Department (Monroe PD) provides law enforcement to the City of Monroe. Monroe PD serves approximately 19,699 people living in incorporated City of Monroe (U.S. Census Bureau 2020).

The 2022 Monroe Police Department Year-End Report states its mission statement as “(t)he Monroe Police Department is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in providing professional law enforcement services” and its goals are to (Monroe PD 2023):

- Invest in our people and organization, providing staff the support and resources they need to be resilient, knowledgeable, and skillful.



- Ensure Monroe remains a place of beauty and goodwill, so that everyone who visits and resides here finds our community healthy and accessible.
- Strengthen our community connections, with friendly and responsive service, by creating a safe and enjoyable place for all.
- Enhance internal collaboration, so that the organization can efficiently meet the needs of our external and internal customers.

Monroe PD's 44 FTE employees include one chief, one deputy chief, one administrative commander, six sergeants, 26 police officers, one administrative supervisor, and eight administrative support (City of Monroe 2023b). Thirty-four staff of the total 44 staff are certificated. Of the five Monroe PD divisions (Administrative Services, Command Staff, Community Service, Investigations, and Patrol), the Patrol Division has the most employees: five sergeants, 21 officers, and two K-9s (Monroe PD 2024a).

In addition to law enforcement, services to the community include car seat safety checks, community academy, claiming found property, concealed pistol license, crime prevention tips, fingerprinting services and U-Visa certification. U-Visa is a temporary visa program administered by the Department of Homeland Security that allows immigration protections for victims of qualifying crimes and their qualifying household members, who are helpful to law enforcement in the detention, investigation, or prosecution of criminal activity (Monroe PD 2024b).

The Monroe PD Citizens Online Police Reporting System provided by MyCrimeReport.us (Monroe PD 2024c) allows for non-emergency reports to be submitted online. Typical incidents reported through this system include abandoned vehicles, lost property, vandalism, crime or drug tips, hit and run, theft from vehicle, graffiti, theft, and vehicle prowling. In 2022, 1,256 incidents were reported in the City based on the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS), most of which were for larceny, vandalism of property, and simple assault (Monroe PD 2023).

Based on a service area population of 19,699, and 34 certificated officers in 2023, the Monroe PD provides on average 1.8 FTE officers per 1,000 people. Using the estimate from NIBRS of 1,256 incidents, the Monroe PD has approximately 27 officers per 1,000 incidents. The 2023–2024 biennial budget allowed for \$280,346 for police vehicles and equipment, which represented less than 1 percent of the City of Monroe 2023–2024 Biennial Budget (City of Monroe 2023b).

The police station is located on the Municipal Campus at 818 W Main Street. The 2019 Municipal Campus evaluation found the existing police building in need of substantial upgrades to improve the function and meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards (Driftmier Architects 2019). A more recent 2024 assessment identified needs related to vehicle space, secure storage and spaces, temperature-controlled evidence storage, visual and audio privacy, armory spaces, general security, and seismic and fire requirements. The City expects future growth at the police station to be 14 staff members, for a total of 60 staff members by 2044, and approximately 26,500 square feet of building space for a total of approximately 27,800 square feet of building space in 2044 (MacKenzie 2024).

The 2023–2024 City of Monroe Biennial budget allocates \$700,000 for Phase III of the Municipal Campus project, which includes updates to the police station. Phase III design is expected to begin in 2025. Improvements listed in the 2023–2024 City of Monroe Biennial budget includes police station renovations design (planned for 2024) and police station renovation construction (planned for 2025 and 2026) (City of Monroe 2023b). The Monroe PD plans for the future by participating in the City of Monroe Biennial Budget process, planning future facilities, and accounting for population growth and staffing needs.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The City of Monroe Fire Marshal and Snohomish Regional Fire and Rescue (SRFR) provide fire protection and suppression and emergency services to the study area (the City of Monroe). In 2020, the Lake Stevens Fire Department and Snohomish County Fire District No. 7, of which the City of Monroe was a part, merged to form SRFR, which serves the cities of Lake Stevens, Monroe, and Mill Creek; the communities of Maltby and Clearview; and the unincorporated areas surrounding these cities and communities (SRFR 2021a). SRFR is an all-hazards fire and emergency service district.

In 2022, SRFR provided fire protection service to an estimated 176,367 residents and responded to 18,770 calls for services including fire, EMS, rescue, and hazardous materials calls. Eighty-one percent of calls for service or 15,288 dispatches originated from within SRFR boundaries (SRFR 2023). Based on these statistics, SRFR responds to approximately 0.09 calls for service per resident.

Within the Special Operations Division of SRFR, the Snohomish County Technical Rescue Response Team responds to trench, rope,



urban search & rescue, water/ice, and confined space rescue. The Technical Rescue Response Team cooperates in coordination with all other fire protection entities in Snohomish County. Other divisions of SRFR include fire suppression, EMS, training, and planning (SRFR 2023, 2024).

In December 2022, SRFR employed 252 personnel, including 197 career firefighters, eight prevention staff, four logistics staff, 11 executive staff, 12 administrative staff, seven mechanics, seven commissioners, and six chaplains. All operations personnel are cross-trained, which means they are trained for medical emergencies, wildland fires, and structure fires. Of the 11 SRFR fire stations, the three stations closest to the study area are (1) Fire Station 31–Monroe, within the City at 163 Village Court, Monroe; (2) Fire Station 32–Chain Lake Road at 2122 132nd Street, Monroe; and (3) Fire Station 33–Fales Road located at 19424 Fales Road, Snohomish. Fire Station 31–Monroe is staffed by one Battalion Chief, one Lieutenant, five Firefighters/Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), and three Firefighters/Paramedics (SRFR 2024).

The SRFR reviews and issues permits for fire protection systems and other construction-related activities, including commercial kitchen fire suppression, fire alarms, fire sprinklers, high piled combustible storage, solar photovoltaic power systems, temporary membrane structures or tents, standpipe systems, liquified petroleum gas, fire pumps, compressed gases, emergency responder radio coverage, cryogenic fluids, battery systems, and retail fireworks stands (City of Monroe 2024b).

All new development is required to meet development regulations and the International Building Code (IBC) and International Fire Code (IFC). SRFR’s goal is to inspect all businesses for fire safety at least annually to maintain and improve the level of safety for community members and emergency responders.

SRFR response times in 2022 were approximately 9 minutes (urban area) and 13 minutes (rural area) for fire calls, 8 minutes (urban area) and 11 minutes (rural area) for emergency medical service calls, and 10 minutes (urban area) and 11 minutes (rural area) for hazardous materials calls (SRFR 2023).

In 2022, SRFR responded to 11,120 EMS calls within the SRFR jurisdiction and transported 7,030 patients to area hospitals. Also in 2022, SRFR issued 342 burn permits, conducted 649 annual fire safety inspections, conducted 504 construction permit inspections, and finished 818 plan reviews (SRFR 2023).

SRFR owns 10 fire engine companies, two ladder companies (based at Station 33 and Station 72), six medic units (advanced life support ambulances), seven aid units (basic life support ambulances), and three battalion chiefs command units (SRFR 2021b).

SRFR plans for the future by becoming an accredited agency through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International and using the 2021 Levy Lid Lift to hire additional personnel and make station renovations. Planning documents include the 2021–2026 Strategic Plan (SRFR 2021a) and 2021 Standards of Coverage report (SRFR 2021b), which is updated annually.

SCHOOLS

The Monroe School District (MSD) and the Snohomish School District (SSD) provide public education to students within the Monroe UGA. MSD operates five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school within its 82-square-mile service area, which includes the Monroe incorporated area. SSD serves areas northwest and west of incorporated Monroe, including the areas of unincorporated Snohomish County within the Monroe UGA. In its 128-square-mile service area, SSD operates eight elementary schools, two middle schools, and two high schools (see **Table 6-1**). The two SSD elementary schools closest to the study area are Dutch Hill and Cathcart elementary schools. In addition to the schools listed in **Table 6-1**, MSD and SSD provide their students with alternative education programs (OSPI 2024a).

MSD enrollment of 5,711 students during the 2023–2024 school year has declined since the 2016–2017 school year, when enrollment was 7,109 students. During the 2022–2023 school year, MSD employed 337 classroom teachers. SSD’s 2023–2024 school year enrollment of 9,681 students reflects a steady 3-year increase after an enrollment drop between school years 2019–2020 and 2020–2021. During the 2022–2023 school year, SSD employed 548 classroom teachers (OSPI 2024a).

MSD’s goals focus on attendance, state test scores, i-Ready, and a sense of belonging (MSD 2024a). I-Ready is an adaptive assessment that adjusts its questions to determine student reading and math skill level (MSD 2024b). SSD’s mission is “[t]o create an educational community that ignites a passion for learning where every student is known and empowered.” Its stated values are a student-focused district, a culture of belonging, equity, and accountability (SSD 2023).



TABLE 6-1 Monroe and Snohomish Public Schools

School Name	Address
ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOLS IN MONROE SCHOOL DISTRICT	
Chain Lake Elementary	12125 Chain Lake Rd, Snohomish, WA 98290
Frank Wagner Elementary	115 Dickinson Road, Monroe, WA 98272
Fryelands Elementary	15286 Fryelands Boulevard, Monroe, WA 98272
Salem Woods Elementary	12802 Wagner Road, Monroe, WA 98272
Maltby Elementary	9700 212th Street SE, Snohomish, WA 98296
Park Place Middle School	1408 West Main Street, Monroe, WA 98272
Hidden River Middle School	9224 Paradise Lake Road, Snohomish, WA 98296
Monroe High School	17001 Tester Road, Monroe, WA 98272
ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOLS IN SNOHOMISH SCHOOL DISTRICT	
Cascade View Elementary	2401 Park Avenue, Snohomish, WA 98290
Cathcart Elementary	8201 188th Street SE, Snohomish, WA 98296
Central Emerson Elementary	1103 Pine Avenue and 221 Union Avenue, Snohomish, WA 98290
Dutch Hill Elementary	8231 131st Avenue SE, Snohomish, WA 98290
Little Cedars Elementary	7408 144th Place SE, Snohomish, WA 98290
Machias Elementary	231 147th Avenue SE, Snohomish, WA 98290
Riverview Elementary	7322 64th Street SE, Snohomish, WA 98290
Seattle Hill Elementary	12711 51st Avenue SE, Everett, WA 98208
Centennial Middle School	3000 S Machias Road, Snohomish 98290
Valley View Middle School	14308 Broadway Avenue SE, Snohomish, WA 98296
Glacier Peak High School	7401 144th Place SE, Snohomish, WA 98296
Snohomish High School	1316 5th Street, Snohomish, WA 98290

SOURCE: Prepared by Environmental Science Associates based on information from MSD 2024c, OSPI 2024a.

Both Monroe and Snohomish school districts have set both desired, acceptable educational standards and minimum standards for students per classroom, as shown in **Table 6-2**. Based on information reports in MSD and SSD CFPs, both districts are meeting minimum standards. Acceptable educational standards are being met in all grades levels except grades K–3 in SSD.



**TABLE 6-2 Monroe and Snohomish School Districts
Students per Classroom**

District/ Category	Accepted Standard	Minimum Standard	Actual ^a
MONROE SCHOOL DISTRICT			
Grades K-3	20	24	—
Grades 4-5	26	26	—
Elementary	—	—	17.72
Middle	28	30	19.05
High	28	30	20.45
SNOHOMISH SCHOOL DISTRICT			
Grades K-3	18	35	—
Grades 4-6	27	35	—
Elementary	—	—	20.63 (2020-2021)
Grade 9-12	30	40	22.46 (2020-2021)

NOTES:

a. 2020-2021 school year

SOURCE: MSD 2022, SSD 2022

MSD expects enrollment to increase between 5 percent and 9 percent between 2021 and 2027, for total enrollment ranging from 5,746 to 6,006 students. MSD projects enrollment in 2044 to be 6,443 students. SSD projects enrollment to increase by 2027 to between 9,638 (4.1 percent increase) and 10,071 students (8.8 percent increase). Projected 2044 enrollment is 11,374 students, assuming the student-to-population ratio remains similar to existing conditions.

MSD and SSD plan for future facilities in accordance with GMA, Snohomish County Policy ED-11 to "ensure the availability of sufficient land and services for future K-20 school needs," and local ordinances governing school impacts. In 2015, Monroe voters approved a \$111 million MSD Capital Projects Bond. MSD also received \$20.5 million in State School Construction Assistance funds and \$0.6 million in developer impact fees, to fund a total of roughly \$132 million in capital construction and improvements. The MSD 2022-2027 CFP lists the following projects that would be completed as long as the community approves future school bonds (MSD 2022):

- Salem Woods Elementary Phase II Expansion and Modernization.

- Frank Wagner Elementary Expansion and Modernization.
- Chain Lake Elementary Expansion and Modernization.
- Construction of New Elementary No. 6.
- Conversion of Wagner Center Early Learning Center to add early learning programs.

Since SSD’s \$470 million bond failed to pass in 2020, the District’s Board of Directors is considering options for a future bond proposal due to remaining capacity needs related to enrollment projections, reliance on portable buildings, safety and security, and maintenance. The 2022 SSD CFP includes plans and funding for permanent building expansion and classroom additions at Dutch Hill and Cathcart elementary schools in 2025 and 2026. Similar to MSD, SSD finances improvements through bond proposals, developer impact fees, and State School Construction Assistance funds (SSD 2022).

6.1.4 Utilities

ELECTRICITY

Snohomish County Public Utility District (SCPUD) provides electricity to the City of Monroe. The SCPUD provides electricity to 373,127 homes and businesses in incorporated and unincorporated areas of Snohomish County and Camano Island, including the study area. Homes represent 91 percent of customers, and commercial uses represent most of the remaining 9 percent. SCPUD headquarters are in the City of Everett, and its service area covers 2,200 square miles (SCPUD 2024a). The City of Monroe’s approximately 6,038 housing units represent less than 2 percent of the SCPUD customer base (U.S. Census Bureau 2022).

The SCPUD employs approximately 1,000 people and operates equipment and facilities including 6,652 miles of electrical lines, more than 100 substations and switching stations, and five hydroelectric projects: Jackson, Woods Creek, Youngs Creek, Calligan, and Hancock. These hydroelectric projects provide 132 megawatts (MW) of power generating capacity (7 percent of what the SCPUD provides to its service area). In 2022, the SCPUD set up 5,051 new service connections and sold 8.6 billion megawatt-hours (MWh) of electricity, 45 percent to residential customers, 27 percent to commercial customers, 5 percent to industrial customers, and the remainder sold through the wholesale power market. Power purchased from Bonneville Power Administration makes up 77 percent of SCPUD’s services. Wind, other renewables, and other market purchases make up the

remaining service (SCPUD 2024a, 2024b). SCPUD provides electricity at an average rate of 23,050 kilowatt-hours per home or business, per year.

In 2022, the SCPUD invested approximately \$15 million in direct funding of conservation programs, \$33 million in non-hydro renewable purchases, and \$20 million in needs-based assistance (SCPUD 2024b).

The SCPUD prepares an annual reliability report and has prepared a 2023–2027 Strategic Plan to plan for the future (SCPUD 2023). The 2023–2027 Strategic Plan is informed by comprehensive scenario planning workshops that imagine how the region might change in the next 20 years. The SCPUD’s strategic priorities are to bolster operational reliability and resiliency, enhance customer experiences, actively help SCPUD communities thrive, build a sustainable future with SCPUD communities, and create the culture and capabilities needed for the future (SCPUD 2023). The SCPUD plans to complete electrical system improvements and preventive maintenance projects to ensure reliability for the growing customer base.

Electric meter installation in Monroe is expected to begin in 2024 (SCPUD 2024b, 2024c). To better serve the eastern portion of its service area (including Monroe), SCPUD built the new Sky Valley Substation located in Monroe (finished in October 2023) and will upgrade its Clearview Substation (completion planned for 2024) (SCPUD 2024d; American Public Power Association 2023).

NATURAL GAS

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) provides natural gas to the City, which is part of its 900,000-customer, 6,000-square-mile service area covering 10 counties and approximately 4 million residents (PSE 2023a). PSE acquires natural gas through contracts with various producers and suppliers in the western U.S. and Canada. The gas PSE acquires is transported into the PSE service area through large interstate pipelines owned and operated by another company. When PSE takes possession of the gas, it is distributed to customers through more than 26,000 miles of PSE-owned underground gas mains and service lines in streets, public properties, and private properties (PSE 2023b). After wellhead pumps bring natural gas to the earth’s surface, the gas is processed and purified, and then travels along interstate pipelines to compressor stations. Compressor stations maintain gas pressure and are located every 50 to 60 miles along the interstate pipelines. Natural gas is often stored in large underground reservoirs to meet spikes in demand.

When natural gas reaches a City gate station, it is metered and delivered to customers through the local gas mains, small-diameter service lines, and customer meters (PSE 2023b).

The natural gas infrastructure closest to Monroe is an west–east-running gas transmission line that approximately borders the north edge of the City (NPMS 2024).

PSE’s 2023 Gas Utility Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) near-term goals include expanding natural gas capacity rights, continuing engagement and development of equity considerations, acquiring cost-effective conservation, participating in green hydrogen development, and reducing its emissions profile by exploring renewable natural gas. Medium-term priorities (2030 to 2050) include exploring clean technology and fuel and reducing transport pipeline capacity contracts when decreasing loads allow. PSE chose a preferred zero-growth portfolio for the 2023 IRP, which will result in a slight decrease in forecasted greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increased pipeline contracts that PSE do not need to renew. The IRP reported that between 2023 and 2050, forecasting models expect demand for natural gas to decline after the impact of cost-effective conservation. In 2023, PSE sold 92,000 thousand dekatherms (MDth), net of demand-side resources and alternate fuels, suggesting a rate of 102,222 British thermal units (Btu) per hour per customer or 0.1 MDth per customer (homes or business). PSE expects sales to decline to 64,000 MDth by 2050 (PSE 2023a). One MDth is equivalent to 1 million Btu per hour. PSE prepared a work plan for its 2025 IRP in fall 2023. The purpose of the IRP is to ensure that PSE’s natural gas supply and infrastructure are adequate to deliver clean, safe, and reliable energy to its customers; the IRP looks ahead 20 years at energy resource needs through a planning process that evaluates a range of potential future outcomes. PSE expects to file the final 2025 Gas IRP with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission in March 2025 (PSE 2023c).

SOLID WASTE

The City of Monroe has a contract with Republic Services, Inc. to provide garbage, recycling, and yard waste collection services to homes and businesses in the City (City of Monroe 2024c).

Republic Services, Inc. utilizes three transfer and recycling facilities (in Everett, Arlington, and Mountlake Terrace) and the Snohomish County Household Hazardous Waste Facility in Everett (City of Monroe 2024c). The Everett facilities are the closest solid waste facilities to the study area, located approximately 4 miles northwest of Monroe. The Snohomish County Department of Public Works Solid

Waste Division manages these facilities and coordinates collection and disposal operations with cities and towns in Snohomish County (including Monroe) and private commercial waste haulers. Waste is collected from the transfer stations, taken to the county facility at the Riverside Business Park in Everett, and then shipped by rail to the Roosevelt Regional Landfill in Klickitat County (Snohomish County 2023).

In 2021, 8,695 tons of recyclables and 560,465 tons of waste were processed in Snohomish County. The waste disposal rate that year was 0.67 tons per person. The county has estimated an average waste generation rate of 2.24 tons per year per person, considering waste, recycling, and recovery. Recovery includes non-municipal solid waste and materials burned for energy (Snohomish County 2023).

Using a 2017 municipal solid waste and recycling rate of 1.86 tons per person per year and a projected population of 1,058,113, the county estimates that 1.968 million tons of solid waste and recycling will be processed in 2040. After recycling, the amount requiring disposal would be 708,512 tons (Snohomish County 2023). The City and the Monroe UGA populations represent less than 5 percent of the overall service area population.

Klickitat County's 2022 SEPA Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed elevation increase at the Roosevelt Landfill states that the existing landfill is permitted for 5 million tons of waste per year through 2041. Klickitat County's proposal would increase the disposal capacity to extend the operational life of the landfill from 2041 to approximately 2130 (Klickitat County 2022).

COMMUNICATIONS AND DATA

Telecommunications services in the City are provided by private providers. Xfinity/Comcast, AT&T, Astound Broadband, Zply Fiber, Hughesnet, Viasat, T-Mobile, and Startouch offer internet services. Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, and others provide wireless phone services. Xfinity, Dish TV, and DirectTV provide cable television services. These companies provide service to individual properties on a property-by-property basis. Private companies respond to market-driven demand by constructing and improving infrastructure to continue their business of providing data and communications services to area residents and businesses.

Within the City, communications and data infrastructure includes network distribution lines. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC)-registered cell phone tower closest to the study area is at 27408 Owens Road, approximately 4 miles east of the eastern City boundary (City-Data 2024).

6.2 Potential Impacts

This section describes the potential impacts of the City’s future growth and development on capital facilities and utilities.

6.2.1 Impact Assessment Methodology and Thresholds of Significance

This section evaluates impacts based on the thresholds of significance and on the Affected Environment. System plan updates for potable water, stormwater, and wastewater are in process and will be adopted by December 31, 2024. Updated standards and information in those system plans will be incorporated into this impact analysis section in the Final SEIS.

Thresholds of significance include:

- **Consistency with Planned Growth and Capital Plans.** The alternative would result in inconsistencies with planned growth and plans for capital facilities or the utility system.
- **Need for New Projects or Upgrades.** The alternative would require new, major projects not likely to be planned for through regular future planning processes, forecasts, and future projections developed by the capital facilities or utilities.
- **Level of Service.** The alternative would negatively affect the ability of capital facilities or utility providers to maintain reliable service to customers.

6.2.2 Impacts Common to Both Alternatives

This section identifies the impacts from the alternatives that would occur under both the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action.

POTABLE WATER

New residential and commercial development associated with the alternatives would increase potable water demand, although the increased use of higher efficiency and low-flow fixtures in the future could reduce per capita demand. The City of Monroe Utility Systems Plan indicates that the City of Everett, from which Monroe purchases potable water, plans on meeting Monroe’s future water demands (OMD 2015).

The alternatives would be consistent with planned growth and capital plans and would not require projects outside of the planning process. The City of Monroe Public Works Operations and Maintenance Division expects to be able to provide potable water

services to the additional residents and employees associated with the alternatives. Regular planning, such as utility system updates (OMD 2015), and compliance with municipal codes and regulations will continue.

STORMWATER

The alternatives would increase demand on the stormwater management system to the extent more impervious surface is added to the system or the amount of water flowing through the system increases. The City considers and will continue to consider stormwater management measures that could reduce future demand on the stormwater system. Future increases in demand could require additional infrastructure or staffing.

The alternatives would be consistent with planned growth and planning documents and would not require upgrades outside of the planning process. Regular planning, such as the CIP process, compliance with and preparing updates to City municipal codes, and compliance with regulations such as the MS4 permit and TMDL requirements would continue.

SANITARY SEWER

WWTP capacity studies have indicated that WWTP improvements will be necessary in the next 10 years. Seven collection and conveyance projects and seven WWTP projects were included in the CIP to occur between 2024 and 2044 (OMD 2024).

The alternatives would be consistent with planned growth and capital plans and would not require projects, upgrades, or initiatives outside of the planning process. The City is expected to be able to serve the additional residents and employees associated with the alternatives. The utility system planning process and compliance with municipal codes and regulations will continue.

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

The recent and ongoing improvements to municipal buildings reflect long range planning by the City. The City's biennial budgeting process and CFP process will continue to address general governmental needs associated with increased population, housing, and employment in the Monroe UGA. The City of Monroe and its municipal buildings are expected to be able to serve the additional residents and employees associated with the alternatives. Regular planning and compliance with municipal regulations, including budgeting and capital facility planning, would continue under each alternative.

POLICE

In 2023, the Monroe PD provided on average 1.8 FTE officers per 1,000 people. Monroe would need additional certificated officers to serve the additional population of Monroe by 2044 while maintaining the same level of service. The Monroe PD has regular planning and budgeting efforts in place to ensure the department can serve the City's incremental increases in population between 2024 and 2044. Both alternatives would be consistent with planned growth and capital plans. No additional improvements, projects, upgrades, or initiatives outside of the planning process would be needed. The Monroe PD is expected to be able to serve the additional residents and employees associated with the alternatives. Regular planning and compliance with municipal codes and regulations would continue under each alternative.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

SRFR estimates 0.09 calls for service per resident within the SRFR boundaries, including the City of Monroe. In 2022, SRFR provided fire and rescue services to 176,367 residents. With additional people living in Monroe in 2044 under the alternatives, additional calls for fire and rescue service would occur. SRFR completes regular planning and future demand projections using the Strategic Plan (SRFR 2021a), which is updated regularly, and the annual Standards of Coverage report (SRFR 2021b). The alternatives would be consistent with planned growth and capital plans and would not require projects, upgrades, or initiatives outside of the planning process. SRFR is expected to be able to serve the additional residents and employees associated with the alternatives. Regular planning and compliance with municipal codes and regulations would continue.

SCHOOLS

Each alternative would result in additional students by 2044. MSD and SSD estimate that 2044 enrollment will be 6,443 students and 11,374 students, respectively. Development associated with the alternatives is reflected in both District's enrollment projections and future planning. The alternatives would not require projects, upgrades, or initiatives outside of the planning process. MSD and SSD are expected to be able to serve the additional students associated with the alternatives. Regular planning and projections, acceptance of school district bond proposals by the community, and compliance with municipal codes and regulations would continue.

ELECTRICITY

A larger population would increase the demand for electricity within the study area. The SCPUD provides electricity to 373,127 homes and businesses and plans electrical system improvements and preventive maintenance projects to ensure reliability. The residents and employees associated with the alternatives would increase SCPUD's service area population. The alternatives would be consistent with planned growth and capital plans and are not expected to require improvements outside of the planning process. SCPUD is expected to be able to serve the additional residents and employees associated with the alternatives. Regular planning and compliance with municipal codes and regulations would continue.

NATURAL GAS

PSE's 2023 Gas Utility IRP reported that between 2023 and 2050, forecasting models expect demand for natural gas to decline after the impact of cost-effective conservation. The alternatives would result in additional customers, who would use 0.1 MDth per hour of natural gas, if current usage rates stay similar. PSE expects to file the final 2025 Gas IRP with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commissions that plans for the next 20 years in March 2025. The alternatives would be consistent with planned growth and are not expected to require projects outside of the planning process. PSE is expected to be able to serve the additional residents and employees associated with the alternatives. Regular planning, such as the IRP process, and compliance with municipal codes and regulations would continue.

SOLID WASTE

Snohomish County estimates an average waste generation rate of 2.24 tons per year per person, considering waste, recycling, and recovery. By adding residents and employees under the alternatives, additional waste and recycling would be generated per year by 2044.

The alternatives would be consistent with planned growth and capital plans and would not require projects, upgrades, or initiatives outside of the planning process. With the Klickitat County landfill expansion and the availability of private waste haulers, the City would be able to serve the additional residents and employees associated with the alternatives. Regular planning and compliance with municipal codes and regulations would continue.

COMMUNICATIONS AND DATA

With the alternatives, private companies would continue to respond to market-driven demand by constructing and improving infrastructure to continue their business of providing data and communications services to area residents and businesses. The alternatives would be consistent with planning documents and capital plans, and would not require projects outside of the planning process. Private companies responding to market-driven demand for communications data are expected to be able to serve additional residents and employees associated with the alternatives.

6.2.3 Impacts of the No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would continue the current plan for growth in the City and unincorporated UGA, including (1) the adopted zoning and planning designations in the current (2015) Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Plan Map and (2) the use of existing tools already in use by the City to meet housing-related state mandates.

Under the No Action Alternative, the City would have capacity for 1,468 new housing units: 975 housing units within the City limits and 493 housing units in the unincorporated UGA. The No Action Alternative would have capacity for 2,330 new jobs within the City. Employment growth outside the City's UGA is constrained by critical areas.

The U.S. Census 2018–2022 5-year ACS reports an average 2.8 persons-per-household estimate for Monroe (U.S. Census Bureau 2022). Applying 2.8 persons-per-household to proposed housing units, the No Action Alternative would result in an increase in population of approximately 4,095 in Monroe (2,720 people within the City, 1,375 people in the unincorporated UGA), for a total of 23,795 people living in the Monroe UGA by 2044.

POTABLE WATER

The increase in potable water customers associated with the No Action Alternative (4,600 residents and 2,200 employees based on the 2024 Draft Water System Plan [BHC 2024]) would represent an increase in the customer base of approximately 1 percent over 20 years. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on potable water services under the No Action Alternative.

STORMWATER

Assuming that additional housing or business development, redevelopment, or infill increases net impervious surface, the No Action Alternatives would require an increase in stormwater system capacity. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on stormwater services under the No Action Alternative.

SANITARY SEWER

The Draft 2024 Sewer System Plan estimates that the wastewater service area includes an estimated 38,849 people, and that by 2044, the number of customers would increase by 4,400 residents and 1,600 employees. This expected increase represents 15 percent growth in the service area population over 20 years. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on wastewater services under the No Action Alternative.

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

Section 6.2.2 describes impacts. The No Action Alternative would result in a **less-than-significant impact** on municipal buildings.

POLICE

Monroe would need to provide an additional 7.4 FTE certificated officers to maintain the current level of service. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, *Impacts Common to Both Alternatives*, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on police services under the No Action Alternative.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

With an additional 4,095 people in Monroe in 2044 under the No Action Alternative, an estimated additional 369 calls for fire and rescue service would occur per year. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on fire and emergency services under the No Action Alternative.

SCHOOLS

Using the estimate of 14.2 percent of the City of Monroe population between the ages of 5 and 17 (U.S. Census Bureau 2022), the No Action Alternative would result in an estimated increase in school

enrollment of approximately 582 students in the Monroe UGA by 2044. This estimate represents 80 percent of MSD’s 2044 projected enrollment increase and 24 percent of the combined MSD and SSD 2044 projected enrollment increase. Both school districts update enrollment projections and capital facilities needs regularly. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on the MSD and SSD under the No Action Alternative.

ELECTRICITY

The 4,095 residents and 2,330 employees associated with the No Action Alternative in 2044 would increase SCPUD’s study area population by less than 2 percent over 20 years (6,425 additional employees and residents divided by 373,127 current study area population). Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on electricity services under the No Action Alternative.

NATURAL GAS

The No Action Alternative would result in an additional 3,798 customers (housing units plus employees), or 379 additional MDth, representing an increase of less than 1 percent compared to PSE’s natural gas sales in 2023. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on natural gas service under the No Action Alternative.

SOLID WASTE

By adding 4,095 residents and 2,330 employees to Monroe and its UGA over a 20-year period under the No Action Alternative, an additional 14,392 tons of waste and recycling would be generated per year by 2044, representing 2 percent of the estimated 708,512 tons of material requiring disposal in 2040 (Snohomish County 2023). Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on solid waste and recycling services under the No Action Alternative.

COMMUNICATIONS AND DATA

The No Action Alternative would increase demand for communications and data over the period 2024 to 2044. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on communications and data services under the No Action Alternative.

6.2.4 Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would add capacity for an additional 2,950 housing units (2,471 housing units in the City, 479 housing units in the unincorporated UGA), which is 1,482 more units of housing capacity than the No Action Alternative. Job capacity would increase, adding space for an additional 2,850 jobs (2,471 jobs in the City, 109 jobs in the unincorporated UGA), which is 520 more jobs than the No Action Alternative.

Applying the U.S. Census estimate of 2.8 persons-per-household in Monroe (U.S. Census Bureau 2022) to proposed housing units, the Proposed Action would result in an increase in population of approximately 8,231 residents in the Monroe UGA (6,894 people within the City and 1,336 people in the unincorporated UGA), for a total of 27,930 people living in Monroe by 2044.

POTABLE WATER

The increase in potable water customers associated with the Proposed Action would be similar to the No Action Alternative. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on potable water services under the Proposed Action.

STORMWATER

Assuming that additional housing or business development, redevelopment, or infill increases net impervious surface, the Proposed Action would require an increase in stormwater system capacity, slightly more than the No Action Alternative due to the higher housing capacity under the Proposed Action. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on stormwater services under the Proposed Action.

SANITARY SEWER

The increase in sanitary sewer customers associated with the Proposed Action would be similar to the No Action Alternative. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on wastewater services under the Proposed Action.

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

Section 6.2.2 describes impacts. The Proposed Action would result in a **less-than-significant impact** on municipal buildings.

POLICE

Impacts would be similar but approximately double compared to the No Action Alternative. The Monroe PD would need to provide an additional 14.8 FTE certificated officers to serve the additional population of Monroe by 2044 while retaining the same level of service. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on police services under the Proposed Action.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

With an additional 8,231 people in Monroe in 2044 under the Proposed Action, an estimated 741 calls for fire and rescue service would occur, per year. These impacts would be approximately double those of the No Action Alternative. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on fire and emergency services under the Proposed Action.

SCHOOLS

Using the estimate of 14.2 percent of the City of Monroe population between the ages of 5 and 17 (U.S. Census Bureau 2022), the Proposed Action would result in an estimated increase in school enrollment of approximately 1,169 students in the Monroe UGA by 2044. This estimate is twice the impact of the No Action Alternative, approximately 60 percent higher than MSD's 2044 projected enrollment increase, and 48 percent of the combined MSD and SSD 2044 projected enrollment increase. Development associated with the Proposed Action would likely be reflected in MSD's enrollment projections and future planning that occurs every year. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on the MSD and SSD under the Proposed Action.

ELECTRICITY

The estimated increase of 8,231 residents and 2,850 employees in the Monroe UGA associated with the Proposed Action in 2044 would increase SCPUD's study area population by less than 3 percent over 20 years, compared to 2 percent with the No Action Alternative. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on electricity services under the Proposed Action.

NATURAL GAS

The Proposed Action would result in an additional 5,800 customers (housing units plus employees) by 2044, or 580 additional MDth, representing an increase of less than 1 percent compared to PSE’s natural gas sales in 2023, similar to the No Action Alternative. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on natural gas services under the Proposed Action.

SOLID WASTE

By adding 8,231 residents and 2,850 employees under the Proposed Action, an additional 24,819 tons of waste or recycling would be generated per year, representing a 4 percent increase in waste and recyclables processing, 2 percentage points higher than the relative impact of the No Action Alternative. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on solid waste and recycling services under the Proposed Action.

COMMUNICATIONS AND DATA

The Proposed Action would increase the demand for communications and data over the period 2024 to 2044. Together with the impacts described in Section 6.2.2, this would be a **less-than-significant impact** on communications and data services under the Proposed Action, similar to the No Action Alternative.

6.2.5 Summary of Impacts

Both alternatives would increase the demand for capital facilities and utilities during the period 2024 to 2044. All capital facilities and utility providers have regular and periodic planning and capital budgeting processes to ensure that staffing, equipment, and infrastructure is up to date and ready to serve additional population as Monroe grows. Communications and data is market-driven and will respond to increased demand with more services. The Proposed Action would result in higher housing, employment, and population growth by 2044 when compared to the No Action Alternative. Therefore, the impacts (increases in demand for services) on capital facilities and utility providers would be greater with the Proposed Action compared to the No Action Alternative. Each alternative would result in less-than-significant impacts on capital facilities and utilities.

6.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

The following measures could be implemented to avoid, minimize, or reduce impacts on capital facilities and utilities.

- Concentrate growth in areas with adequate capital facilities and utilities.
- Build additional population density into upcoming plan or service updates, such as conservation plans and other future utility planning documents.
- Invest in building and maintaining facilities for capital facilities and utilities.
- Require potable water, wastewater, and stormwater connections for all new development, unless otherwise allowed by state, county, or City regulations.

6.4 Significant, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Neither alternative would result in significant unavoidable adverse impacts to capital facilities and utilities.



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CHAPTER 7 Transportation

As part of the City of Monroe’s SEPA Programmatic SEIS evaluation of probable impacts relating to the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update and associated Transportation Plan, this chapter describes transportation within the study area and assesses potential impacts associated with the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative.

7.1 Affected Environment

Transportation in the City of Monroe is described below for the following topics: principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and local roads; traffic volumes; traffic operations; traffic safety; freight and passenger rail traffic; pedestrian and bicycle facilities; and transportation demand management.

7.1.1 Methodology

The following description of the affected environment is based on:

- City of Monroe 2015 Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element.
- City of Monroe 2023–2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Transportation system GIS data provided by the City of Monroe, including roadway functional classifications, walk and bicycle facilities, and freight routes.
- Weekday PM peak period (4 to 6 p.m.) traffic volumes collected by the firm IDAX Data Solutions at key intersections throughout Monroe in June 2022.
- Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Collision Reports for the period January 1, 2018, to December 31, 2022.

7.1.2 Regulatory Setting

The following regulations, plans, and policies apply to transportation.

STATE REGULATIONS

- **RCW 36.70A.070(6) Comprehensive Plans – Mandatory Elements** sets requirements for the City to develop its Transportation Element to address the motorized and non-motorized transportation needs of the City of Monroe. It represents the City’s policy direction for the next 20 years.
- **Chapter 36.70A RCW Growth Management Act (GMA)** now requires jurisdictions to develop a multimodal transportation system based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and City comprehensive plans. GMA also directs jurisdictions to incorporate the following items into their local comprehensive plans:
 - Level of service (LOS) standards that are consistent with state and regional transportation plans that reflect community goals for multimodal transportation facilities.
 - A minimum of 10-year forecast that reflects capacity needs based on land use assumptions.
 - Needs projection consistent with state and local system needs to meet current and future demands.
 - Active transportation component that identifies pedestrian and bicycle facilities and promotes healthy lifestyles.
 - Improve the safety and efficiency of freight movement and reduce the impacts on other travel modes to support economic development.
 - Environmental protections including pollution mitigation strategies and wildlife habitat restoration and protection.
 - Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies including ridesharing, vanpooling, bicycling, walking and use of public transportation, efficient parking, and land use policies.
 - Future funding analysis for new facilities and maintenance based on projected revenues.
 - Multi-year financing plan based on the needs identified in the comprehensive plan.
 - Shortfall strategy to fund adopted levels of service.
 - Intergovernmental coordination based on countywide planning policies.

REGIONAL REGULATIONS

- **Puget Sound Regional Council’s VISION 2050** (PSRC 2020) is the region’s plan for growth. It provides a structure for consideration of transportation issues for freight, roads, transit, bicycles, and walking across Puget Sound to support the regional growth strategy. A key concept of VISION 2050 is the need to link the decision-making processes of regional and local growth centers. VISION 2050 also recognizes the environmental and climate challenges created by transportation infrastructure and supports energy-efficient, sustainable, and safe transportation options. Finally, VISION 2050 emphasizes pursuing a range of funding options to address transportation needs.
- **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) 2022–2050** (PSRC 2022) is the long-range transportation plan for the central Puget Sound region and is developed by PSRC. The RTP is adopted every 4 years and is the transportation plan to implement VISION 2050. Transportation projects included in the RTP that support travel to and from Monroe are:
 - **Centennial Trail South (Project 2842)** – Shared use path between the City of Snohomish southern boundary and King County.
 - **Snoqualmie Valley Trail (Project 2822)** – Shared use trail between City of Snohomish eastern city limits and King County line.
 - **SR 522 at Paradise Lake Road Intersection Improvements (Project 4257)** – Construction of intersection improvements with pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
 - **SR 522 Paradise Lake Road to Snohomish River Widening (Project 1698)** – Widen to a four-lane divided highway with pedestrian and bicycle improvements. Complete construction of SR 522/Fales Road-Echo Lake Road interchange.
 - **US 2 Bickford to Monroe (Project 4176)** – Widen to four lanes.
 - **US 2 Monroe Bypass Phase 1 (Project 5444)** – Construct a two-lane SR 522 extension to the north and terminate the road at Chain Lake Road to connect to the local street system.
 - **US 2 Monroe to City of Sultan (Project 4177)** – Widen the corridor to four lanes (PSRC 2022).
- **Snohomish Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs)** are required by GMA to be prepared by Snohomish County in collaboration with cities and tribes as a framework for developing consistent comprehensive plans. Snohomish County Tomorrow (SCT), a cooperative public, inter-jurisdictional forum comprising the county’s cities and tribal governments, oversees

developing, reviewing, and implementing these CPPs. The county's CPPs help ensure consistent transportation planning and implementation across jurisdictions. The jurisdictions' transportation elements are developed to reflect the CPPs' guidance and requirements.

- **Snohomish County planning policies** emphasize a coordinated and efficient transportation system that minimizes impacts on the climate and employs adaptive management strategies to meet the varied growth patterns throughout the county. The countywide planning goals also echo the state and regional perspective of establishing multimodal transportation connectivity between residential areas and growth centers. Snohomish County suggests that the countywide planning policies *"are intended to guide transportation planning by the County and cities in Snohomish County and to provide the basis for regional coordination with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and transportation operating agencies"* (Snohomish County 2011).

LOCAL REGULATIONS

- **City of Monroe LOS Standards** are based on the requirements of Washington's GMA and consistent with regional and state planning. Monroe sets LOS standards for arterial, collector, and local streets (not state highways). The current adopted City LOS standard is D for arterial intersections and LOS C for collector and local street intersections. WSDOT sets the LOS standards for the highways of statewide significance (HSS), which in Monroe are US 2 and SR 522. For non-HSS facilities, like SR 203, the state requires that an agency coordinate with WSDOT in establishing an LOS standard for those facilities. PSRC has determined that SR 203 is a highway of regional significance and designates the LOS standard. The current LOS standard for all state routes within the City is LOS D.

7.1.3 Arterials and Collectors

Figure 7-1 shows the existing roadway functional classification system for transportation facilities in the study area. Three major, state-controlled highways (principal arterials) serve Monroe: US 2, SR 522, and SR 203. US 2 provides the major east-west regional connection between Monroe and Everett to the west and to Sultan, Stevens Pass, and beyond to the east. SR 203 provides a north-south connection to Duvall and SR 522 provides northeast-southwest connection to Woodinville, Bothell, and north Seattle. Within Monroe, US 2, SR 522, and SR 203 are classified as principal arterials. Main Street/Old Owen Road, Fryelands Boulevard, a portion of Chain Lake Road, N Kelsey Street, and Woods Creek Road are classified as minor arterials. Several collector streets provide



connectivity between the City’s principal and minor arterials and its local roads. The collectors also provide vital connectivity between the City’s residential areas and central business district and are therefore candidates for improvements to active mode facilities. **Figure 7-1** shows Existing functional road classifications. Other roads in Monroe are local roads.

7.1.4 Traffic Volumes

Traffic levels in the City have increased in most areas since completion of the 2015 Transportation Plan commensurate with growth in housing and jobs. A comparison of 2022 traffic volumes with 2015 Transportation Plan traffic levels shows that weekday PM peak hour traffic growth was largest at intersections north of US 2, with the largest increase in weekday PM peak hour traffic volumes occurring at the intersection of Chain Lake Road and Kelsey Street (where traffic increased by approximately 5 percent per year for a total of over 50 percent in 8 years). This growth is the result of residential development north of the City. Little to no growth was shown at intersections along 179th Avenue. Overall traffic volume on US 2, SR 203, and SR 522 has changed less than 2 percent per year since the 2015 Transportation Plan.

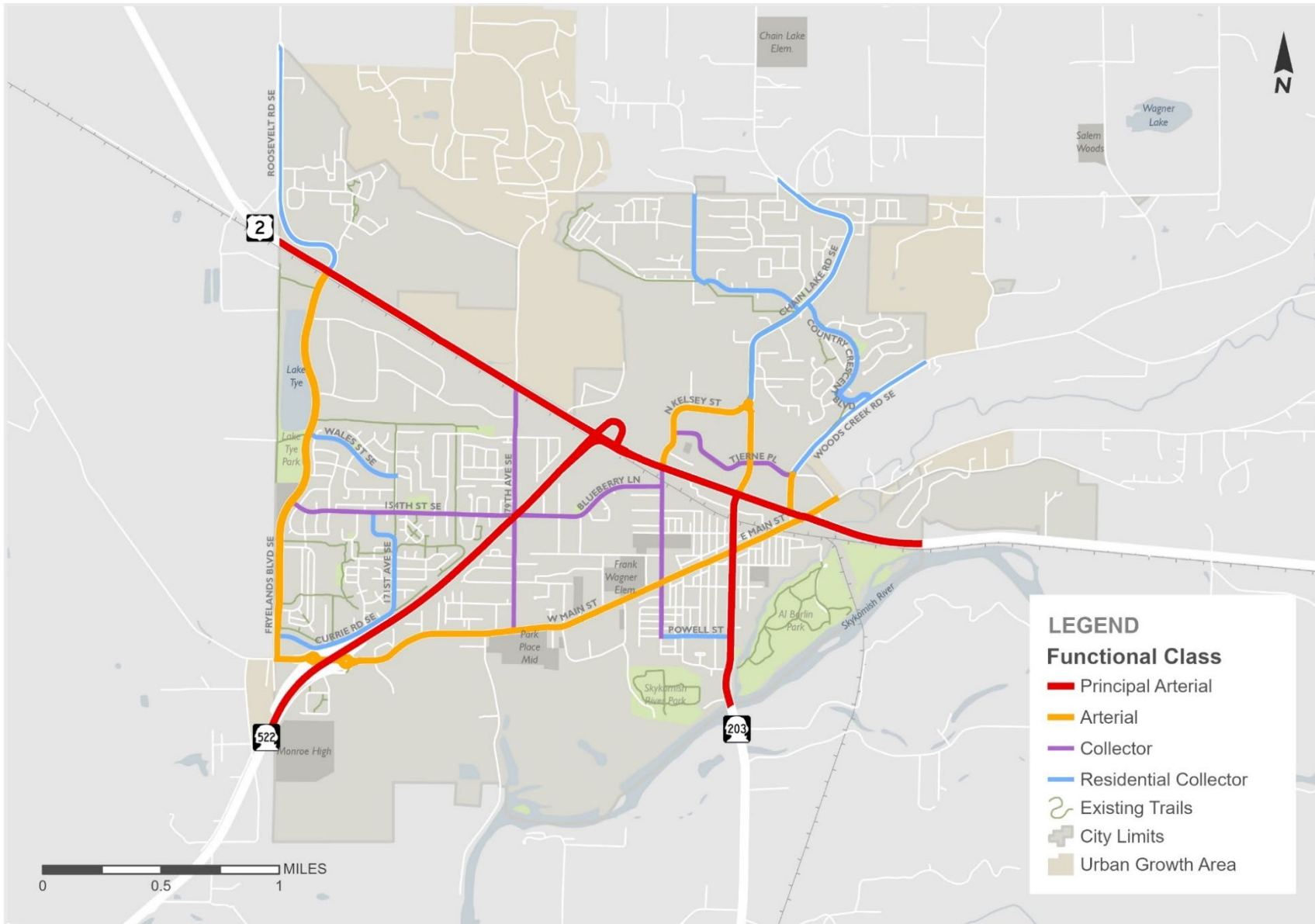


FIGURE 7-1 Functional Classification of the Road System

7.1.5 Traffic Operations

Traffic volume data collected in June 2022 were used to analyze traffic operations at 24 study intersections in Monroe. Analysis of traffic operations provides a quantitative method for evaluating existing transportation conditions. Intersection operations were evaluated based on their ability to accommodate PM peak hour demand. Level of Service is how the operations of road systems are measured to ensure that adequate facilities are present or planned and funded to accommodate growth. LOS is a qualitative term describing the operating conditions a driver may experience while traveling on a particular street or highway during a specific time interval. Criteria range from LOS A, indicating free-flowing conditions with minimal vehicle delays, to LOS F, indicating heavy congestion and long vehicle delays. At signalized, roundabout, and all-way stop-controlled intersections, LOS is measured in terms of weighted average delay per vehicle and reported for the intersection as a whole. At unsignalized side-street stop-controlled intersections, LOS is measured in terms of the average vehicle delay and is typically reported for the worst movement.

The study intersections were evaluated based on their ability to accommodate PM peak hour demand in their existing configuration, including number of lanes and traffic control. As described previously, Monroe has an LOS D standard for arterial intersections and an LOS C standard for collectors and local street intersections. An LOS D standard has been adopted for state routes running through Monroe (US 2, SR 203, and SR 522).

Table 7-1 provides a summary comparison between 2014 and 2022 intersection LOS at the study intersections. The 2014 conditions are presented to provide an understanding of how traffic operations have changed since completion of the 2015 Transportation Plan.



TABLE 7-1 Comparison of Weekday PM Peak Hour Intersection LOS

Intersection	LOS Standard	2014 ^a			2022		
		LOS ^b	Delay ^c	WM ^d or v/c ^e	LOS	Delay	WM or v/c
Fryelands Blvd/US 2	D	D	35	—	D	38	—
Fryelands Blvd/Tye St	C	C	20	EBL	D	28	EBL
Fryelands Blvd/Wales St	C	A	9	—	A	8	—
Fryelands Blvd/154th St	C	B	13	—	B	12	—
Fryelands Blvd/Main St	C	C	19	—	C	18	—
SR 522 SB Ramps/Main St	D	D	28	SB	A	5	0.304
SR 522 NB Ramps/Main St/Tester Rd	D	B	14	0.786	A	8	0.665
179th Ave/Main St	C	B	13	—	C	28	—
179th Ave/154th St	C	C	16	—	B	15	—
179th Ave/147th St	C	D	31	EB	D	33	EB
179th Ave/US 2	D	D	44	—	D	44	—
SR 522 Ramps/US 2	D	B	17	—	B	16	—
Kelsey St/US 2	D	C	22	—	D	44	—
Kelsey St/Blueberry Ln	C	D	26	EBL	C	18	EBL
Kelsey St/Main St	C	A	9	—	A	9	—
Lewis St/Main St	C	C	27	—	B	18	—
Lewis St/US 2	D	D	53	—	D	47	—
Chain Lake Rd/Tjerne Pl	C	C	28	—	B	15	—
Chain Lake Rd/Kelsey St	C	B	13	NB	A	8	0.554
Chain Lake Rd/Rainier View Rd	C	B	21	EBL	B	14	EB
Chain Lake Rd/Country Crescent Blvd	C	B	15	WBL	C	15	WBL
Main St/US 2	D	C	27	—	D	41	—
Woods Creek Rd/Tjerne Pl	C	—	—	—	A	8	—
Woods Creek Rd/Country Crescent Blvd	C	B	13	—	B	11	EB

SOURCE: Prepared by Transpo Group 2024

a. From the City of Monroe 2015 Transportation Plan.

b. Level of service (LOS), based on Highway Capacity Manual 7th Edition methodology unless otherwise noted.

c. Average delay in seconds per vehicle.

d. Worst movement (WM) reported for unsignalized intersections, where WB= westbound, WBL = westbound left, SB= southbound, NB= northbound, EB= eastbound, and EBL = eastbound left.

e. Volume to capacity (V/C) ratio for roundabout-controlled intersections.

As shown in **Table 7-1**, all study intersections currently meet the LOS standard, except for the Fryelands Boulevard/Tye Street intersection. A signalization project planned for 2025 may improve LOS at the Fryelands Boulevard/Tye Street intersection. Growth has resulted in traffic volume increases at the Fryelands Boulevard/Tye Street intersection and the LOS has degraded to D. For most study intersections, traffic operations have remained consistent from 2014 to 2022. There are seven intersections that showed improved LOS when comparing 2014 and 2022 conditions for the reasons described below:

- SR 522 SB Ramps/Main Street – Construction of a roundabout.
- SR 522 NB Ramps/Main Street/Tester Road – Slight reduction in vehicle volumes.
- 179th Avenue/154th Street – Slight reduction in vehicle volumes.
- Kelsey Street/Blueberry Lane – Updates to the channelization.
- Lewis Street/Main Street – Slight reduction in vehicle volumes.
- Chain Lake Road/Tjerne Place – Updates to signal timing.
- Chain Lake Road/Kelsey Street – Construction of a roundabout.

Table 7-1 shows that at four intersections, operations degraded between 2015 and 2022 but the LOS standards are still met. Increases in delay at intersections are primarily a result of growth. Intersections where operations degraded are:

- 179th Avenue/Main Street – LOS B to LOS C.
- Kelsey Street/US 2 – LOS C to LOS D.
- Chain Lake Road/Country Crescent Boulevard – LOS B to LOS C
- Main Street/US 2 – LOS C to LOS D.

7.1.6 Traffic Safety

Citywide collision records were reviewed to identify potential safety issues for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists. The traffic safety analysis included collision data for a 5-year period from January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2022. Of collisions in Monroe during that time period, two were reported fatalities, one fatality along US 2 and the other fatality along SR 522. The number of collisions occurring along City roads are generally low to moderate, compared to a higher number of collisions occurring along state routes in the City, which have higher vehicle volumes. **Figure 7-2** shows the locations of collisions in the City and highlights pedestrian and bicycle crashes, fatalities, and serious injuries. Most pedestrian crashes are in the downtown area where there is more pedestrian activity.

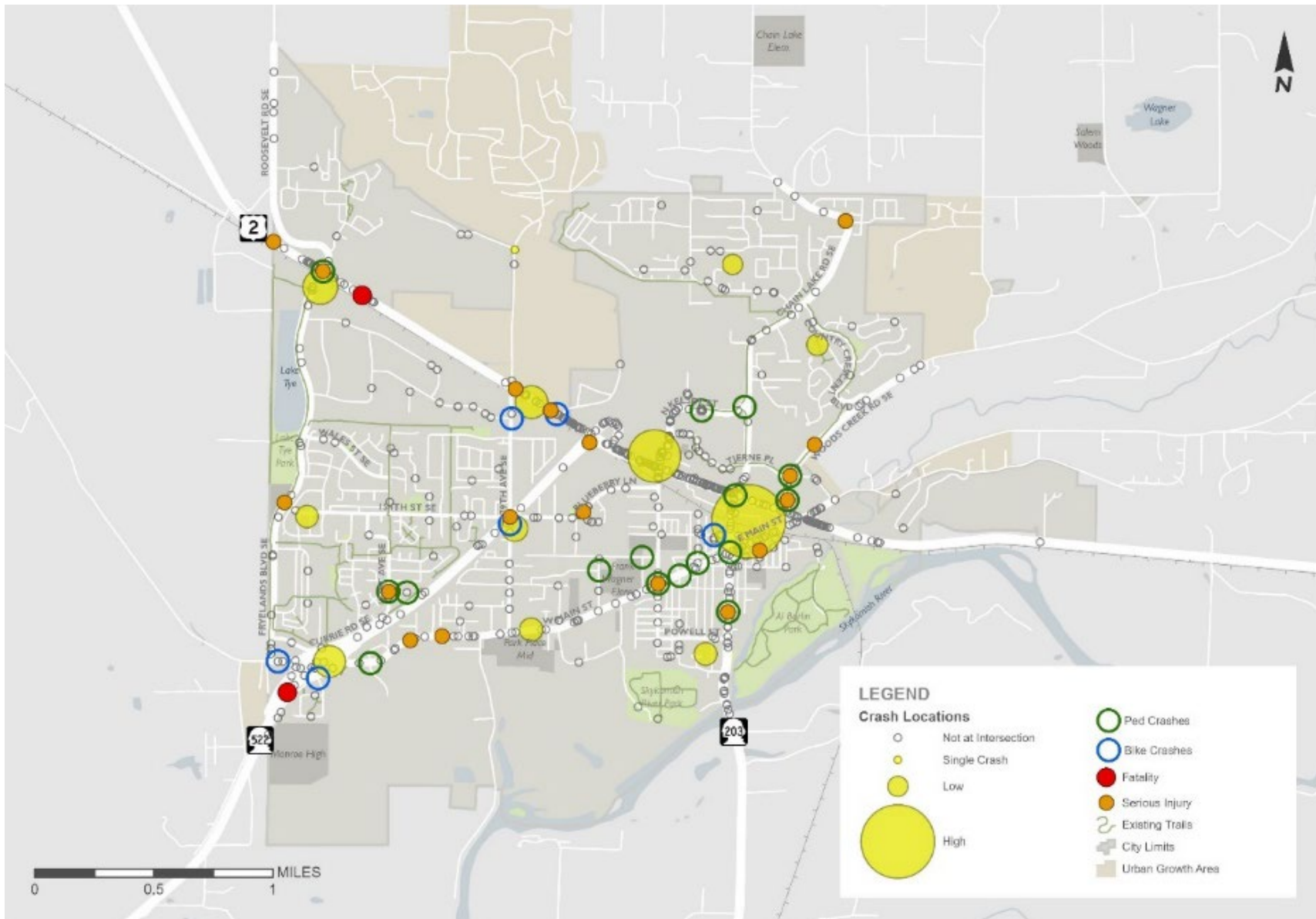


FIGURE 7-2 5-Year (2018-2022) Collision Summary



7.1.7 Transit Service

Community Transit provides transit service throughout the City of Monroe. Community Transit offers bus, paratransit, vanpool, and commuter services. Bus routes 270, 271, and 424 travel through the City. Bus routes 270, a local route, and 271, a Boeing route, provide service between Gold Bar and Everett via US 2, with average headways or the amount of time between buses arriving at a stop, of approximately 60 minutes. Bus route 424 is a commuter route with limited service of two trips from Monroe to Seattle in the morning, and two trips from Seattle to Monroe in the afternoon. Route 424 travels between the cities of Snohomish and Seattle and passes through Monroe via US 2, 179th Avenue SE, and SR 522, with average headways ranging from 75 to 90 minutes.

Transit routes, hours of operation, and recent ridership data available from Community Transit are summarized in **Table 7-2**.

TABLE 7-2 Community Transit Routes Serving Monroe

Route Number	Description	Hours of Operations	Average Daily Ridership ^a
270	Gold Bar to Everett	Weekdays Only (5:45 a.m.–5:30 p.m.)	690
271	Gold Bar to Everett	Weekdays (6:015 a.m.–10:01 p.m.) Saturdays (7:05 a.m.–9:29 p.m.) Sundays (7:05 a.m.–9:28 p.m.)	920
424	Snohomish to Seattle	Weekdays Only (3:37 p.m.–6:47 p.m.)	955

SOURCE: Community Transit, Schedule accessed April 2024
<https://www.communitytransit.org/maps-and-schedules>.

a. Represents average daily ridership for May 2023 provided by Community Transit.

Transit operations are out of the City’s direct control; however, Monroe has influence over the transportation network that Community Transit serves. The 2015 Transportation Plan defined transit LOS based on the amenities and access provided along corridors with transit. The City defines LOS for transit using a green, yellow, and red rating, where yellow is the target minimum LOS standard. Green transit LOS standard can be reached by providing a high level of the transit supportive amenities at major stops, installing sidewalks and marked crosswalks at all stops, and

attracting frequent, all day transit service. The yellow standard includes some transit stop amenities, sidewalks, and marked crosswalks at some stops, and all-day service with headways of 30 minutes or less during the peak hour and 60 minutes or less during midday. Monroe has made progress towards this LOS standard with the sidewalks and connectivity of the transportation network along corridors served by transit; however, the City has not achieved the desired headways.

Community Transit updated its Journey 2050 Long Range Plan in December 2023. The plan provides a vision for future transit improvements in the Community Transit service area. Improvements include increased frequency of fixed-route service within Monroe and providing mobility options like on-demand service (Community Transit 2023).

7.1.8 Freight and Passenger Train Traffic

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) rail line bisects the City of Monroe, generally running parallel to US 2, with five at-grade crossings located at Frylands Boulevard, 170th Avenue SE, Kelsey Street, Lewis Street, and E Main Street. Both freight and passenger trains operate on the tracks. Crossing closures frequently result in extended periods of delay at intersections and gridlock before the roadway network can return to normal operations after the crossing gates have raised. The crossing locations are also located along primary emergency response routes for the City. Rail traffic impacts on mobility within the City present an ongoing issue as north-south movement cannot proceed while trains pass. With populations expected to increase, so is the passenger rail service. Rail service through the City of Monroe is part of the Strategic Rail Corridor Network (STRACNET) designation, established by the Department of Defense and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to ensure rail transportation readiness capabilities during a time of need (FRA 2023).

7.1.9 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Figure 7-3 illustrates the existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the City. Most roadways in Monroe offer access to sidewalks or shared-use pathways. Many of the City's signalized or roundabout-controlled intersections provide crosswalks. Annual sidewalk improvements and removal of barriers to accessibility are a specific goal for the City. The City completed an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) self-evaluation and transition plan for pedestrian facilities in the public rights-of-way in 2021.

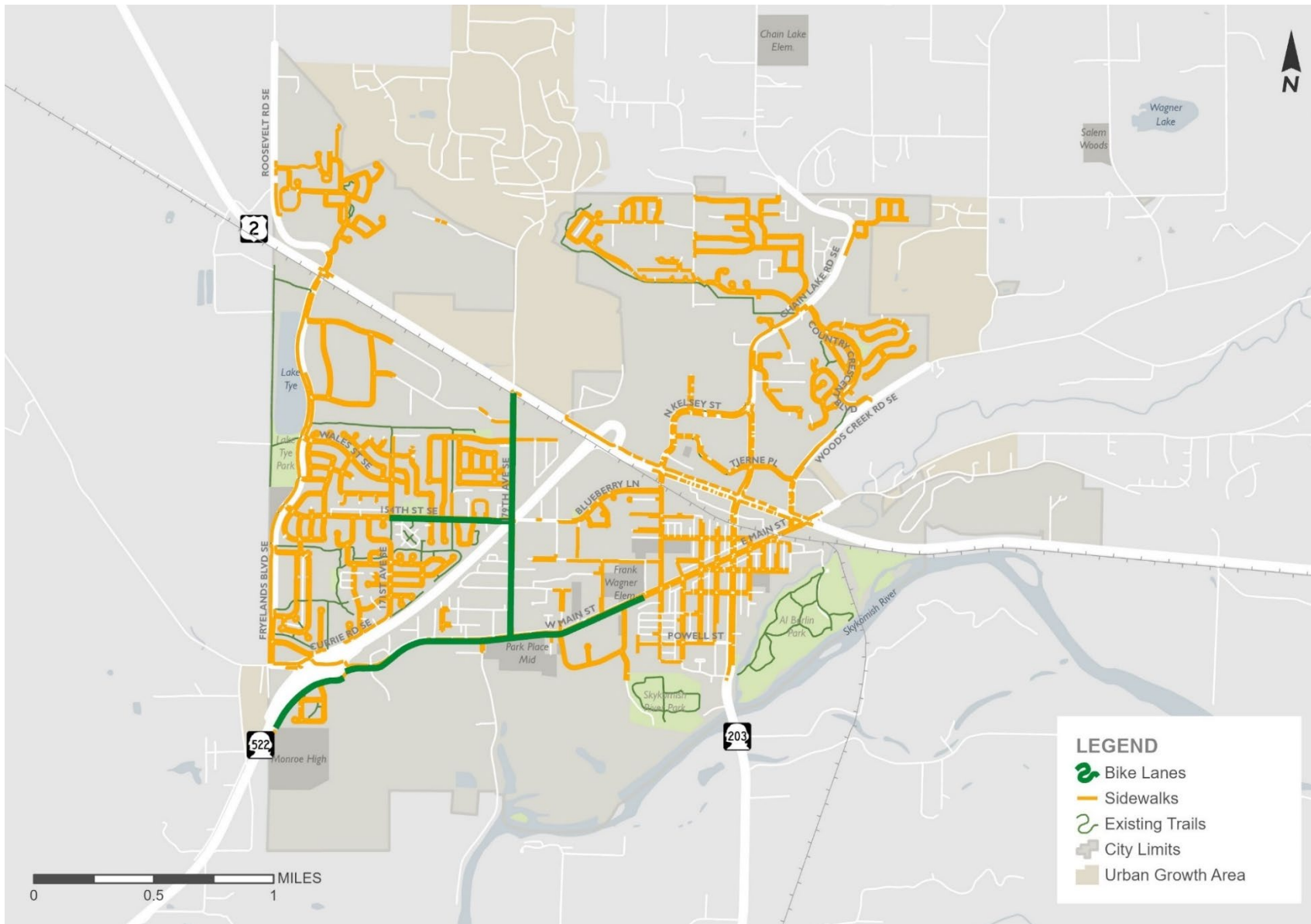


FIGURE 7-3 Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Compared to pedestrian facilities, bicycle-only facilities are less present in the City; however, many sidewalks and shared use paths are wide enough to accommodate bicycle traffic. Dedicated bike lanes are present on Main Street, 154th Street, and 179th Avenue.

7.1.10 Transportation Demand Management

Transportation demand management is focused on reducing reliance on single-occupant vehicles. The 2015 Transportation Plan has a policy for requiring new development to include site and building features that support alternative modes of transportation. The City also has a Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program, which is outlined in Chapter 22.88 Monroe Municipal Code (MMC). The goal of the program is to reduce drive alone vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled for work. The City's CTR program outlines a range of strategies for employers to implement such as:

- Identifying an employee transportation coordinator.
- Distributing commuter information to employees.
- Preferred vanpool and carpool parking.
- Subsidies for transit, vanpools, and other non-drive alone modes.
- Flexible work schedules and telecommuting.
- Bicycle parking/lockers, showers, and other amenities on-site.
- Charging employees for parking.

Currently, the City of Monroe is eligible for Vanpool services provided by Community Transit. Vanpools must consist of at least three riders and can accommodate up to 12 riders per vanpool group, including the driver. Users pay a fare based on the daily round trip miles and the size of the van used. Community Transit supplies the van, fuel, insurance costs, and any highway tolls.

A park-and-ride facility with a capacity of 102 parking stalls is available on US 2, west of the Evergreen State Fair Park. The facility is owned by WSDOT and operated by Community Transit and offers direct access to bus routes 270, 271, and 424.

7.1.11 Air Transportation

Aviation in Monroe is accommodated by First Air Field, a privately owned airport adjacent to the Evergreen State Fairgrounds that is available for public use. First Air Field is not listed in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) (FAA 2023) and according to WSDOT it is classified as a community airport (WSDOT, n.d.).

7.2 Potential Impacts

This section evaluates the impacts of the alternatives on transportation. The No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action are assessed within the context of the Affected Environment.

7.2.1 Impact Assessment Methodology and Thresholds of Significance

Impacts of the alternatives were assessed based on future traffic forecasts. The Monroe Travel Demand Model was developed in 2022 and is used as a basis for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update and the 2024 Transportation Plan to determine future traffic forecasts. The model accounts for the number of households and employees within the City and converts those into weekday PM peak hour trips. These trips were then converted to travel modes and allocated to City roadways to understand overall impacts on the transportation system for the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action. The base year of the Monroe Travel Demand Model represents 2022 conditions, and the future horizon year represents 2050 conditions. Land use information (existing and future) was provided by the City as part of its land use planning efforts, which also included coordination with the PSRC land use datasets.

Both alternatives would implement demand management strategies, similar to existing conditions, including the CTR program.

As described in the Affected Environment, the City of Monroe currently evaluates transportation impacts based on vehicle-based intersection operations LOS standards. The 2024 Transportation Plan will revise the City LOS standards for evaluating transportation impacts. Under Washington law, LOS standards can be applied in two areas: State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review and concurrency management. It is possible to have different LOS standards and methodologies for SEPA review completed for developments and concurrency management.

The City of Monroe’s LOS standards under SEPA will be vehicle-based intersection operations for local streets and state routes. The City may adopt intersection LOS standards for SEPA that are different from current standards; however, for state routes the current WSDOT LOS D standard will continue to be applied.

For transportation concurrency, the City is in the process of developing a multimodal level of service standard that will incorporate a corridor travel time metric that will establish minimum travel speeds along select corridors and a “system completeness”

metric for the planned pedestrian and bicycle networks to estimate multimodal system connectivity.

The No Action Alternative and Proposed Action are evaluated against the revised concurrency standard and the WSDOT LOS D standard for state routes to assess impacts.

The following will apply to WSDOT intersections when future development is proposed:

- Where the LOS prior to development is D or better, attempts to maintain LOS D shall be undertaken.
- Where the LOS prior to development is E, the state will request that LOS E be maintained after development.
- Where the LOS prior to development is F, the state will request mitigation measures so that one of the following is true:
 - a) The estimated delay for signalized intersections is no worse than pre-development conditions;
 - b) The reserve capacity for non-signalized intersections is no worse than pre-development conditions; or
 - c) The volume-to-capacity ratio for segments is no worse than pre-development conditions.

The SEPA LOS standard applied to local streets will be evaluated using site specific traffic studies to understand impacts of future development proposals and is not included in this programmatic SEPA assessment of impacts of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update alternatives.

Monroe’s transit LOS is defined based on the amenities and access provided along corridors with transit. The City defines LOS for transit using green, yellow, and red gradings. Green transit LOS standard can be reached by providing a high level of the transit supportive amenities at major stops, installing sidewalks and marked crosswalks at all stops, and attracting frequent, all day transit service. The yellow standard, which is the minimum target, includes some transitstop amenities, sidewalks, and marked crosswalks at some stops, and all-day service with headways of 30 minutes or less during the peak hour and 60 minutes or less during midday. No threshold for air traffic is provided because First Air Field is a private facility. Neither alternative is expected to result in changes in air travel or traffic.

For the purposes of this SEIS, thresholds of significance for transportation impacts include:

- **Intersection Delay:** The alternative would result in an increase in delay at state route intersections.

- **Intersection LOS:** The alternative would not meet WSDOT LOS D standard for state route traffic operations.
- **Traffic Safety:** The alternative would result in increased potential for traffic safety issues.
- **Transit LOS:** The alternative would not meet the “yellow” LOS standard for transit.
- **Rail Traffic:** The alternative would result in increased rail traffic such that new, unplanned infrastructure would be required.

7.2.2 Impacts Common to Both Alternatives

This section describes impacts that would occur under each alternative. Traffic volumes would increase. The City is in the process of developing a multimodal level of service standard that will incorporate a corridor travel time metric used to assess potential impacts and determine transportation needs for the City. With increases in traffic volumes, travel times will also increase without implementation of transportation improvements. Also under each alternative, the potential for conflicts between modes, vehicle-vehicle, vehicle-pedestrian, and vehicle-bicycle, increases. Specific traffic volume and operations impacts are discussed for each alternative in Section 7.2.3 and Section 7.2.4.

Freight and passenger rail traffic regionwide is expected to increase in the future, which could result in an increase in rail traffic at at-grade rail crossings. The growth in Monroe housing and jobs under each alternative would not result in freight traffic increases.

Each alternative would have impacts on the pedestrian and bicycle facilities unless sidewalk, trail, and other pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements are implemented. Specific impacts are discussed in Section 7.2.3 and Section 7.2.4.

7.2.3 Impacts of the No Action Alternative

This section describes the impacts of the No Action Alternative.

TRAFFIC VOLUMES

As described previously, future No Action Alternative 2050 traffic forecasts were developed using the City’s Travel Demand Model. **Table 7-3** shows the No Action Alternative weekday PM peak hour trip generation and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) compared to existing conditions. VMT is a measure of all the miles traveled by cars and trucks in the City of Monroe during the weekday PM peak



hour. As shown in the table, the anticipated growth in jobs and housing within Monroe and the surrounding area with the No Action Alternative results in a 34 percent increase in weekday PM peak hour trips and 25 percent increase in VMT as compared to existing conditions.

TABLE 7-3 Comparison of Existing and No Action Alternative Trips and Vehicle Miles Traveled

	Existing	No Action Alternative	Percent Increase ^a
Weekday PM Peak Hour Trips	12,353	16,547	34%
Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	40,625	50,972	25%

SOURCE: City of Monroe Travel Demand Model; Transpo Group 2024

NOTES:

a. Represents the percentage that the No Action Alternative results in an increase compared to existing conditions.

The increase in weekday PM peak hour trips and VMT for the No Action Alternative results in traffic volume increases at the study intersection. The PM peak hour volumes at the study intersections are expected to increase on average by approximately 30 percent under the No Action Alternative compared to existing conditions. There are areas of the City where more growth in jobs and/or housing is anticipated resulting in higher-than-average increases in weekday PM peak hour traffic volumes including 40 to 60 percent for Chain Lake Road intersections and 40 to 50 percent for Wood Creek Road intersections. Frylands Boulevard is anticipated to have lower than average increases in traffic volumes of 15 to 20 percent. The evaluation of and significance conclusions for traffic operations (below) consider traffic volume increases.

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

As described previously, the City is in the process of developing a multimodal level of service standard that will incorporate a corridor travel time metric that will establish minimum travel speeds along select corridors. The travel time metric will be used to assess potential impacts and determine transportation needs for the City. It is anticipated that with increases in traffic volumes, travel times will also increase without implementation of transportation improvements.



State routes will be incorporated into the travel time metric; however, they are also evaluated against the intersection operations-based LOS standard.

Table 7-4 summarizes the state route (US 2, SR 522, and SR 203) weekday PM peak hour intersection operations for the No Action Alternative and compares the No Action Alternative to the 2035 condition under the 2015 Comprehensive Plan.

TABLE 7-4 2035 Condition and No Action Alternative Weekday PM Peak Hour Intersection LOS for State Routes

Intersection	LOS Standard	2035 Condition (2015 Comprehensive Plan) ^a			No Action Alternative 2050 ^a		
		LOS ^b	Delay ^c	v/c ^d	LOS	Delay	v/c
Fryelands Blvd/US 2	D	D	41	—	E	71	—
SR 522 SB Ramps/Main St	D	B	13	—	A	5	0.328
SR 522 NB Ramps/Main St/Tester Rd	D	F	94	—	A	8	0.648
179th Ave/US 2	D	C	33	—	F	107	—
SR 522 Ramps/US 2	D	D	40	—	B	20	—
Kelsey St/US 2	D	D	54	—	D	50	—
Lewis St (SR 203)/Main St	D	F	115	—	C	29	—
Lewis St (SR 203)/US 2	D	E	58	—	E	62	—
Main St/US 2	D	C	31	—	D	45	—

SOURCE: City of Monroe 2015 Comprehensive Plan, Appendix D, Transportation Plan, 2015; Transpo Group 2024

- a. **Bold** = does not meet LOS standard.
- b. Level of service (LOS), based on Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 7th Edition methodology unless otherwise noted. The 2035 results were completed under HCM 2010 methodologies using the HCM 6th Edition.
- c. Average delay in seconds per vehicle.
- d. Volume to capacity (V/C) ratio for roundabout-controlled intersections.

As shown in **Table 7-4**, the No Action Alternative results in improved operations compared to the 2035 condition under the 2015 Comprehensive Plan due to improvements such as the SR 522/Main Street roundabouts and restricted turns at the Lewis Street/Main Street intersection that have occurred since the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. Most state route intersections are forecast to meet LOS standards, except for two intersections:

- Fryelands Boulevard/US 2 – LOS D to LOS E.
- 179th Avenue/US 2 – LOS C to LOS F.

In addition, Lewis Street/US 2 will operate at LOS E under the No Action Alternative and with the 2035 condition with the continuation of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. The No Action Alternative would result in a **significant impact** on traffic operations because LOS standards would not be met at Fryelands Boulevard/US 2 and at 179th Avenue/US 2 intersections.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

As described in the discussion on traffic volumes, the No Action Alternative results in an over 30 percent increase in weekday PM peak hour trips in the City. It is anticipated with the No Action Alternative the potential for transportation safety issues in the City will increase. The No Action Alternative includes goals and policies focused on improving safety for all road users through street designs that accommodate all travel modes (Monroe 2015 Transportation Plan). The No Action Alternative would result in a **less-than-significant impact** on traffic safety.

TRANSIT SERVICE

The No Action Alternative includes partnering with Community Transit and other transit operators to provide transit stop amenities and safe access to transit at major transit stops and park-and-ride facilities. The No Action Alternative is anticipated to make strides towards achieving a yellow LOS for transit corridors. Although Community Transit has identified increased transit frequency for Monroe, implementation of Community Transit's plans are outside of the City's control; therefore, some corridors could continue to be below the target yellow LOS standard, resulting in a **less-than-significant impact** on transit service.

FREIGHT AND PASSENGER RAIL TRAFFIC

The growth in Monroe housing and jobs under the No Action Alternative would not result in freight traffic increases. The No Action Alternative would result in **no impact** on freight and passenger rail traffic.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES

Under the No Action Alternative, the pedestrian and bicycle network would be consistent with the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. A **less-than-significant impact** on pedestrian and bicycle facilities is expected.

7.2.4 Impacts of the Proposed Action

The impacts of the Proposed Action are assessed against the No Action Alternative based on the methods and thresholds of significance described in Section 7.2.1.

TRAFFIC VOLUMES

As described previously, similar to the No Action Alternative, Proposed Action 2050 traffic forecasts were developed using the City’s Travel Demand Model. **Table 7-5** shows the Proposed Action weekday PM peak hour trip generation and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) compared to the No Action Alternative. As shown in the table, additional growth in land use with the Proposed Action results in 3 percent more weekday PM peak hour trips and 1 percent more VMT compared to the No Action Alternative.

TABLE 7-5 Comparison of No Action Alternative and Proposed Action Trips and Vehicle Miles Traveled

	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action	Percent Increase ^a
Weekday PM Peak Hour Trips	16,547	17,047	3%
Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	50,972	51,712	1%

SOURCE: City of Monroe Travel Demand Model, Transpo Group, 2024

NOTES:

a. Represents the percentage that the Proposed Action results in an increase compared to the No Action Alternative.

The increase in weekday PM peak hour trips and VMT for the Proposed Action results in traffic volume increases at the study intersection. The PM peak hour volumes at the study intersections are expected to increase on average by approximately 30 percent under Proposed Action compared to existing conditions. The Proposed Action increase in intersection traffic volumes is similar to the No Action Alternative, except for a few instances of slightly higher volume increases due to the additional growth in land use and some lower traffic volume increases due to different areas of the City being developed with the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action increases in traffic volumes at the Chain Lake Road intersection is approximately 10 percent more than the No Action Alternative. The 179th Avenue Proposed Action intersection traffic volumes are anticipated to be 10 percent lower than the No Action

Alternative. The evaluation of and significance conclusions for traffic operations (below) consider traffic volume increases.

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

The City’s future multimodal level of service standard and corridor travel time metric will be used to assess potential impacts and determine transportation needs for the City related to the Proposed Action land uses. Increases in traffic volumes are expected to result in increases to travel times unless transportation improvements are implemented.

Table 7-6 summarizes the state route (US 2, SR 522, and SR 203) weekday PM peak hour intersection operations for the Proposed Action compared to the No Action Alternative.

TABLE 7-6 2050 Weekday PM Peak Hour Intersection LOS for State Routes

Intersection	LOS Standard	No Action Alternative ^a			Proposed Action ^a		
		LOS ^b	Delay ^c	v/c ^d	LOS	Delay	v/c
Fryelands Blvd/US 2	D	E	71	—	E	76	—
SR 522 SB Ramps/Main St	D	A	5	0.328	A	5	0.342
SR 522 NB Ramps/Main St/Tester Rd	D	A	8	0.648	A	9	0.774
179th Ave/US 2	D	F	107	—	F	117	—
SR 522 Ramps/US 2	D	B	20	—	C	22	—
Kelsey St/US 2	D	D	50	—	D	49	—
Lewis St (SR 203)/Main St	D	C	29	—	C	23	—
Lewis St (SR 203)/US 2	D	E	62	—	E	65	—
Main St/US 2	D	D	45	—	D	44	—

SOURCE: Transpo Group 2024

- a. **Bold** = does not meet LOS standard.
- b. Level of service (LOS), based on Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 7th Edition methodology unless otherwise noted.
- c. Average delay in seconds per vehicle.
- d. Volume to capacity (V/C) ratio for roundabout-controlled intersections.

As shown in **Table 7-6**, the Proposed Action has impacts similar to the No Action Alternative. Similar to the No Action Alternative, under the Proposed Action, the Fryelands Boulevard/US 2 and Lewis Street/US 2 intersections would continue operate at LOS E with an increase in delay of 5 seconds or less. The 179th Avenue/US 2 intersection would continue to operate at LOS F under the Proposed Action, similar to the No Action Alternative, except with an increase

in delay of 10 seconds compared to the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action would therefore result in a **significant impact** on traffic volumes due to the increase in delay at the 179th Avenue/US 2 intersection.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

Impacts would be the similar to those under the No Action Alternative, except that more traffic safety issues would result from the Proposed Action due to more jobs and housing, and therefore number of vehicle trips. The Proposed Action would result in a **less-than-significant impact** on traffic safety.

TRANSIT SERVICE

Impacts on transit service under the Proposed Action would be the same as the No Action Alternative, resulting in a **less-than-significant impact** on transit service.

FREIGHT AND PASSENGER TRAIN TRAFFIC

Freight and passenger train traffic impacts under the Proposed Action would be the same as the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action would result in **no impact** on freight and passenger rail traffic.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES

The Proposed Action includes improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle network to improve access, connectivity, and safety. A **less-than-significant impact** on pedestrian and bicycle facilities is expected.

7.2.5 Summary of Impacts

Both alternatives are expected to result in similar impacts, with the intensity of the impacts increasing as population and employment levels increase under the Proposed Action.

The No Action Alternative results in a 34 percent increase in weekday PM peak hour trips and 25 percent increase in VMT compared to existing conditions. The PM peak hour volumes at the study intersections would increase on average by approximately 30 percent compared to existing conditions. The No Action Alternative would result in a significant impact on traffic operations because LOS standards would not be met at Fryelands Boulevard/US 2 and at 179th Avenue/US 2 intersections. Safety issues would accompany increased traffic volumes and worsening



LOS; goals and policies focused on improving safety for all travel users and modes would reduce the impacts on traffic safety to a less-than-significant impact. Although the No Action Alternative would support working toward a yellow LOS for transit and Community Transit has identified increased transit frequency for Monroe, some corridors could continue to operate below the target yellow LOS standard, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on transit service.

The growth in housing and jobs under the No Action Alternative would not result in freight traffic increases; therefore, no impact on rail traffic would occur. The City's new multimodal LOS standard (development of which is in progress) will be used to confirm impacts to pedestrian and bicycle facilities. However, the No Action Alternative would increase demand for pedestrian and bicycle facilities due to the increased development and population, resulting in a less-than-significant impact to pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Under the Proposed Action, additional growth in land use would result in 3 percent more weekday PM peak hour trips and 1 percent more VMT compared to the No Action Alternative. The increase in intersection traffic volumes is similar to the No Action Alternative, except slightly higher volume increases. The 179th Avenue/US 2 intersection would continue to operate at LOS F, similar to the No Action Alternative, but with a 10-second increase in delay. The Proposed Action would result in a significant impact on traffic volumes due to this increase in delay. Safety issues would accompany increased traffic volumes similar to under the No Action Alternative, and goals and policies focused on improving safety for all travel users and modes would reduce the impacts on traffic safety to a less-than-significant impact. Impacts on transit service and rail traffic under the Proposed Action would be the same as the No Action Alternative, resulting in a less-than-significant impact on transit service and no impact on rail traffic. Impacts of the Proposed Action on the pedestrian and bicycle network would be the same as under the No Action Alternative.

7.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures will be needed to support growth while reducing adverse impacts under each alternative. Both alternatives would implement policies that address circulation system classification and design, concurrency standards, transit coordination and improvements, active transportation facilities, financing including transportation impact fees, and joint transportation planning, among other policies.

The No Action Alternative will continue to implement the 2015 Transportation Plan while the Proposed Action includes implementing the revised 2024 Transportation Plan with new and existing street improvements to enhance traffic flow, multi-modal mobility, facilitate development consistent with the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update Land Use Element, and adoption of a multimodal LOS standard. The 2024 Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element under the Proposed Action would include a comprehensive list of improvement projects and programs to meet the existing forecast transportation needs of the City and reduce adverse impacts on transportation. The multimodal improvements address safety, capacity, trail connections, expanded non-motorized transportation facilities, and roadway preservation needs. They also cover upgrades to existing roads and interconnected street systems to support the forecast economic development and growth in the City and its UGA. The roadway and intersection projects incorporate needs for pedestrians and bicyclists that will use the same corridors.

The City is committed to reassessing their transportation needs and funding sources each year as part of their annual Six-Year TIP. This allows the City to match the financing program with the shorter-term improvement projects and funding. The Transportation Plan also includes goals and policies to periodically review land use growth, adopted level of service standards, and funding sources to ensure they support one another and meet concurrency requirements.

Demand management strategies would be in place under both alternatives, consistent with current conditions including the CTR program. The goal of demand management strategies is to reduce the number of vehicular trips; therefore, demand management would reduce impacts under both alternatives associated with traffic volumes and operations.



7.4 Significant, Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

After implementation of mitigation measures, each alternative is expected to result in significant, unavoidable adverse impacts on transportation operations.

Future jobs and housing growth will result in increased traffic volumes. Under both alternatives, the City would have established levels of service that would be met with proposed transportation improvements and programs. Greater mobility through bicycling and walking is anticipated to be achieved with the proposed non-motorized plan, under the Proposed Action. Although congestion can be addressed through the mitigation measures presented in Section 7.3, the increase in auto traffic itself is considered a significant unavoidable adverse impact.

8

CHAPTER 8 Cumulative Impacts

SEPA directs lead agencies to consider the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of proposed actions. Direct and indirect impacts are described in the preceding chapters. Requirements for cumulative impact analysis are described below.

8.1 Regulatory Context

“Cumulative impact” is not defined in the SEPA Rules, but it is defined under federal rules implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). “Cumulative impact” is defined in the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations as the *“impact on the environment that results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions”* (40 CFR Part 1508). This chapter considers the effects of the Comprehensive Plan Update when considered with other proposed actions or projects within the study area.

Washington courts have limited the requirement for cumulative impact analysis under SEPA, stating that an analysis of the cumulative impacts of a proposed project is not required under SEPA unless (1) there is some evidence that the project will facilitate future action that will result in additional impacts, or (2) the project is dependent on subsequent proposed development. A project's cumulative impacts that are merely speculative need not be considered (*Boehm v. City of Vancouver*, 111 Wn. App. 711(2002) – Cumulative impacts).



8.2 Cumulative Impact Evaluation

The City of Monroe Comprehensive Plan Update falls under the category of item (1) above (there is some evidence that the project will facilitate future action that will result in additional impacts). As required by GMA, it is anticipated that any changes to codes, standards, or regulations that follow in the wake of this non-project action will be consistent with the Proposed Action evaluated in this Draft SEIS. Potential future actions are speculative at this point. Therefore, cumulative impacts cannot be evaluated for this non-project action.

In addition, there are no current or existing projects that are functionally related or interconnected to this project (i.e., one could proceed without the other). Future projects would be required to conduct separate, project-specific environmental review, as appropriate. Mitigation measures for each project would also decrease the potential for cumulative impacts.

Finally, the environmental review contained in this Draft SEIS takes a conservative approach by assuming growth to “build-out” capacity under the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action. It is not expected that this level of growth would all occur by 2044, but the SEIS nonetheless assumes this growth when evaluating potential environmental impacts associated with the alternatives. In addition, the SEIS includes land use assumptions for the rest of the region, based on PSRC growth allocations, where applicable and reasonably foreseeable. Any cumulative impacts associated with additional regional or citywide growth beyond that evaluated in this SEIS is merely speculative and need not be considered as part of this programmatic environmental review.

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CHAPTER 9 Distribution List

TRIBES

- Sauk-Suiattle Tribe of Indians
- Tulalip Tribes
- Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians
- Snoqualmie Tribe

FEDERAL

- United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
- United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- Federal Aviation Administration, Seattle Airports District Office
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region 10

STATE

- Washington Department of Ecology
- Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
- Washington Department of Agriculture
- Washington Department of Commerce
- Washington Department of Commerce, Growth Management Services
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 4

- Washington Department of Corrections
- Washington Department of Health, Community and Environment Drinking Water Northwest Region
- Washington Department of Health, Environmental Health and Safety
- Washington Department of Social and Health Services, Operations & Support Division
- Washington Department of Natural Resources, SEPA Center
- Washington Parks and Recreation Commission
- Washington State Department of Transportation Aviation
- Washington State Department of Transportation, Northwest Region
- Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council
- Parks and Recreation Commission

REGIONAL

- Snohomish County Parks and Recreation Department
- Snohomish County Assessor's Office
- Snohomish Health District, Environmental Health
- Snohomish County Planning and Development Services
- Snohomish County Fire Protection District 3
- Snohomish County Public Works
- Puget Sound Clean Air Agency
- Puget Sound Partnership
- Puget Sound Regional Council

OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

- City of Duvall
- City of Lake Stevens
- City of Snohomish
- City of Sultan

SERVICE PROVIDERS, SCHOOLS, UTILITIES, FRANCHISE SERVICES

- Puget Sound Energy
- Monroe Public Library
- Zply Communications
- US Post Office

- Republic Services
- Comcast
- Snohomish County PUD #1
- Community Transit
- French Slough Flood Control District
- Providence Health
- Evergreen Health
- Monroe School District #103
- Monroe Correctional Complex
- Snohomish School District #201

ORGANIZATIONS

- BNSF Railway Company
- Everett Herald
- Futurewise, Snohomish Office
- People for the Preservation of Tualco Valley
- Trout Unlimited
- Roosevelt Water Association
- Highland Water District
- Snohomish PUD Water
- Master Builders of King and Snohomish Counties
- Snohomish County/Camano Association of Realtors

The Draft SEIS has also been made available at <https://www.monroe2044.com/>, and a Notice of Availability was sent to all commentors during the public scoping process and to all people on the interested parties contact list.



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CHAPTER 7, TRANSPORTATION

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