

Poplar Way Extension Bridge

Visual Quality Report

Prepared for:

Washington State Department of Transportation

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CSS	Context Sensitive Solutions
DCE	Documented Categorical Exclusion
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
LOS	Level of Service
MP	Mile Post
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

Executive Summary

PROJECT NAME: Poplar Way Extension Bridge

LOCATION: The proposed project is located in Lynnwood, Snohomish County, Washington. The project is in Township 27N, Range 04E, Sections 15 and 22. On I-5, the project crossing is at Milepost 180.

PROPOSED PROJECT: The City proposes to construct a new bridge across I-5 between Poplar Way and 33rd Avenue W. (at approximately 196th Street SW).

CLIENT: Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and City of Lynnwood

PERTEET STAFF: Jason Walker, Environmental Manager, Washington Landscape Architect #766

FIELD SURVEY: A site evaluation was performed by Perteet staff on November 11, 2013.

INTENT/PURPOSE: This report analyzes the changes in visual quality resulting from the proposed (enter project title, following the method adopted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA, 1989). This report:

- Provides documentation of the analysis of visual effects, including aesthetics and light and glare from the proposed project.
- Was written in accordance with Section 459 of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Environmental Procedures Manual (WSDOT, 2013a), which contains guidance for conducting visual quality analyses.

ANALYSIS SUMMARY: The existing conditions have Moderately Low visual quality. After the project alters the viewshed, the average is reduced insignificantly from to 1.95, from 2.07, a Moderately Low visual quality rating.

Chapter I. Introduction

I.1 What is the Poplar Way Extension Bridge Project?

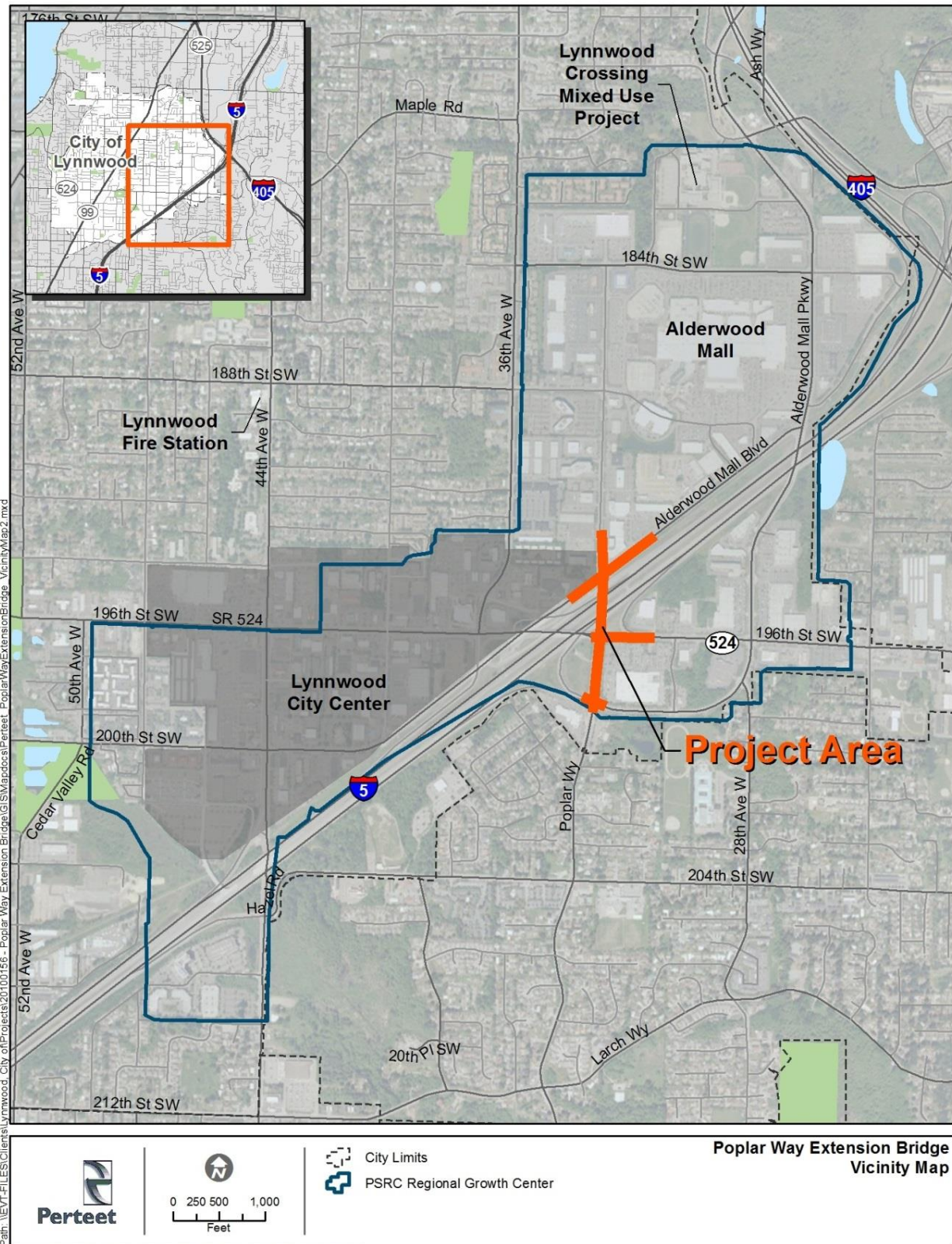
The City of Lynnwood proposes to construct a new bridge crossing over the I-5 corridor and within the City of Lynnwood, Snohomish County, Washington. The City of Lynnwood has received federal funds for the project, and will therefore follow the environmental review process and guidelines established by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The NEPA process consists of an evaluation of the environmental effects of a particular project. Further consultation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) will confirm the level of environmental review for this project, which is expected to be authorized as a Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE). As the project description and visual quality evaluation in this report indicate, improvements are expected to have no adverse effect on visual quality.

The City of Lynnwood proposes to improve access to and circulation within their City Center. The Poplar Way Extension Bridge is a key transportation improvement identified within the “Interstate 5 (I-5) to Lynnwood City Center Access Study,” developed by the City in cooperation with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Snohomish County. The City proposes to construct a new bridge across I-5 between Poplar Way and 33rd Avenue W. (at approximately 196th Street SW). The proposed project is located in Lynnwood, Snohomish County, Washington (see **Exhibit I.1**). The project is in Township 27N, Range 04E, Sections 15 and 22. On I-5, the project crossing is at Milepost 180.

Major elements of the Poplar Way Extension Bridge project will include a new multi-lane bridge structure, approximately 600 feet long with six vehicle lanes, and sidewalks and bike lanes on both sides. Intersection modifications will be made at Alderwood Mall Parkway/Poplar Way, 196th Street SW/Poplar Way, and Alderwood Mall Boulevard/33rd Avenue W. As part of the bridge span, new legs will be added to the 196th Street SW/Poplar Way and Alderwood Mall Boulevard/33rd Avenue W intersections. To accommodate the bridge, the project includes grade adjustments at these intersections: Up to 3 feet at the 196th Street SW/Poplar Way intersection and up to 5.5 feet at the Alderwood Mall Boulevard/33rd Avenue W. intersection. Widening and restriping of portions of Poplar Way, 196th Street SW, Alderwood Mall Boulevard, 33rd Avenue W., and Alderwood Mall Parkway are also included. Retaining walls will also be needed at these intersections to accommodate the grade changes. Stormwater will be collected and then treated at an existing stormwater facility, which will be upgraded (but not expanded).

The project will also accommodate the Interurban Trail, which runs along Alderwood Mall Boulevard on the west/northwest side of I-5. This trail is a regional, multi-use paved facility that connects communities from Shoreline to Everett. To accommodate the trail, a separate three-sided concrete box structure will cross over the trail, and the trail profile will be lowered. Construction of the project will begin in 2015, with a planned opening in 2017.

Exhibit I.1 – Project Vicinity Map



I.2 Why is the City of Lynnwood working with WSDOT to create the Poplar Way Extension Bridge?

The Poplar Way Extension Bridge is a key transportation improvement identified in the “Interstate 5 (I-5) to Lynnwood City Center Access Study.” The City of Lynnwood (City) was the lead agency in partnership with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in the preparation of the “Interstate 5 (I-5) to Lynnwood City Center Access Study.” Other study participants included FHWA and Snohomish County. The City of Lynnwood led this study which was tied to another federal grant called the “City Center Exit Project.” The access study was a planning effort to select solutions to current and forecasted traffic demand and safety issues related to access to the regional transportation system in the Lynnwood area. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the current and forecasted land use and traffic demands of the Lynnwood City Center Sub-Area Plan and to evaluate options for transportation improvements necessary to satisfy these demands. The study, in conjunction with determining whether there was a need and if the need was justified, evaluated improvements for local city streets, the feasibility of modifying existing access points, and / or creating new access points to I-5 or State Route 525 (SR 525). A key conclusion of the analysis of the study was that a new bridge extending Poplar Way across I-5 was an important improvement for mobility in the area.

This project proposes to improve connectivity and mobility within the Lynnwood City Center by extending Poplar Way via a new bridge over I-5, from 196th Street SW (SR 524) to Alderwood Mall Boulevard (**Exhibits I.2 and I.3**). The new structure will be a four-span precast pre-stressed concrete girder bridge with variable girder depths. The project will also include roadway improvements to SR 524 west and east of Poplar Way, to Poplar Way south of SR 524, Alderwood Mall Boulevard, and 33rd Avenue W. The Interurban Trail west of I-5 would be lowered in the area where the trail crosses under the alignment for the extension of Poplar Way.

Exhibit I.2 – Overview Image of Existing Conditions (I-5 Northbound)



Exhibit I.3 – Overview Image of Proposed Conditions (I-5 Southbound)



I.3 What are the existing facilities?

Poplar Way (south of I-5) is presently a four-lane arterial with an on-ramp and turn lanes associated with the SR-524 (196th St SW) interchange and overcrossing. North of I-5, 33rd Avenue W is a four lane arterial. The project crosses I-5 which is a median-separated eight-lane highway with HOV lanes, merge lanes, and the Interurban Trail on the north side of the corridor.

As a major center of employment and retail in the Puget Sound area, congestion on the streets surrounding the proposed project is prevalent. Traffic modeling and analysis has focused on 15 intersections in the project area (David Evans Associates, 2012; Pertteet Inc., 2012). Average Weekday Traffic Volumes (ADT) for 2011 is 27,000 vehicles on 196th Street SW and 14,000 vehicles on Alderwood Mall Boulevard. The Poplar Way Extension Bridge will improve traffic patterns around the bridge area and attract more traffic to Poplar Way. Projected ADT volumes on the proposed bridge are estimated to be 23,500 vehicles in 2015 and 31,400 vehicles in 2040. With anticipated growth factored in, seven of the 15 intersections analyzed will fall below the City's adopted Level of Service (LOS) standard of E, to LOS F during the PM peak hour in 2040. However, the proposed project improvements will help the City accommodate the significant growth that is planned for the City Center area. It appears that the City will need more roadway improvements in addition to the Poplar Way Extension Bridge to alleviate the projected long-term LOS deficiencies.

I.4 What are the project benefits?

Safety:

One of the benefits of the project will be to create an additional cross-freeway roadway, adding redundancy to the transportation system, which is vital for public safety. This will benefit emergency responders and the general public in situations where any one of the existing freeway crossings (at SR 524, Alderwood Mall Parkway, or SR 525) are closed due to incident, accident, maintenance or other

reason. The Poplar Way Extension Bridge will provide an equivalent alternate route from the City of Lynnwood fire station located at 18800 44th Avenue West (west of I-5) to locations on the east side of I-5 using either 44th Avenue West and 196th Street SW (existing) or 188th Street SW and Poplar Way (new). This redundancy will help to maintain consistently good emergency response times from the City's fire station to locations on the east side of the freeway. This redundancy will be more important in the future as the number of service calls increase due to the higher demands placed on emergency responders by the increasing population of residents and employees.

Mobility:

A key conclusion of the analysis of the "Interstate 5 (I-5) to Lynnwood City Center Access Study" was that a new bridge extending Poplar Way across I-5 is an important improvement for mobility in the area.

The east and west neighborhoods of Lynnwood are bisected by I-5, which creates barriers for vehicular traffic circulation, including bicyclists, transit and pedestrians. The area is served extensively by Community Transit (CT), but I-5 crossings to connect the neighborhoods and travelers to the City Center and the Alderwood Mall area are located to the southwest and northeast. The new bridge extension will be designed with sidewalks and bike lanes to facilitate bicycle and pedestrian movement across I-5. Access to transit in and around the City Center will be enhanced. Improved transit access to the Center will be imperative as surface parking lots are consumed by redevelopment, and as parking within the Center become more limited and more expensive. Transit routes serving the growing residential population and employment opportunities will be greatly improved and more direct with the Poplar Way overcrossing in place.

The Lynnwood Transit Center, located southwest of the project location, provides a hub for transit service to the City Center vicinity. The Lynnwood Transit Center is served by Sound Transit (ST) and CT with a total of 18 routes, providing regular route service to Everett to the north, Seattle to the south, Bellevue to the east, and to other destinations including Canyon Park, Edmonds/Edmonds Community College, Edmonds Ferry Terminal, and the Mukilteo Ferry Terminal, as well as local communities. The Lynnwood Transit Center is the planned end of the line station for an extension of Sound Transit's North Link Light Rail from Northgate in Seattle. This project is in the EIS stage, and is planned for a service start in 2023, with electric light rail trains operating four minutes apart during peak periods, and ten minutes apart during the off-peak. Forecasted ridership is 52,000 riders per day by 2030. The extension of light rail service to Lynnwood will fundamentally change the nature of transit service within the I-5 corridor. CT indicates in its Long Range Plan (February 2011) that the Lynnwood Transit Center LRT station will become a destination for feeder bus routes transporting commuters from surrounding communities, while also providing convenient connections for express service to major destinations in Snohomish County including major employment centers, educational institutions and ferry terminals. The Poplar Way Extension Bridge will enable regional and feeder bus routes to circulate more easily through the City Center on their way to and from the end-of-the-line LRT station.

Circulation in Lynnwood is essentially bisected by I-5, resulting in a lack of access between neighborhoods and downtown and accentuated congestion on the city's side streets. Construction of the Poplar Way Extension Bridge will support implementation of the Lynnwood *City Center Plan* with more direct roadway connections, serving higher density residential and employment growth. In 2040, fewer vehicle trips (approximately 5,260 trips per day) are projected to occur as a result of shifting person trips to transit, cycling and walking, resulting in a projected reduction of Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) of 105,180 miles per day, reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by 43 metric tons per day by all vehicles.

1.5 What is the project timeline?

Although construction funding has not yet been secured, it is assumed that construction will occur over two seasons beginning in 2015.

1.6 What is the no-build alternative?

If the project is not built, safety and mobility improvements will not occur and social and economic development in this area of the City Center will not move forward. Not implementing the project would be detrimental for several reasons. Intensification of development must be accompanied by transportation and access improvements to avoid a total degradation of the circulation system, which would affect both quality of life and the transport of goods into and out of the Center, which directly affects business success. The state's Growth Management Act (GMA) requires local jurisdictions to adopt and maintain "concurrency standards" to ensure that transportation facilities and services are improved in parallel with development to accommodate resulting changes in travel demand. Consistent with GMA requirements, the City of Lynnwood has adopted concurrency standards and has planned roadway facility improvements (including the Poplar Way Extension) to maintain mobility, consistent with those standards, to serve the planned City Center growth. In addition, the City has implemented non-motorized system improvements and is cooperating with transit providers to improve transit service to the Center as described in the next section.

1.7 How will the project be phased?

The project design phase is anticipated to be concluded in late 2014; construction will occur in 2015-2016.

1.8 What other projects are in the area?

The PSRC-designated Regional Growth Center accommodates a large share of the city's growth allocation including the City Center with 9.1 million square feet of redevelopment (6.6 million of which is new) planned to add 2,711 dwelling units (62% of the citywide growth) and 9,000 jobs (37% of the citywide growth) by the year 2040. In addition, 165 hotel rooms are planned for the area north of 182nd Street SW and east of Alderwood Mall Parkway as part of the Lynnwood Crossing Mixed Use Project on the site of the former Lynnwood High School. This project includes 500 multi-family dwelling units, a major retail anchor, restaurants and amusement recreation within a 900,000 gross-square-foot redevelopment that has been subjected to full environmental review, including transportation.

Chapter 2. Methodology

2.1 Why do we consider aesthetics, light, and glare as we plan this project?

The visual experience is an important component of a project and its impact on the environment. How a project looks and fits into the natural or built environment is closely allied with how it functions as a facility. Visual quality is a fundamental concept in planning and analysis. Public concern over negative visual impacts of a project can be a major source of opposition to projects. The visual effect of any alteration must be thoroughly analyzed during project development. Temporary visual impacts during project construction must also be considered.

Both the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) require that an environmental analysis be performed during project development to minimize harm to

the human, physical, or biological environment. Both SEPA and NEPA to protect the aesthetic environment. The visual impact of a project is also recognized by WSDOT's approach to project development.

2.2 What study methods were used?

This study complies with the guidelines outlined in the 2013 WSDOT Environmental Procedures Manual, Section 459 "Visual Impacts." Visual quality analyses were conducted in accordance with the U.S. Department of Transportation, FHWA Visual Impact Analysis for Highway Projects (FHWA, 1988). A site evaluation was performed by Perteet staff on November 11, 2013. Results have been tabulated and are provided the in the Appendix of this report.

A description of the FHWA methodology can be found at:

http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/publications/fulltext/roadside/visual_methodology.pdf

2.3 What studies were considered in this analysis?

Preliminary scoping information and the "Interstate 5 (I-5) to Lynnwood City Center Access Study" developed by the City in cooperation with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), FHWA, and Snohomish County were reviewed prior to the preparation of this report.

Other plans and information that was reviewed for the preparation of this report included:

- City of Lynnwood, *City Center Plan*, 2007
- Community Transit Long Range Plan, 2008
- David Evans and Associates, Traffic Modeling Update and Intersection Evaluation, 2012
- Perteet Inc. Traffic Analysis Technical Memorandum, 2012
- City of Lynnwood, Final EIS for the Lynnwood Crossing Mixed-Use Project, March, 2012
- US Census Data, 2010

2.4 What is the regulatory context of the project?

Section 459 of the 2013 WSDOT Environmental Procedures Manual contains policies for conducting a visual quality analysis. Other applicable state regulations include the Washington Highway Beautification Act (RCW 47.40.010) and the Open Space Land Preservation Act (Chapter 84.34 RCW). Beyond these broad policies, federal resource agencies may also develop management plans for a specific area or resource, such as U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USFS) forest plans that identify important scenic and visual resources, key viewing areas, and specific management goals and objectives.

2.5 How was information on visual quality collected for this study?

On-site investigation:

Information on visual quality was collected from photographs of the site, aerial photography, and through personal viewing of the project area and vicinity by the author.

Viewer analysis:

There are three main types of viewers that will experience the project area. These include recreational users, who are assumed to be highly sensitive to changes in the view; those driving freight, who are

assumed to have a low sensitivity to changes in the view; and commuters through the project area, who are assumed to have a medium sensitivity to changes in the view.

People viewing this project are generally traveling through the area for business or commuting to and from work. Travelers through the project area are assumed to be moderately sensitive to the change in views. Business owners and customers, within the viewshed of the project area, and residential users both in and adjacent to, the project are assumed to be highly sensitive to changes in the views, due to frequency and duration of viewing. Business owners of properties outside the project, who will also view changes, are assumed to be moderately sensitive because their businesses are not directly impacted and they are focused on work most of their time. The Interurban Trail is located within the project limits which will be modified by this project. The users of this trail, as well as adjacent business owners, are expected to be highly sensitive to these visual impacts.

The project area is also in the viewshed of the entrances into the City of Center. As such, viewers may be highly sensitive to changes in the views here.

Chapter 3. Affected Environment

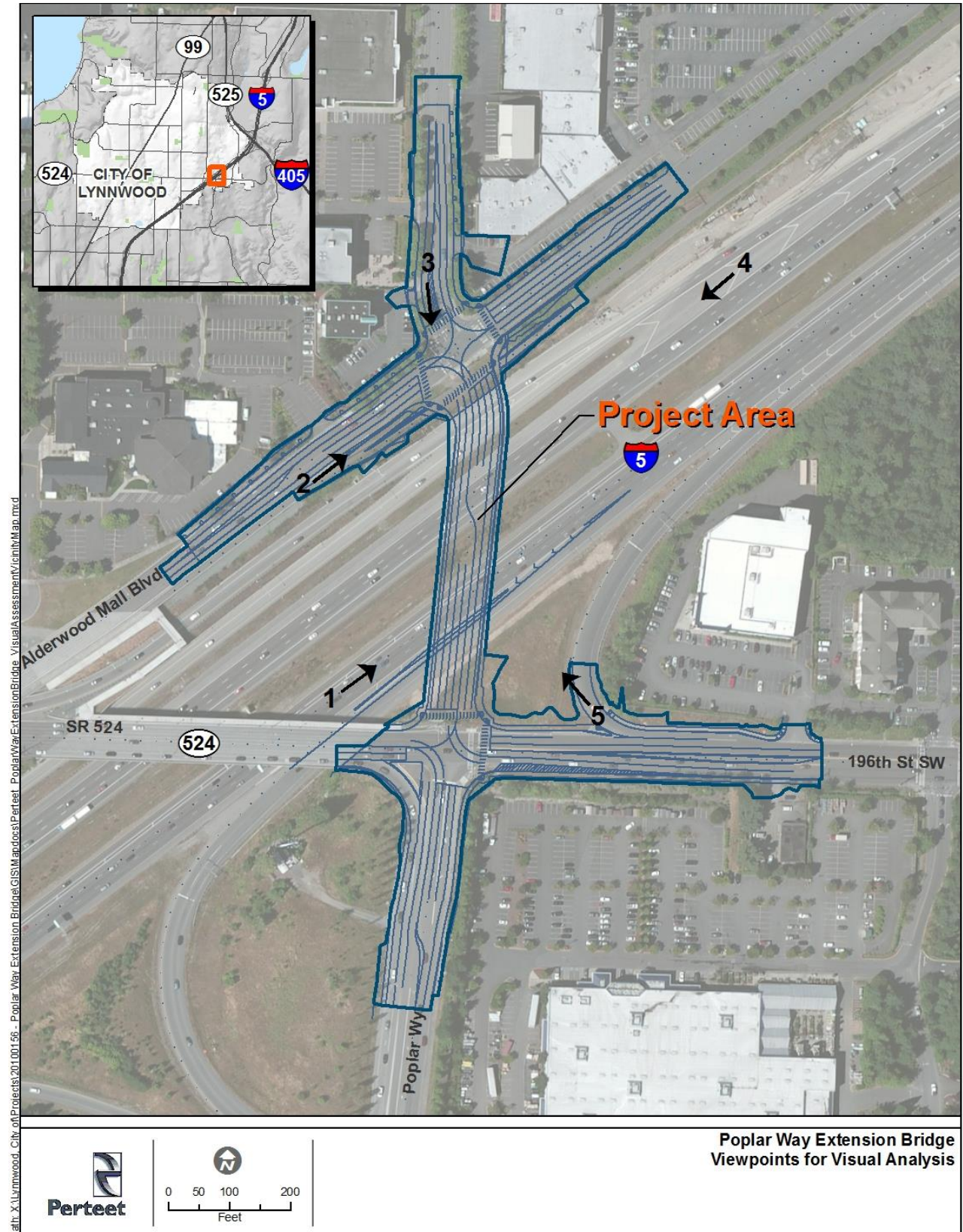
3.1 What was included in the visual quality study area?

The visual quality study area for this analysis addresses the project viewshed. The viewshed is defined to include all areas with a line-of-sight (exclusive of vegetation), looking toward and away from the project. The viewshed is larger than the project area because built and natural features determine what can and cannot be seen.

Five key views were chosen to analyze the impacts of the project. These views were chosen because they are representative of views toward and from the new roadways and bridge from a large number of users or from viewers that would have frequent views of long duration, such as workers at businesses. There is one Landscape Unit within the project limits. The predominant feeling is Urban.

The locations of key viewpoints of the project are shown in **Exhibit 3.1**.

Exhibit 3.1 – Location of Key Viewpoints



Path: X:\Lynnwood_City_of\Projects\2011\001156 - Poplar Way Extension Bridge\CIS\MapDocs\Perteeet_VisualAssessment\cmtb\Map.mxd

Source: City of Lynnwood, Snohomish County; ESRI Imagery

3.2 What is the visual character of the viewed?


3.2.1. Key View I – View looking northeast along northbound I-5.

Key View I is taken alongside northbound I-5 just before the new bridge.

Exhibit 3.2 Key View I – Looking Northeast along Northbound I-5.



Key View I is along northbound I-5 towards the I-405 interchange. The foreground, middle ground and background of the view show an urban environment with some areas of natural vegetation consisting mainly of conifer trees and grass species. Although subtle, mature conifer trees to the northeast of the foreground and in the background are interesting. Light standards and utility poles are the only encroachments visible in the view.

 Visual quality in this key view scored 2.25: a Moderately Low rating. This view has a moderately low visual impression and is of low memorability (Vividness); visual integrity has some continuity between the natural and built landscape features (Intactness); and built elements lack visual relationships to natural landforms or land cover patterns and visual order is moderately lacking (Unity).

3.2.2. Key View 2 – View looking north along Interurban Trail

Key View 2 is taken along the Interurban Trail south of the new bridge.

Exhibit 3.3 Key View 2 – Looking North along the Interurban Trail



Key View 2 shows the Interurban Trail just south of the new bridge location. Since there will continue to be pedestrians at this location once the project is built, it is anticipated that viewers will have a higher sensitivity to the project due to the duration of their view. Foreground views are of an urban transportation corridor (I-5) with some landscape separations. Middleground views are similar, but also include overhead utility line encroachments. Background views are of businesses and the I-5 corridor along with some natural vegetation to the northeast, similar to Key View 1.

👁️ Visual quality in this key view scored 1.83: a Low-Moderately Low rating. This view has a low visual impression and is of low memorability (Vividness); visual integrity has minimal continuity between the natural and built landscape features (Intactness); and built elements lack visual relationships to natural landforms or land cover patterns and visual order is moderately lacking (Unity).

3.2.3. Key View 3 – View looking south at the end of 33rd Avenue W.

Key View 3 is taken at the south end of 33rd Avenue W. at the intersection of Alderwood Mall Boulevard.

Exhibit 3.4 Key View 3 – Looking South at the End of 33rd Avenue W.



Key View 3 is at the south end of 33rd Avenue W. at the intersection of Alderwood Mall. Foreground views are of 33rd Avenue W., pedestrian sidewalks and park-like landscaping and trees on adjacent properties. The middleground view shows the intersection and pedestrian crossings and overhead utility lines. Background views show trees and a big-box commercial business across I-5.

👁️ Visual quality in this key view scored 2.75: a Low-Average rating. This view has a moderately low visual impression and is of some memorability (Vividness); visual integrity has some continuity between the natural and built landscape features (Intactness); and built elements have some relationships to natural landforms or land cover patterns and some visual order is present (Unity).

3.2.4. Key View 4 – Looking southwest along southbound I-5

Key View 5 is taken along southbound I-5 just before the new bridge.

Exhibit 3.5 Key View 4 – Looking Southwest along Southbound I-5



Key View 4 is along southbound I-5 just before the new bridge. The foreground, middleground and background of the view all show an urban environment with minimal areas of natural vegetation. Some vegetation is however visible and consists of conifer and deciduous trees in the background to the southwest along with numerous utility and light poles. Signs also encroach in the view.

👁️ Visual quality in this key view scored 1.67: a Low-Moderately Low rating. This view has a moderately low visual impression and is of low memorability (Vividness); visual integrity lacks continuity between the natural and built landscape features (Intactness); and built elements lack visual relationships to natural landforms or land cover patterns and visual order is lacking (Unity).

3.2.5. Key View 5 – View looking northwest along northbound I-5 on-ramp

Key View 5 is taken along northbound I-5 on-ramp, immediately east of the new bridge and is a similar view from the parking area of a big-box retail store.

Exhibit 3.6 Key View 5 – Looking Northwest along Northbound I-5 On-Ramp



The foreground shows a disturbed natural environment with grasses and invasive Scot's broom. The slopes on the sides of the highway corridor are steep and large expanses of retaining walls and commercial business occur in the background, along with some natural vegetation and trees to the northwest.

🗺️ Visual quality in this key view scored 1.83: a Low-Moderately Low rating. This view has a moderately low visual impression and is of low memorability (Vividness); visual integrity lacks continuity between the natural and built landscape features (Intactness); and built elements lack visual relationships to natural landforms or land cover patterns and visual order is lacking (Unity).

Chapter 4. Potential Effects

4.1 What will be the effects of construction on visual quality?

The project will temporarily impact visual quality during the construction period. The most noticeable effects to visual quality throughout the study area will result from the following:

- Stockpiling materials and establishing staging areas for equipment and other materials.
- Operating construction equipment of all sizes, including hauling trucks, earth-working vehicles, and heavy equipment.

- Placing temporary erosion and sediment control measures such as plastic sheeting, erosion fabric, sandbags, and silt fences.
- Exposure of soils and minimal dust associated with earth-movement activities.
- Narrowing or closing lanes while work is being done.
- Disruption of the view due to medium- and heavy-duty construction equipment.

These impacts will be temporary and do not require mitigation.

4.2 Will there be effects on visual quality if the project is not built?

If the project is not built, traffic congestion will continue to worsen. Excessive congestion will lower visual quality within the project area.

4.3 How will the project permanently affect visual quality?

Sidewalks/trails, overhead utilities, street signs and some vegetation will be modified throughout the project area. Roadways will be significantly widened in some areas and the new extension bridge over I-5 will be a visually prominent feature. Exhibits 4.1 to 4.5 show examples of the changes that will occur as a result of this project.

4.3.1. Key View I – View looking northeast along northbound I-5

The greatest potential impact to Key View I is the further minimization of the remaining natural landscape in the middleground and background in an otherwise highly developed environment.

Exhibit 4.1 Key View I – Design Visualization Looking Northeast along Northbound I-5




Existing



Proposed

The foreground will remain unchanged. The middleground and the distant background vegetation and landform will be obscured by the new extension bridge; however, pedestrian access will be included on the new bridge allowing for a new pedestrian viewshed. Retaining walls, substructure, and superstructure of the new bridge will increase the level of development from high to very high; however, the new bridge structure will increase unity of the built environment through use of similar construction materials in the project context. Minor encroachments remain unchanged.

 Post project, this key view is rated 1.92: down slightly from 2.25.

4.3.2. Key View 2 – View looking north along Inturban Trail

Similar to Key View 1, the greatest potential impact to Key View 2 is the further minimization of the remaining natural landscape in the middleground and background in an otherwise highly developed urban environment.

Exhibit 4.2 Key View 2 – Design Visualization Looking North along the Interurban Trail



Existing



Proposed

Some foreground vegetation will be removed and paved; however, this only includes lawn area at the planting strip along Alderwood Mall Boulevard and the adjacent embankment of I-5, which is comprised of primarily of weeds and grasses. The middle ground and the distant background vegetation and landform will be obscured by the new extension bridge; however, pedestrian access will be included on the new bridge allowing for a new pedestrian viewshed. Retaining walls, substructure, and

superstructure of the new bridge will increase the level of development from high to very high; however, the new bridge structure will increase unity of the built environment though use of similar construction materials in the project context. Encroachments remain unchanged.

🚶 Post project, this key view is rated 1.46: down slightly from 1.83.

4.3.3. Key View 3 – View looking south at the end of 33rd Avenue W.

Key View 3 is taken at the south end of 33rd Avenue W. at the intersection of Alderwood Mall Boulevard.

Exhibit 4.3 Key View 3 – Design Visualization Looking South at End of 33rd Avenue W.



Existing



Proposed

Vegetation in the foreground and middleground will remain unchanged. The distant background vegetation will be obscured by the new extension bridge; however, pedestrian access will be included on the new bridge allowing for a new pedestrian viewshed. The substructure of the new bridge will increase the level of development from moderately high to high; however, the new bridge will increase unity of the built environment though use of similar construction materials in the project context. Minor encroachments remain unchanged.

🏠 Post project, this key view is rated 2.75: down slightly from 2.50.

4.3.4. Key View 4 – Looking southwest along southbound I-5

Key View 4 is taken from along Southbound I-5 just before the new bridge.

Exhibit 4.4 Key View 4 – Design Visualization Looking Southwest along Southbound I-5.



Existing



Proposed

The foreground will remain unchanged. The middleground and the deminimis distant background vegetation and landform will be partially obscured by the new extension bridge. Retaining walls, substructure, and superstructure of the new bridge will increase the level of development; however, the

new bridge structure will increase the unity of the built environment though use of similar construction materials in the project context and will help to obscure some of the utility and light poles in the background. Minor encroachments remain unchanged.

🏠 Post project, this key view is rated 1.75: up slightly from 1.67.

4.3.5. Key View 5 – View looking northwest along northbound I-5 on-ramp.

Key View 5 is taken along northbound I-5 just before the new bridge.

Exhibit 4.5 Key View 5 – Design Visualization along Northbound I-5 On-Ramp



Existing



Proposed

Vegetation in the foreground and middleground will remain unchanged. Some background vegetation will be partially obscured by the new extension bridge; however, pedestrian access will be included on

the new bridge allowing for a new pedestrian viewshed. The visible superstructure and substructure of the new bridge will increase the level of development; however, the new bridge will also increase unity of the built environment through use of similar construction materials in the project context.

🏠 Post project, this key view is rated 2.13: up slightly from 1.83.

4.4 Will there be new sources of shadow, glare, or light?

Lighting on the bridge is proposed to be light-emitting diode (LED) and will be focused downward to avoid glare and night-sky impacts. Light standards will tie in to the existing lighting features in the context of the project area. The City of Lynnwood has traditionally used a sodium-vapor type street lighting which is a soft yellow light versus the bright white light of LED. New sodium-vapor type street lights may replace similar existing light standards within the project area outside of the bridge or the City may opt to utilize LED lighting for new standards in the project area.

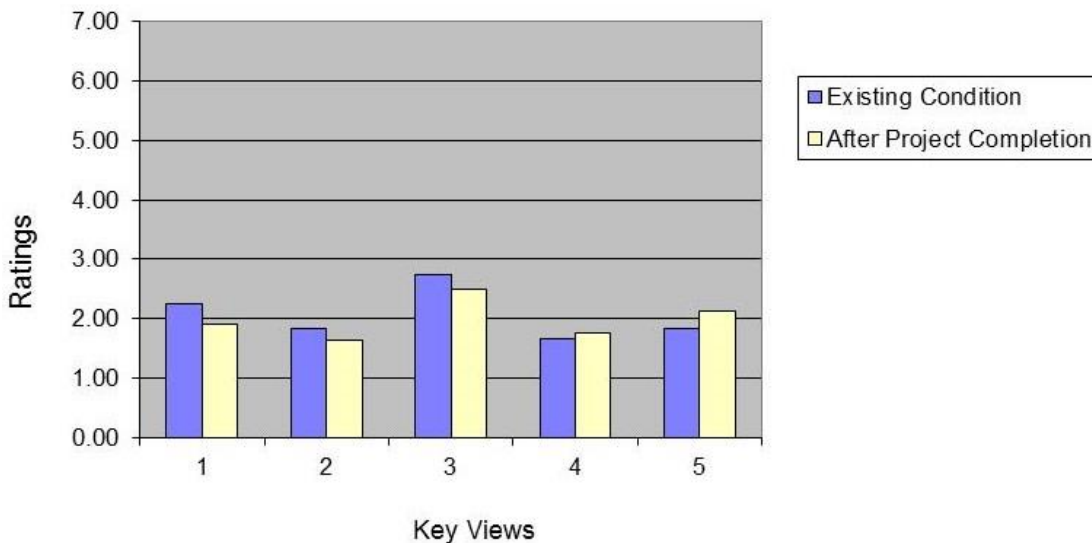
4.5 What are the direct effects of the project?

The existing conditions have Moderately Low visual quality. After the project alters the viewshed, the average score is reduced insignificantly from 2.07 to 1.95, a Moderately Low visual quality rating.

The following exhibit shows the changes by key views in visual quality. None of the views will have substantial changes in visual quality. WSDOT defines “substantial” as any change of 1.0 or greater.

Exhibit 4.6 Changes in Visual Quality Ratings

Total Visual Quality Ratings for Views From The Road



4.6 What are the cumulative effects of the project?

Under NEPA, cumulative effects result from the incremental effects of the project when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency or person undertakes the other actions.

This project is a major component of many development enhancements planned for the Lynnwood City Center and surrounding Regional Growth Center. All projects will have some slight reductions in total visual quality ratings that do not rise to the level of significance. The cumulative effects of these projects are expected to make the projects' vicinity more urban in character than at the present time, by increasing the amount of man-made elements.

Chapter 5. Measures to Avoid and Minimize or Mitigate Potential Effects

5.1 What measures will be taken to avoid/minimize/mitigate the visual effects?

Roadside restoration will be provided throughout the project limits and Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) will be provided to decrease the visual effects of the project. CSS is a process that involves stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that considers its total context by preserving scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility (FHWA 2009). Consistent with the CSS approach, the City of Lynnwood will host a minimum of two open houses to receive input from the community prior to selection of a final design. This input is necessary to ensure that the character of the community will be maintained, while meeting current local, state, and federal road standards. The City of Lynnwood will use the design guidelines below to minimize the project's visual effects.

5.1.1. Vegetation

The use of vegetation can visually unify the corridor. Vegetation measures will be implemented as follows:

1. Roadside restoration will be done according to the requirements of the Roadside Policy Manual.
2. Design will be completed by a Landscape Architect.
3. Minimize disturbances to native plant communities and specimen trees by clearly identifying clearing and grading limits.
4. Maintain as many trees as possible by protecting root zones around the base of trees, and/or installing tree wells.
5. Visually anchor the new structure by planting trees where possible.
6. Select tree species for replacement that are appropriate to the site conditions and in context with the corridor.
7. Select grasses to blend cut and fill slopes within the project limits and with adjacent land uses.

5.1.2. Human-Built Road Features

In cooperation with the City of Lynnwood and Snohomish County, improvements to the Interurban Trail will be provided including the inclusion of assessable walkways and trail connections. Trees and landscape restoration will be provided within the project to reduce visual impacts.

5.2 Mitigation for Unavoidable Adverse Visual Effects.

Reasonable mitigation is only appropriate where a project generates adverse significant environmental effects. Because visual impacts are not significant due to the CSS design approach, no other mitigation measures are recommended.

END OF REPORT

Chapter 6. References

City of Lynnwood. 2007a. *City Center Plan*.

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Washington State Department of Transportation. 2012. *Roadside Manual, M 25-30*.

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Appendix

VISUAL ANALYSIS MATRIX																			
Project Title	ALTERNATIVE	ORIENTATION TO FACILITY	VIEWPOINT	VIEWER DISTANCE			VIEWER POSITION		VIVIDNESS				INTACTNESS		UNITY	TOTAL VISUAL QUALITY			
				FORGROUND	MIDDLEGROUND	BACKGROUND	INFERIOR	SUPERIOR	LANDFORM	WATERFORM	VEGETATIVE	MANNMADE	AVERAGE	DEVELOPMENT			ENCROACHMENT	AVERAGE	
Northbound I-5	KEY VIEW 1 EXISTING	Toward	1	100	1000	miles		X		2	1	2	2	1.75	2	3	2.5	2.5	2.25
	PROPOSED									1	1	1	4	1.75	1	3	2	2	1.92
	KEY VIEW 2 EXISTING	Toward	2	50	500	miles			X	1	1	2	2	1.5	2	1	1.5	2.5	1.83
	PROPOSED									1	1	1.5	2	1.38	1	1	1	2	1.46
	KEY VIEW 3 EXISTING	Toward	3	50	500	1000		X		1	1	3	4	2.25	3	3	3	3	2.75
End of 33rd Ave W	PROPOSED									1	1	2	4	2	2	3	2.5	3	2.50
	KEY VIEW 4 EXISTING	Toward	4	100	100	2000		X		1	1	2	2	1.5	2	1	1.5	2	1.67
Southbound I-5	PROPOSED									1	1	1.5	2.5	1.5	2	1.5	1.75	2	1.75
	KEY VIEW 5 EXISTING	Toward	4	50	500	1000			X	1	1	2	3	1.75	1.5	2	1.75	2	1.83
Northbound I-5 Ramp	PROPOSED									1	1	1.5	3	1.63	1	2.5	1.75	3	2.13

Width:
7 - Very High
6 - High
5 - Moderately High
4 - Average
3 - Moderately Low
2 - Low
1 - Very Low
- Non-existent

Intactness:
Development:
7 - No development
6 - Little development
5 - Some development
4 - Average level of development
3 - Moderately high development
2 - High level of development
1 - Very high level of development
Encroachment (undesirable eyesores):
7 - None
6 - Few
5 - Some
4 - Average
3 - Several
2 - Many
1 - Very Many

Unity:
7 - Very High
6 - High
5 - Moderately High
4 - Average
3 - Moderately Low
2 - Low

Existing
Equal to Existing
Higher than Existing

Rater's Total Visual Quality Score Breakdown
7 - Dramatic, Pristine Natural Environment with water, mountains, and mature vegetation or superb example of built environment in dramatic physical setting.
6 - Very High
5 - High
4 - Moderately High
3 - Average
2 - Moderately Low
1 - Low