ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTI-AGENCY CENTER
IN DOWNTOWN SEWARD, ALASKA

JULY 2004

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Kenai Fjords National Park

and

United States Department of Agriculture
U.S. Forest Service
Chugach National Forest

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AADT	annual average daily traffic
ANILCA	Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CNF	Chugach National Forest
DOE	Determination of Eligibility
EA	Environmental Assessment
FDCP/EA	Frontcountry Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
gsf	gross square feet
ITE	Institute of Transportation Engineers
KEFJ	Kenai Fjords National Park
LCC	Life-Cycle Cost Analysis
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NPS	National Park Service
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
USFS	United States Forest Service

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1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

Kenai Fjords National Park (KEFJ), the Chugach National Forest (CNF), and the City of Seward (City) are considering the development of a multi-agency administration and visitor facility (Multi-Agency Center or Center) in downtown Seward, Alaska (Figure 1). The Center will include space for administration, education programs, interpretive exhibits and programs, visitor information, and conference facilities. Six individually owned properties comprising a total area of approximately 1.3 acres are being analyzed as potential sites for the Multi-Agency Center. The Center would be located on a combination of at least three but no more than five individually owned properties and/or part of a City-owned right of way in downtown Seward.

The purpose of the action is to develop a Multi-Agency Center to provide for co-located administrative and visitor facilities for both KEFJ and CNF that meets the current and future needs of both agencies in a location that is visible and readily accessible to the public. The Center would also incorporate conference facilities managed by the City of Seward to accommodate conference activities by various groups and organizations. The Center would provide KEFJ and CNF with a visitor contact facility with adequate space to conduct public business, where visitors can become informed about the varied recreational opportunities and resources available on federally owned public lands in the region at a single unified location. A purpose of the Center would be to reduce agency costs and improve operating efficiencies by allowing shared reception services, mailroom functions, phone systems, and other necessary services combined to improve visitor service.

The action is needed because the administrative and visitor service space requirements for both agencies currently exceed the capacity of the existing facilities, resulting in reduced visitor service capabilities and inefficient operations and maintenance. The existing National Park Service (NPS) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) administrative office space capacity is insufficient to house the size of staff required to manage NPS and USFS lands in the area. The NPS KEFJ office's lobby and auditorium experience frequent crowding during the summer season, particularly when tour boats and buses disembark visitors. Demand for seating often exceeds the capacity of the 30-person auditorium, and existing space is inadequate to display exhibits conveying safety, outdoor ethics, and park interpretation. Additionally, most of KEFJ's administrative offices are located separately in the Ray Building (leased space) in downtown Seward, which inefficiently splits staff between two offices. The USFS Seward Ranger District Office is located outside of the more heavily traveled tourist and public travel routes and provides limited opportunity for disseminating public information. The Seward Ranger District also houses part of its staff out of the Kenai Lake Work Center, about 23 miles from Seward. Parking adjacent to both buildings is limited.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) considers the development of a Multi-Agency Center in downtown Seward, Alaska. This EA analyzes potential impacts of no action, and of four distinct action alternatives, and has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1508.9), and the NPS NEPA Compliance Guideline, DO-12 *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-Making*.

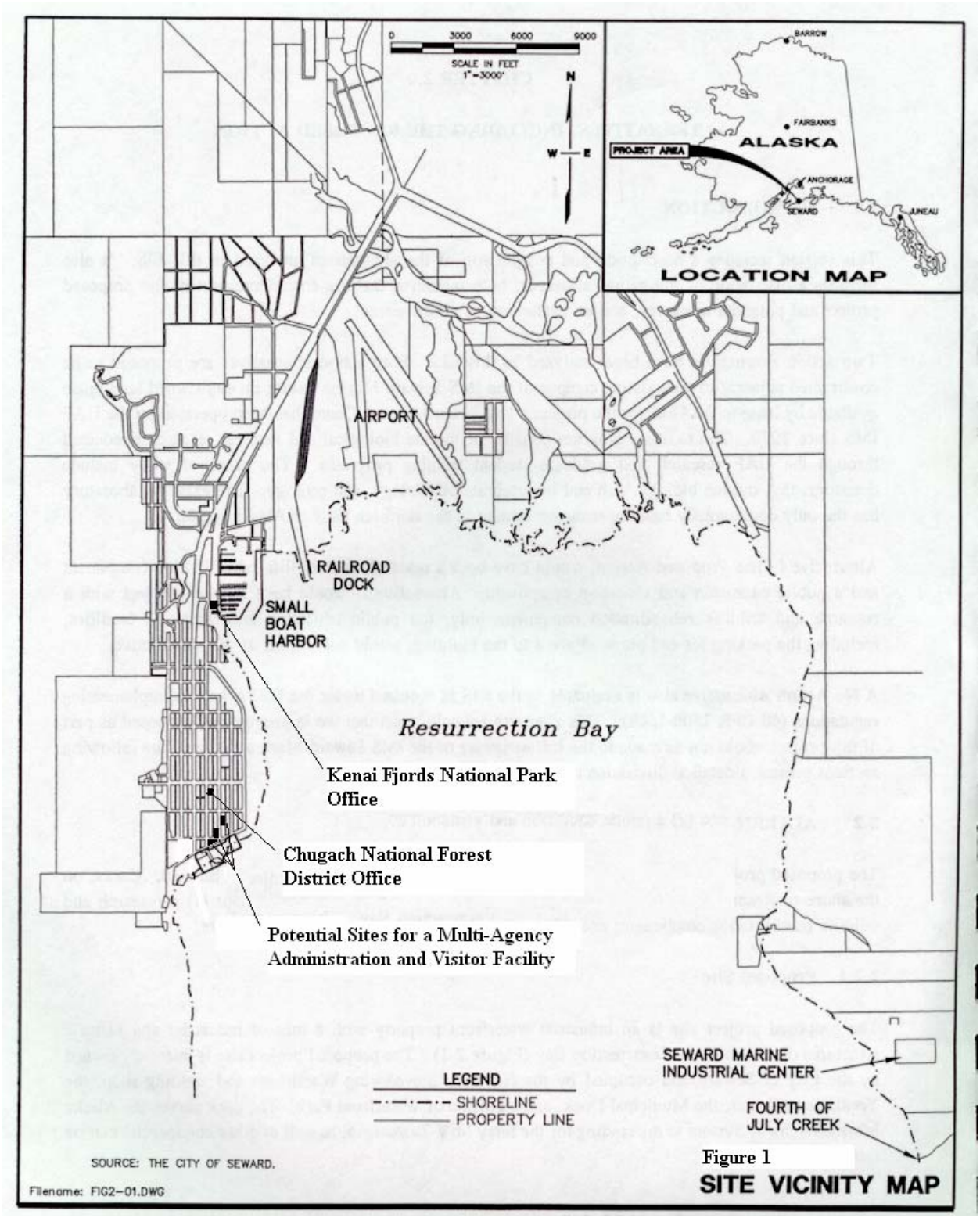

Figure 1
SITE VICINITY MAP

1.1 Background

In September 1995, the NPS completed the Frontcountry Development Concept Plan/ Environmental Assessment (FDCP/EA) for KEFJ, which is incorporated by reference (NPS, 1995). The plan considered expansion of the visitor and administration facilities in Seward since they were experiencing visitor crowding during the summer season and exceeding the capacity for administrative space in the existing headquarters building.

The FDCP/EA evaluated 19 sites as potential building locations in Seward. Several Native-owned sites were also considered in and near Seward, but these were determined to be unsuitable for the location of the visitor center (NPS, 1995). Fifteen sites were rejected from further consideration for environmental or physical reasons (NPS, 1995). The FDCP/EA included five alternatives developed around four potential sites.

One of the sites initially rejected in the FDCP/EA was the University of Alaska's Institute for Marine Science property (K.M. Rae Building) on the corner of 3rd Avenue and Railroad Avenue. The property was considered as an administrative site with the visitor center being shared at the Alaska SeaLife Center site (NPS, 1995). Public response regarding common space partnering with the Alaska SeaLife Center was almost unanimously negative, and this alternative was rejected.

The FDCP/EA considered five alternatives for a visitor center in Seward. Two alternatives proposed expanding the existing KEFJ visitor center at its current location next to the boat harbor, with the administration functions in a separate building. Two alternatives combined the visitor center with the administration facility. A no action alternative maintained the existing KEFJ visitor center/administration building. Of the four action alternatives, one proposed an NPS administration facility and three proposed an interagency administration facility. All proposed site locations were in or near the Seward small boat harbor.

On March 22, 1996, the NPS approved a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the FDCP/EA (NPS, 1996). The FONSI concluded that the NPS would proceed with the design of a multi-agency administrative and visitor facility. A facility site location was not determined although the sites described in Alternative C (expanding the existing NPS visitor center and building new administration offices at Van Buren Street and 4th Avenue) and Alternative D (building a new visitor center/interagency administration building at Van Buren Street and 4th Avenue) would be considered. The NPS determined that final site selection would depend on the number of partners, available lands, the complexity of the structure, and parking availability.

Upon completion of the FDCP/EA the City of Seward proposed use of a 4+-acre site on Ballaine Boulevard adjacent to Resurrection Bay between the boat harbor and downtown Seward. A concept planning and design study was conducted for the site (GDM Inc., 1997). This site was dropped from further consideration because of its location within an area of high seismic risk (City of Seward, 1985; R&M Consultants, Inc., 1994).

In May of 1999, the NPS entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the CNF, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Alaska State Parks, the City of Seward, the Seward Chamber of Commerce, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau. The goal was to provide a framework

for the coordination of activities working toward the approval, funding, design, construction, and operation of a co-located, jointly managed visitor center and administrative facility in Seward, Alaska.

In December 2001, KEFJ and CNF released an EA for public review that considered the purchase and development of a multi-agency visitor and administration facility on two sites comprising about 2.8 acres in Seward, Alaska (NPS and USFS, 2001). The sites included a 2.4-acre site owned by the University of Alaska, containing the 5,900-square foot K.M. Rae Building, and a 0.4-acre residential site about ½ block northeast of the University property. These sites would be rehabilitated and expanded to provide visitor services, administrative space, and parking for both KEFJ and CNF.

In February 2002, the agencies approved a FONSI concluding that the properties should be purchased and developed as a multi-agency visitor and administration facility (NPS and USFS, 2001). Subsequent to the FONSI, the University of Alaska declined to sell their property. The NPS purchased the 0.4-acre residential property in February 2002.

In 2002, the NPS, USFS, and City of Seward commissioned The Portico Group to prepare the Seward Waterfront Study to evaluate properties and set a course of action that would expedite the construction of a Multi-Agency Center, including a conference facility for City-managed conference activities, and to assist in the revitalization of Seward's downtown waterfront district (The Portico Group, 2003). All landowners within the Seward Waterfront Study Area, including Native Corporations and groups, were invited to participate and make known any available lands during the preparation of the waterfront site selection study. Landowners willing to consider selling property were encouraged to contact the KEFJ park superintendent or attend a series of workshops and meetings (April 2003 to September 2003) that explored site selection. Public notices for each of the three workshops/meetings were published in the local newspaper, *The Seward Phoenix Log*, and posted on public bulletin boards throughout Seward.

The Seward Waterfront Study determined that the Multi-Agency Center should be located in downtown Seward and should function as a unified facility. Site selection criteria for the Seward Multi-Agency Center locations required (1) land area and/or building square footage adequate to accommodate the joint needs of NPS, USFS, and other partnering agencies, (2) accessibility to recreational and administrative visitors, (3) aesthetic and interpretive opportunities with an emphasis on proximity to Resurrection Bay, (4) environmental feasibility that considers avoidance of sensitive areas and minimal exposure to hazardous conditions, and (5) individual lots or parcels of a size or in a contiguous arrangement to meet facility needs of about 40,000 square feet of building space and at least a portion of the required vehicle parking.

The Seward Waterfront Study also led to the preparation of the Seward Multi-Agency Center Concept Design Alternatives Phase report, which develops and evaluates the four action alternatives being considered in this EA (The Portico Group, 2004).

1.2 Issues/Impact Topics

To focus the EA, the NPS selected specific issues for further analysis and eliminated others from evaluation.

1.2.1 Issues Selected for Detailed Analysis

The following issues have been identified for impact analysis in this EA. A public information meeting was held in Seward on April 14, 2004, to present project history, current status, and the design process (see Section 5.0 Consultation and Coordination for meeting details such as number of persons attending and location). Issues were selected for analysis based on agency and public concerns identified during the information meeting and throughout the history of the project. A brief rationale for the selection of each issue is described.

Visitor Experience: Visitor experience would be directly affected by the continued use of existing facilities or the development of a Multi-Agency Center with adequate interpretative and visitor orientation facilities.

Visual Resources: The visual character of the downtown area could be affected by the removal of urban trees and shrubbery and the placement of buildings that may be out of context with the existing setting.

Transportation (Pedestrian and Vehicular) and Parking: The development of a Multi-Agency Center may affect pedestrian and vehicle traffic patterns in downtown Seward. Residential and commercial vehicle parking in the downtown area may be affected by government employees and visitors using available parking.

Land Use and Land Use Plans: Development of a Multi-Agency Center and associated parking may affect existing land uses in downtown Seward.

Cultural Resources: Cultural resources may be affected by the development of a Multi-Agency Center and associated parking facilities.

National Park and National Forest Management: Development of a Multi-Agency Center or continued use of existing facilities would directly affect management and operations of KEFJ and CNF with respect to interpretation, visitor information services, and staff coordination.

Public Safety: Public safety concerns include the effects of an earthquake or tsunami on the proposed facilities. Seward is located in the zone of highest earthquake risk because of the frequency and magnitude of recorded earthquakes in the area. Facilities could also be subject to potential risks from tsunamis.

Local Economy: The removal of commercial and residential properties from the downtown area may affect Seward's economy. An increase in government workers and visitors in the downtown area may increase economic opportunities for businesses.

1.2.2 Issues Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

Due to the location and nature of this project, the following issues have been eliminated from detailed impact analysis. A brief rationale for the elimination of each issue is described.

Air Quality: No effects to air quality would be expected from the proposed development in downtown Seward.

Water Resources and Wetlands: No wetlands or water resources occur on the proposed development sites.

Floodplains: The proposed development sites are not located in the 100-year floodplain. The sites are located in an area that was not flooded during an intense 3-day storm in October 1986.

Vegetation and Wildlife: The proposed development sites are located in the developed portion of Seward. The project would not affect vegetation or wildlife.

Threatened and Endangered Species: No threatened or endangered species occur within or adjacent to the proposed development sites.

Subsistence: The proposed development sites, located in the City of Seward, are not used for subsistence activities. See Appendix A for the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Section 810 subsistence evaluation.

Resources and Values of Kenai Fjords National Park and Chugach National Forest: The potential development of a Multi-Agency Center would have no effect on the resources and values of KEFJ or CNF. The proposed facility would be located outside the boundaries of both units; therefore, the project would not lead to an impairment of park resources or values.

Coastal Zone Consistency: The proposed development is in a category of actions that do not normally affect the coastal zone and therefore do not require a consistency determination. Item C of the Memorandum of Understanding between the State of Alaska and the USFS includes the following example of an action that does not normally require a consistency determination: construction, reconstruction, operations, or maintenance of administrative sites located on National Forest System lands within areas that are subject to local zoning regulations.

Lands in the City of Seward immediately adjacent to the coastal shoreline would not be disturbed. There would be no fill material placed on the shoreline. Surface water runoff would be diverted into existing city storm drains and would not directly enter coastal waters.

Effects on Minority and Low Income Populations: Executive Order 12898 requires federal agencies to incorporate environmental justice into their missions by identifying and addressing adverse human health or environmental effects in their programs and policies on minorities and low-income populations and communities. The proposed project would not result in adverse impacts on any minority or low-income populations or communities.

1.3 Permits and Approvals Needed to Implement Project

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 Consultation: Section 106 of the NHPA requires the lead federal agency to take into account the effects of the project on properties included or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Further, Section 106 requires consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and provides for comments from the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Consultation with SHPO is currently underway, and the Section 106 review is being conducted in parallel with the preparation of the EA. Information collected through the Section 106 process will be included in the appropriate sections. See Section 2.9 for mitigation measures associated with this approval.

Building and Fire Codes: The Multi-Agency Center must be designed in accordance with the City of Seward's ordinances and the pertinent sections of the Uniform Building Code. These codes are further discussed in Section 2.9. In addition, all Fire and Safety Codes required by the State of Alaska Department of Public Safety will be met. The National Fire Protection Codes adopted by the NPS will also be met.

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2.0 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

This section describes and compares the range of reasonable alternatives considered for analysis in this EA that meet the identified purpose and need. Four action alternatives have been selected for consideration in addition to the no action alternative. This section also identifies the environmentally preferred alternatives and presents potential mitigating measures that would be considered as part of the proposed project.

2.1 No Action Alternative

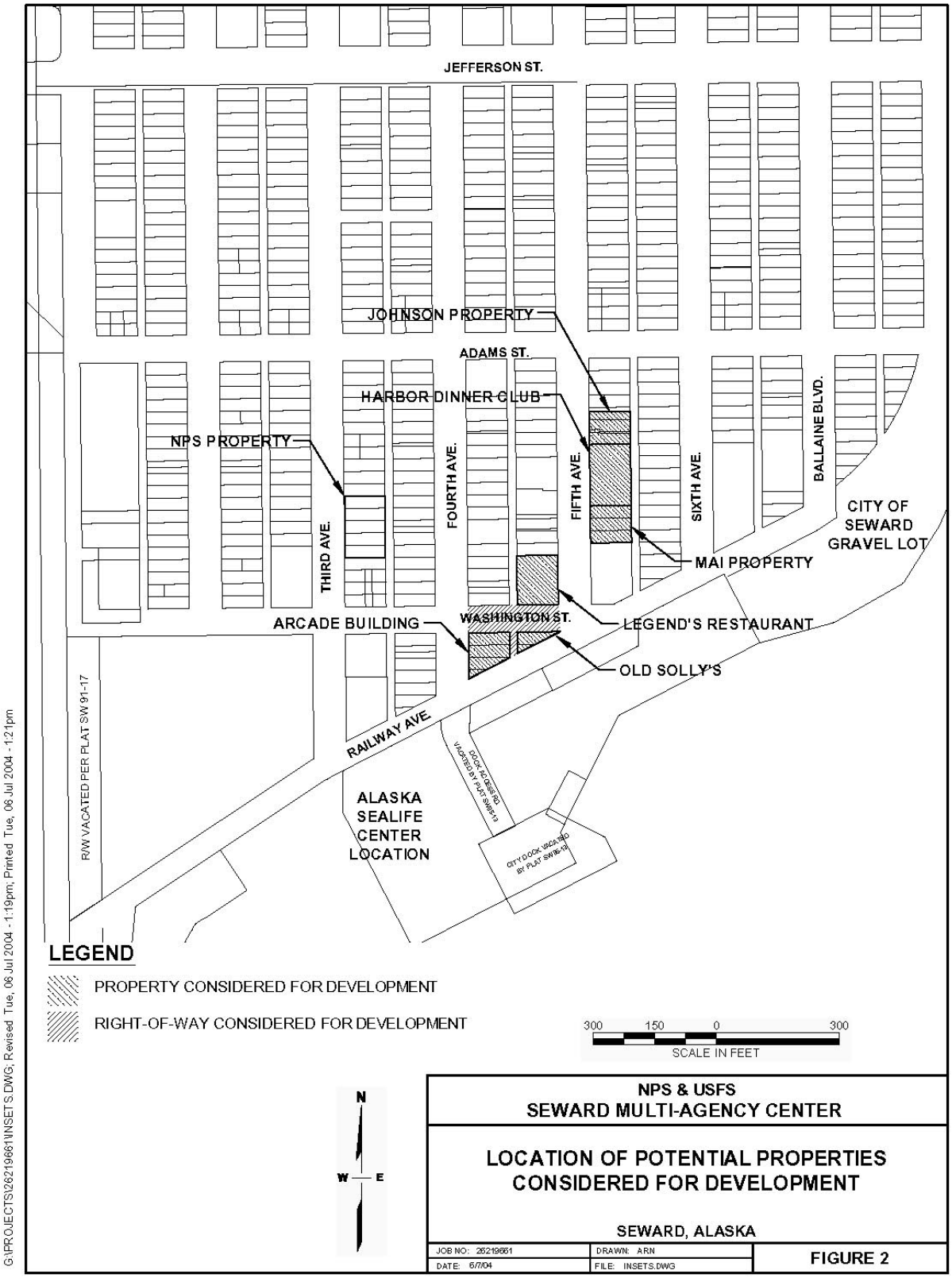
The no action alternative represents a continuation of the existing situation and provides a baseline for evaluating the changes and impacts of the action alternatives. Under the no action alternative, the KEFJ and CNF would continue to use existing administrative/visitor facilities in the City of Seward. The KEFJ would maintain a visitor center and administrative building at Seward's small boat harbor and rented office space in the downtown area, while the CNF would continue to use its offices in Seward and at the Kenai Lake Work Center for administrative purposes. There would be no expansion of existing facilities, and a conference center would not be built for use by the City of Seward. Existing facilities are described further in Section 3.0, Affected Environment.

2.2 Actions Common to All Action Alternatives

All four of the action alternatives propose building a Multi-Agency Center in downtown Seward to provide administrative offices and visitor facilities for the NPS and USFS and a conference center for city-managed conference activities. The Center would house 133 permanent and seasonal NPS and USFS employees, including shared administrative employees. The visitor and conference facilities would accommodate a maximum of 739 people at one time and would include a 200-person auditorium and a 300-person meeting room. The combined space need of the Center is about 39,000 square feet.

Six individually owned properties are being analyzed as potential sites for the Multi-Agency Center. The action alternatives consider locating the Center on a combination of three to five of the six individually owned properties and/or part of a City-owned right of way (Washington Street and/or the alley between the Arcade and Old Solly's south of Washington Street) in downtown Seward (Figure 2). The six properties comprise a total area of approximately 1.3 acres:

- Arcade Building at 4th Avenue and Railway Avenue (8,712 square foot lot)
- Old Solly's Building at 5th Avenue and Railway Avenue (2,614 square foot lot)
- Legend's Restaurant at 5th Avenue and Washington Street (12,197 square foot lot)
- Mai Property on 5th Avenue (9,148 square foot lot)
- Harbor Dinner Club at 220 5th Avenue (14,810 square foot lot)
- Johnson Property on 5th Avenue (8,276 square foot lot)


JEFFERSON ST.
JOHNSON PROPERTY
ADAMS ST.
HARBOR DINNER CLUB
NPS PROPERTY
THIRD AVE.
FOURTH AVE.
FIFTH AVE.
SIXTH AVE.
BALLAINE BLVD.
CITY OF SEWARD GRAVEL LOT
MAI PROPERTY
ARCADE BUILDING
WASHINGTON ST.
LEGEND'S RESTAURANT
OLD SOLLY'S
RAILWAY AVE.
R/W VACATED PER PLAT SW 91-17
ALASKA SEALIFE CENTER LOCATION
LEGEND
PROPERTY CONSIDERED FOR DEVELOPMENT
RIGHT-OF-WAY CONSIDERED FOR DEVELOPMENT
300 150 0 300
SCALE IN FEET
N
W E
NPS & USFS
SEWARD MULTI-AGENCY CENTER
LOCATION OF POTENTIAL PROPERTIES CONSIDERED FOR DEVELOPMENT
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In order to meet the purpose and need, the existing buildings on the selected properties would be demolished and a new two-story complex would be constructed under all four action alternatives. Administrative facilities would occupy approximately 12,760 square feet and would include offices, work areas, conference rooms, computer facilities, and storage. Visitor facilities would make up approximately 12,450 square feet, including classrooms, exhibits, and interpretive displays. The conference center would occupy approximately 6,700 square feet and would incorporate conference and meeting spaces and support spaces. An additional 6,440 square feet would be required for building systems (circulation, heating, etc.).

The historic character of Seward's downtown area would be preserved in accordance with the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004).

Parking required by City of Seward planning and land use regulations is estimated at 160 spaces for the facility. One 0.4-acre lot already owned by NPS (see Figure 2) would be developed to provide approximately 32 spaces for government and staff vehicle parking. One or more of the six properties not already included as part of the proposed site for a given action alternative could also be developed into parking areas. Additionally, on-street parking and shared parking (i.e., visitors who park and walk to multiple downtown businesses in addition to the Multi-Agency Center) would be used to achieve the required parking spaces. A public gravel lot east of the Alaska SeaLife Center could be converted by the City of Seward to provide conference event or peak facility use parking (approximately 60 spaces). Table 1 provides a summary of the approximate number of spaces available on each lot or street section; the Traffic and Parking Analysis is included as Appendix B.

Table 1: Parking Space Summary

Location	Number of Spaces Available
Off-Street	
Arcade Building	21
Old Solly's Building	4
Legend's Restaurant	35
Mai Property	21
Harbor Dinner Club	41
Johnson Property	21
NPS Property	32
City Waterfront Property (east of Alaska SeaLife Center)	60
Total Off-Street Parking	235
On-Street	
4th Avenue (diagonal spaces west of Arcade Building)	8
Washington Street (parallel spaces north of Arcade/Solly's Buildings)	8
5th Avenue (diagonal spaces east of Legend's Restaurant)	7
5th Avenue (diagonal spaces east of Washington Street, if vacated)	5
5th Avenue (west of Mai Property)	7
5th Avenue (west of Harbor Dinner Club)	11
5th Avenue (west of Johnson Property)	7
Total On-Street Parking	53
Grand Total Potential Parking Spaces	**288**

In order to avoid building excessive parking lots in the downtown area, a phased approach could be taken to address parking for the Multi-Agency Center. A portion of the required parking

spaces could be developed initially, and as new parking demands are assessed, additional parking areas could be developed as needed. The NPS would coordinate with the City to address a phased approach to parking.

Parking areas would contain landscaped islands that visually break up the expanse of asphalt and provide a more appealing view for the community.

Construction of the new facilities would comply with local and federal building code requirements, including those pertaining to seismic activity and flood hazards. Emergency warning systems and evacuation procedures would be incorporated into the building design, and the center would comply with all requirements for access by the disabled.

A cost analysis by alternative is included as Appendix C.

2.3 Alternative 1: Single Site, Mid-Block Parcel

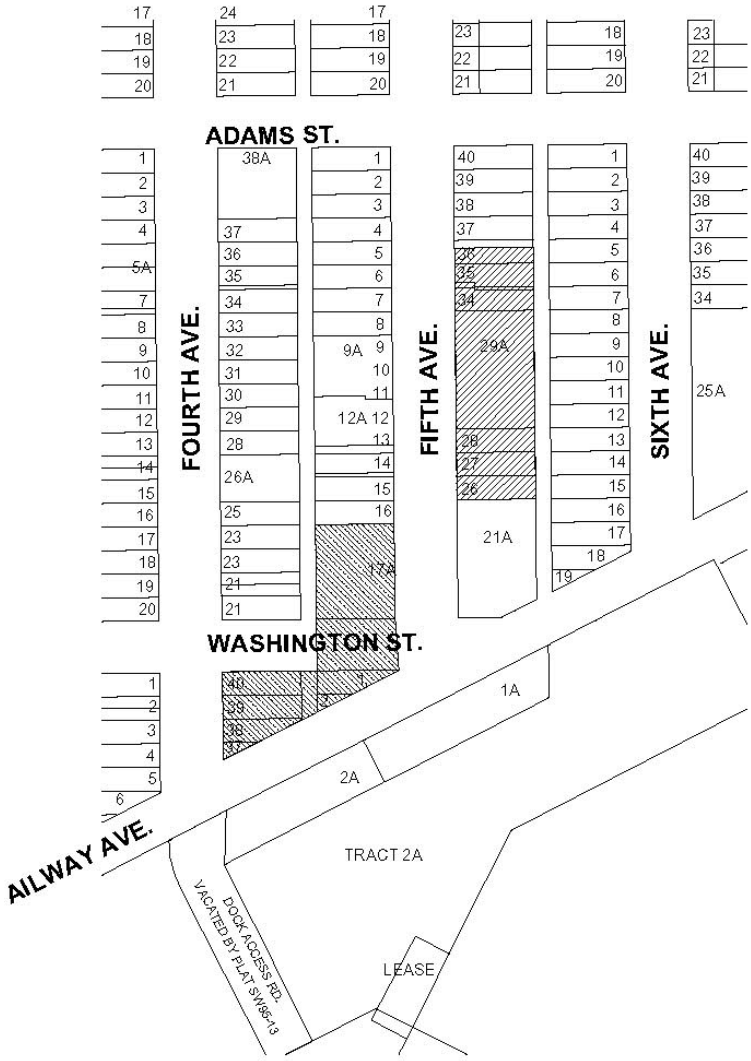
Alternative 1 would use the three parcels mid-block on the east side of 5th Avenue (Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property) to make a single site (Figure 3). A single, two-story building would be constructed on the site; the building would have a footprint of approximately 22,800 square feet and would incorporate areas of outdoor "green space" (e.g., lawns and landscaped areas). The visitor service and conference functions would be located on the building's first floor, and the administrative and staff functions would be located on the second floor.

Alternative 1 could achieve 152 of the 160 required parking spaces using 25 on-street parking spaces on 5th Avenue, 92 off-street spaces provided by the NPS-owned property and City Waterfront property, and 35 off-street parking spaces possible on the Legend's Restaurant site (Table 1).

2.4 Alternative 2: Single Site, Railway and 5th Avenue Parcel

Alternative 2 would use a combination of the three parcels on Railway and 5th Avenues (Arcade Building, Old Solly's Building, and Legend's Restaurant) and a portion of Washington Street to make a single site (Figure 4). A single, two-story building would be constructed on the site; the building would have a footprint of approximately 19,800 square feet and would incorporate areas of outdoor "green space" (e.g., lawns and landscaped areas). The visitor service and conference functions would be split between two floors with most of the visitor services on the first floor and the conference facilities on the second floor. The administrative and staff functions would also occupy two floors and would be located primarily within the former Arcade and Old Solly's sites.

All or a portion of Washington Street and the alley between the Arcade and Old Solly's sites would be vacated under this alternative. Use of Washington Street could be changed from vehicular to pedestrian, although vehicular access to the alley between the buildings on 4th and 5th Avenues, north of Washington Street, would be maintained for service or emergency purposes.



LEGEND

LOTS DEVELOPED UNDER ALTERNATIVE 1

LOTS NOT DEVELOPED UNDER ALTERNATIVE 1

200 100 0 200
SCALE IN FEET

N
W E

NPS & USFS
SEWARD MULTI-AGENCY CENTER

ALTERNATIVE 1:
SINGLE SITE, MID-BLOCK PARCEL

SEWARD, ALASKA

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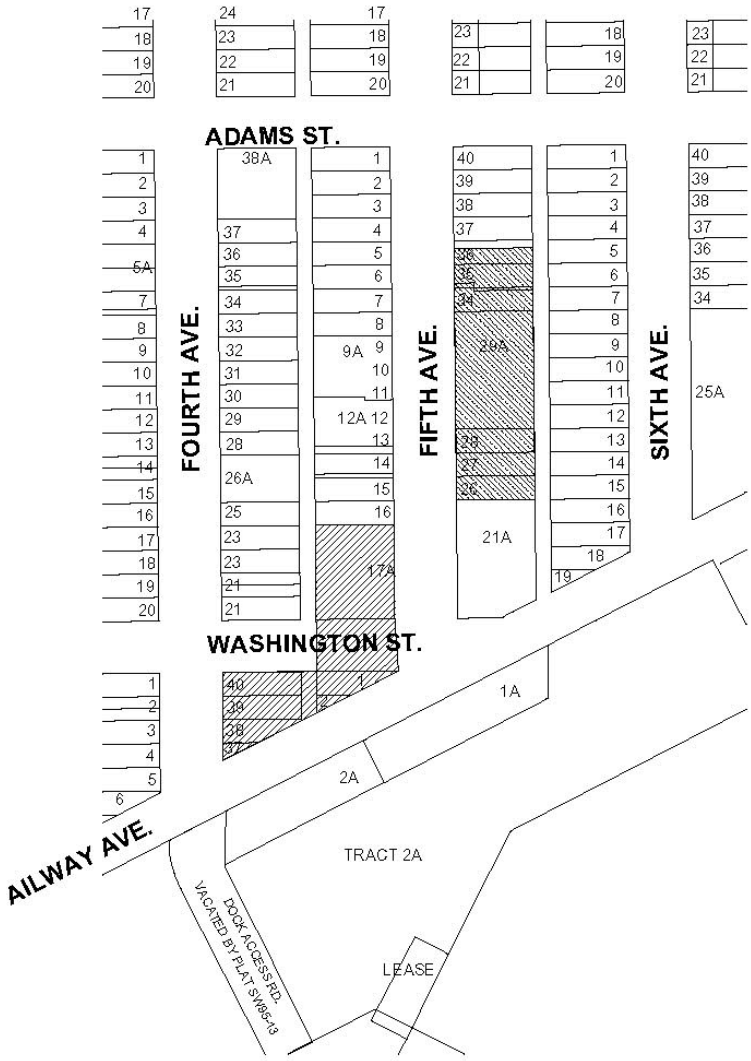

LEGEND

LOTS DEVELOPED UNDER ALTERNATIVE 2

LOTS NOT DEVELOPED UNDER ALTERNATIVE 2

200 100 0 200
SCALE IN FEET

N
W E

NPS & USFS
SEWARD MULTI-AGENCY CENTER

ALTERNATIVE 2:
SINGLE SITE, RAILWAY
AND 5TH AVENUE PARCEL

SEWARD, ALASKA

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Alternative 2 could achieve 153 or 154 of the 160 required parking spaces using 20 on-street parking spaces on 4th and 5th Avenues, 92 off-street spaces provided by the NPS-owned property and City Waterfront property, and either 41 off-street parking spaces possible on the Harbor Dinner Club site or 42 off-street parking spaces possible on the Mai and Johnson Properties combined (Table 1).

2.5 Alternative 3: Two Sites, Railway Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels

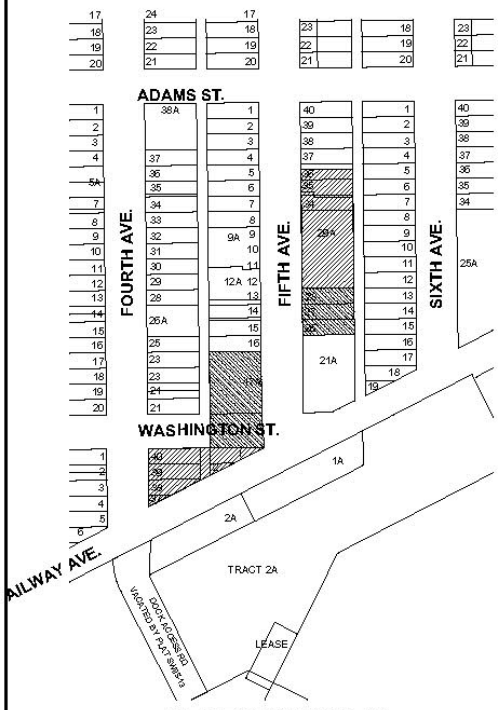
Alternative 3 would use a combination of two of the three parcels mid-block on the east side of 5th Avenue for one building, and the Arcade Building and Old Solly's Building lots to create a parcel for a second building along Railway Avenue (Figure 5). Of the mid-block parcels, either the Johnson Property and Harbor Dinner Club lots would be combined (Alternative 3a), or the Harbor Dinner Club and Mai Property lots would be combined (Alternative 3b). A two-story building with a footprint of approximately 12,900 square feet would be constructed on the mid-block site, and an additional two-story building with a footprint of approximately 10,800 square feet would be constructed on the Railway Avenue site. The mid-block building would incorporate areas of outdoor "green space" (e.g., lawns and landscaped areas). The visitor service and conference functions would be located at the mid-block site with visitor services on the first floor and the conference facilities on the second floor. The administrative and staff functions would be located on two floors within the former Arcade and Old Solly's sites.

The alley between the Arcade and Old Solly's sites would be vacated under this alternative.

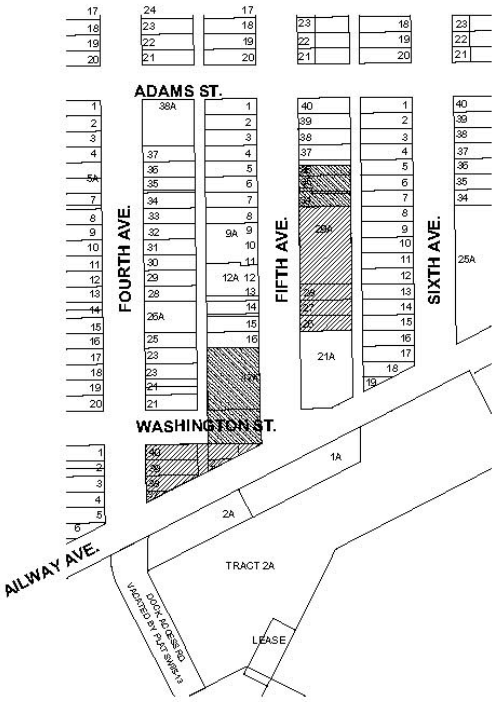
Alternative 3 could achieve 162 of the 160 required parking spaces using 35 on-street parking spaces on 5th Avenue and Washington Street, 92 off-street spaces provided by the NPS-owned property and City Waterfront property, and 35 off-street parking spaces possible on the Legend's Restaurant site (Table 1).

2.6 Alternative 4: Two Sites, Railway and 5th Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels

Alternative 4 would use a combination of two of the three parcels mid-block on the east side of 5th Avenue for one building, and the Old Solly's Building lot, Legend's Restaurant lot, and a portion of Washington Street to create a parcel for a second building (Figure 6). Of the mid-block parcels, either the Johnson Property and Harbor Dinner Club lots would be combined (Alternative 4a), or the Harbor Dinner Club and Mai Property lots would be combined (Alternative 4b). A two-story building with a footprint of approximately 11,000 square feet would be constructed on the mid-block site, and an additional two-story building with a footprint of approximately 9,000 square feet would be constructed at the former Old Solly's and Legend's sites. The combined sites would be larger than the area needed for the buildings; therefore, outdoor park space and on-site parking (21 spaces on the Johnson or Mai properties, see Table 1) would be incorporated into the design. The visitor service and conference functions would be located at the mid-block site with visitor services on the first floor and the conference facilities on the second floor. The administrative and staff functions would be located on two floors within the former Old Solly's and Legend's sites. This alternative would also allow the visitor/conference functions and administrative/staff functions to switch sites if necessitated by design criteria.



ALTERNATIVE 3A



ALTERNATIVE 3B

LEGEND

LOTS DEVELOPED UNDER ALTERNATIVE 3

LOTS NOT DEVELOPED UNDER ALTERNATIVE 3

300 150 0 300

SCALE IN FEET

N

W E

NPS & USFS
SEWARD MULTI-AGENCY CENTER

ALTERNATIVE 3:
TWO SITES, RAILWAY AVENUE
AND MID-BLOCK PARCELS

SEWARD, ALASKA

JOB NO: 26219661	DRAWN: ARN	FIGURE 5
DATE: 6/7/04	FILE: INSETS.DWG	

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ALTERNATIVE 4A

ALTERNATIVE 4B

LEGEND

LOTS DEVELOPED UNDER ALTERNATIVE 4

LOTS NOT DEVELOPED UNDER ALTERNATIVE 4

300 150 0 300

SCALE IN FEET

N

W E

NPS & USFS
SEWARD MULTI-AGENCY CENTER

ALTERNATIVE 4:
TWO SITES, RAILWAY AND 5TH AVENUE AND MID-BLOCK PARCELS

SEWARD, ALASKA

JOB NO: 262196661	DRAWN: ARN	FIGURE 6
DATE: 6/7/04	FILE: INSETS.DWG	

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All or a portion of Washington Street would be vacated under this alternative. Use of Washington Street could be changed from vehicular to pedestrian, although vehicular access to the alley between the buildings on 4th and 5th Avenues, north of Washington Street, would be maintained for service or emergency purposes.

Alternative 4 could achieve 165 of the 160 required parking spaces using 52 on-street parking spaces, 92 off-street spaces provided by the NPS-owned property and City Waterfront property, and 21 off-street parking spaces possible on either the Mai or Johnson Property (Table 1).

2.7 Environmentally Preferred Alternative

Development of a Multi-Agency Center under any of the four action alternatives is environmentally preferred. The differences between impacts of the four action alternatives are minor, and the improvements of each alternative to the visitor experience and NPS and USFS management over the status quo are substantial. None of the action alternatives would have a long-term impact to visual resources, land use, or cultural and archaeological resources. Under normal conditions, each action alternative would result in traffic trips per day that would be comparable to existing conditions, and parking spaces that would adequately accommodate normal Center usage. The new conference center that would be built under the four action alternatives would bring visitors to Seward throughout the year, benefiting the local economy in the long term. Each action alternative would result in some lost property tax revenues for the City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough. The action alternatives would provide a greater degree of environmental safety than the no action alternative because they are all located outside the area of high seismic risk.

2.8 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Study

Other Site Concept Designs: The Seward Multi-Agency Center Concept Design Alternatives Phase report (The Portico Group, 2004) conducted a preliminary analysis of the relationship between parcel size and program need, which resulted in about 57 parcel combinations that could support the program. These combinations ranged from using two to six individual parcels to meet the program design. Of the 57 combinations, only 31 were determined to be viable regarding the square footage required for the proposed building footprints. The 31 parcel combinations were further evaluated for efficiency in building footprint, volume, and functional arrangement; contiguity or proximity to each other; and, if not contiguous, ability to easily split the administration functions and visitor functions between parcels.

Of the 31 possible configurations, the four action alternatives described in the previous section were chosen because they best represent the variety of parcel-program opportunities with either one or two buildings, and will easily maintain a functional arrangement within the building(s). Therefore, the remaining possible configurations were not brought forward for analysis (The Portico Group, 2004).

Develop a Multi-Agency Center on Native-Owned Lands in Downtown Seward: ANILCA Section 1306(a)(2) states that the Secretary of Interior shall attempt to locate administrative sites and visitor facilities that would be outside the boundaries and in the vicinity of conservation

system units on Native lands if it is practicable and desirable. There are 3 parcels of land owned by Native Corporations in the downtown Seward study area (Table 2).

Table 2: Native Corporation Properties in the Downtown Seward Study Area

Owner(s)	Location	Lot size	Building size
Chugachmiut Inc.	NW corner of Washington St. & 3rd Ave.	0.35 acre	Orca Building 18,930 square feet
Chugachmiut Inc & Chugach Alaska	NE corner of Washington St. & 2nd Ave. (adjacent to ORCA building).	0.14 acre	Vacant Land
Qutekcak Native Tribe	3rd Ave. (across from NPS property).	0.14 acre	3,105 square feet

In 2002, the NPS, USFS, and City of Seward commissioned The Portico Group to prepare the Seward Waterfront Study to evaluate properties for construction of a Multi-Agency Center (The Portico Group, 2003). All landowners within the Seward Waterfront Study Area, including Native Corporations and groups, were invited to participate and make known any available lands during the preparation of the waterfront site selection study. Landowners willing to consider selling property were encouraged to contact the KEFJ park superintendent or attend a series of workshops and meetings (April 2003 to September 2003) that explored site selection. Public notices for each of the three workshops/meetings were published in the local newspaper, *The Seward Phoenix Log*, and posted on public bulletin boards throughout Seward.

The Native Corporations did not contact the NPS to make their lands available to be included in the study. In addition, the Native Corporation land areas and/or building square footages were not adequate to accommodate the joint needs of NPS, USFS, and other partnering agencies. The individual lots were not of a size or in a contiguous arrangement to meet facility needs for at least 40,000 square feet of building space and at least a portion of the required vehicle parking.

2.9 Mitigating Measures

Contaminants and Hazardous Substances: If evidence of any soil and/or groundwater contamination by pollutants, contaminants, or hazardous substances were encountered during demolition and construction, appropriate notification and remedial action would be taken to ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local government environmental statutes and regulations.

Cultural Resources: The proposed project will proceed in compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA of 1966, as amended. As lead federal agency, the NPS has initiated the Section 106 consultation process with SHPO for the development of the Multi-Agency Center. In accordance with 36 CFR 800, the NPS, in consultation with SHPO, will identify historic properties within the Potential Area of Effect and make an assessment of adverse effect on any identified properties (see the Cultural Compliance Schedule attached as Appendix D). The views of the public have been solicited and considered throughout the process.

If historic properties are discovered or unanticipated effects on historic properties found after the completion of the Section 106 process without an agreement document, the NPS will apply the requirement of 36 CFR 800.13(b), Discoveries Without Prior Planning. If the Section 106

process results in a Memorandum of Agreement, that agreement would define a process to resolve the discovery of historic properties or the unanticipated effect.

Land Use and Building Codes: Any potential development would meet all City of Seward Planning and Land Use Regulations in Chapter 15.10 of the Seward Zoning Code (City of Seward, 1999) and the International Building Code (Seismic Zone 4). Parking for the Multi-Agency Center would meet Seward parking guidelines for office and public assembly buildings, as approved or amended by all municipal regulatory bodies, and would comply with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

2.10 Summary and Comparison of Effects of Alternatives

Table 3 provides a summary and comparison of potential effects for the no action alternative and action alternatives 1 through 4.

Table 3: Summary and Comparison of Effects of Alternatives					
Impact Issue	**No Action**	**<u>Alternative 1</u>** **Single Site, Mid-Block Parcel**	**<u>Alternative 2</u>** **Single Site, Railway and 5th Avenue**	**<u>Alternative 3</u>** **Two Sites, Railway Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels**	**<u>Alternative 4</u>** **Two Sites, Railway and 5th Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels**
Visitor Experience	The no action alternative would have a negative effect on the visitor experience due to continued overuse and crowding of the existing facilities.	Alternative 1 would improve the quality of the visitor experience by relieving crowding and improving exhibits and educational programs.	Effects of Alternative 2 would be the same as Alternative 1.	Effects of Alternative 3 would be the same as Alternative 1.	Effects of Alternative 4 would be the same as Alternative 1.
Visual Resources	The no action alternative would have no effect on visual resources because the character of the downtown and small boat harbor areas would not change.	Alternative 1 would have temporary negative impacts to visual resources due to construction. The project would be consistent with the historic character and strongly influenced by the natural environment of Seward.	Effects of Alternative 2 would be the same as Alternative 1.	Effects of Alternative 3 would be the same as Alternative 1.	Effects of Alternative 4 would be the same as Alternative 1.

Table 3: Summary and Comparison of Effects of Alternatives					
Impact Issue	**No Action**	**Alternative 1** **Single Site, Mid-Block Parcel**	**Alternative 2** **Single Site, Railway and 5th Avenue**	**Alternative 3** **Two Sites, Railway Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels**	**Alternative 4** **Two Sites, Railway and 5th Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels**
Transportation and Parking	The no action alterative would continue to have a negative impact on traffic congestion and availability of parking spaces at the small boat harbor area.	Under normal conditions for Alternative 1, vehicle trips per day would be comparable to existing conditions. Under the full-use scenario, a maximum increase in vehicle trips per day of nearly 200% over existing conditions is possible. Proposed parking under the alternative would be eight spaces short of the required number, which, under normal conditions, would provide ample parking, but could be insufficient for peak conditions.	Under normal conditions for Alternative 2, vehicle trips per day would be comparable to or less than existing conditions. Vacation of Washington Street and the alley would result in an increase in traffic on Railway Avenue. Under the full-use scenario, the increase in vehicle trips per day would not be noticeable over existing conditions. Proposed parking under the alternative would be six or seven spaces short of the required number, which, under normal conditions, would provide ample parking, but could be insufficient for peak conditions.	Under normal conditions for Alternative 3, vehicle trips per day would be comparable to existing conditions. Vacation of a part of the alley would not greatly impact traffic flow in the area. Under the full-use scenario, a maximum increase in vehicle trips per day of approximately 150% over existing conditions is possible. Proposed parking under the alternative would meet the required number of spaces.	Vacation of Washington Street and the alley would result in an increase in traffic on Railway Avenue. All other effects for Alternative 4 would be the same as Alternative 3.
Land Use and Land Use Plans	Continued use of the existing NPS and USFS offices would have no effect on land use or land use plans.	Alternative 1 would be consistent with land uses designated in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan.	Effects of Alternative 2 would be the same as Alternative 1.	Effects of Alternative 3 would be the same as Alternative 1.	Effects of Alternative 4 would be the same as Alternative 1.

Table 3: Summary and Comparison of Effects of Alternatives					
Impact Issue	**No Action**	**Alternative 1** **Single Site, Mid-Block Parcel**	**Alternative 2** **Single Site, Railway and 5th Avenue**	**Alternative 3** **Two Sites, Railway Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels**	**Alternative 4** **Two Sites, Railway and 5th Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels**
Cultural Resources	Continued use of the existing NPS and USFS offices would have no effect on cultural resources.	Alternative 1 would have no effect on known archaeological or cultural resources.	Effects of Alternative 2 would be the same as Alternative 1.	Effects of Alternative 3 would be the same as Alternative 1.	Effects of Alternative 4 would be the same as Alternative 1.
National Park and National Forest Management	The no action alternative would have a long-term negative effect on administrative needs due to inefficiencies caused by separation of park offices.	Alternative 1 would maximize efficiency of both the NPS and USFS by incorporating all of their functions into a single building in downtown Seward.	Effects of Alternative 2 would be the same as Alternative 1.	Housing the visitor center and administrative functions in two separate buildings would be less efficient than using a single facility; however, overall efficiency would be much improved over status quo.	Effects of Alternative 4 would be the same as Alternative 3.
Public Safety	The potential threat to visitors and NPS/USFS offices and personnel from natural hazards such as tsunamis, seismic activity, and floods would continue.	The new facilities would still be located in the coastal high hazard area subject to tsunamis, but not in the area of high seismic risk.	Effects of Alternative 2 would be the same as Alternative 1.	Effects of Alternative 3 would be the same as Alternative 1.	Effects of Alternative 4 would be the same as Alternative 1.

Table 3: Summary and Comparison of Effects of Alternatives					
Impact Issue	**No Action**	**Alternative 1** **Single Site, Mid-Block Parcel**	**Alternative 2** **Single Site, Railway and 5th Avenue**	**Alternative 3** **Two Sites, Railway Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels**	**Alternative 4** **Two Sites, Railway and 5th Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels**
Local Economy	The no action alternative would have no change from the current conditions of the local economy.	Construction activities would stimulate the local economy on a short-term basis. The conference center would bring visitors to Seward throughout the year, benefiting the local economy in the long term. The City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough could lose about $11,600 in combined property taxes per year.	Short- and long-term effects of Alternative 2 would be the same as Alternative 1. The City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough could lose about $11,500 or $13,800 in combined property taxes per year, depending on which properties were selected for development.	Short- and long-term effects of Alternative 3 would be the same as Alternative 1. The City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough could lose between $14,800 and $15,100 in combined property taxes per year, depending on which properties were selected for development.	Short- and long-term effects of Alternative 4 would be the same as Alternative 1. The City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough could lose between $14,000 and $14,400 in combined property taxes per year, depending on which properties were selected for development.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The City of Seward is located along the Resurrection Bay coastline on the southeast coast of the Kenai Peninsula in Alaska (Figure 1). Detailed information on the City of Seward, including the natural and socioeconomic environments, existing land uses, access and transportation, and natural hazards, is included in the Preliminary Draft 2004-2020 Seward Comprehensive Plan (URS, 2004), which is incorporated by reference.

Potentially Affected Properties

The six properties proposed for development are located at the southern end of the city of Seward, amidst commercial and residential development (Figure 2). Although the sites are separated from the waterfront by a public street and other property, the local maritime influence is apparent. Views out into Resurrection Bay are framed by the Alaska SeaLife Center and waterfront promenade. The topography gently slopes from northeast to southwest. Summaries of the six properties to be used as potential sites for the Multi-Agency Center, and Washington Street and the alley to be potentially vacated, are provided below.

Photo 1. Arcade Building

Arcade Building: The Arcade Building (Original Seward Townsite, Lots 37, 38, 39, and 40 Block 4) is an 8,340 square foot, single story structure built in 1943 (Photo 1). Located on Washington Street at the corner of 4th Avenue, the property abuts Railway Avenue to the South. Currently vacant, the Arcade Building most recently housed a pawnshop, a cafe, and apartments. The "New Arcade" was built in 1943 to replace the original Arcade Building, which burned in 1941. The preliminary Determination of Eligibility (DOE) for the "Seward Historic Commercial District" found the Arcade Building not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Old Solly's Building: Old Solly's Building (Original Seward Townsite, Lots 1 and 2 Block 4) is a 5,498 square foot, two-story structure built in 1916 and located at the corner of Washington Street and Railway Avenue (Photo 2). Currently vacant, the building has been used variously as a drug store, saloon, office building, and artist's studio. This structure has sentimental interest for the residents of Seward. Although Old Solly's is the oldest building potentially impacted by the project, it has undergone many alterations throughout its history. The preliminary DOE for the "Seward Historic Commercial District" found Old Solly's not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Photo 2. Old Solly's Building & Washington St

Photo 3. Legend's Restaurant

Legend's Restaurant: Legend's Restaurant (Banic Replat, Lot 17A Block 9) is a 3,538 square foot structure with a full basement built in 1985 and located at the corner of Washington Street and 5th Avenue (Photo 3). The property is across Washington Street from Old Solly's. Legend's Restaurant closed in December 2003. The restaurant was on the upper floor; the lower floor (basement) was used for weddings, etc. The building is less than 50 years old. The preliminary DOE for the "Seward Historic Commercial District" found Legend's Restaurant not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Photo 4. Mai Property

Mai Property: The Mai Property (Original Seward Townsite, Lots 26, 27, and 28 Block 8) consists of a 1,070 square foot, single-story structure built in 1940 and located on the east side of 5th Avenue south of the Harbor Dinner Club and between Washington Street and Adams Street. The house has two bedrooms and is currently owner-occupied. The building has undergone several alterations including the removal of two arctic entryways and the addition of modern windows, doors, and a metal roof. The preliminary DOE for the "Seward Historic Commercial District" found the Mai Property not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Photo 5. Harbor Dinner Club

Harbor Dinner Club: The Harbor Dinner Club (Original Seward Townsite, Lot 29A Block 8) is a 4,656 square foot, single-story structure. The current structure appears to have been built between 1955 and 1957 as those are the first years the structure appears in aerial photographs. The building was remodeled and expanded to add 948 square feet in 1975. It is located on the east side of 5th Avenue between Washington Street and Adams Street. The Harbor Dinner Club is an up-scale restaurant that has been on the market for several years. The preliminary DOE for the "Seward Historic Commercial District" found the Harbor Dinner Club not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

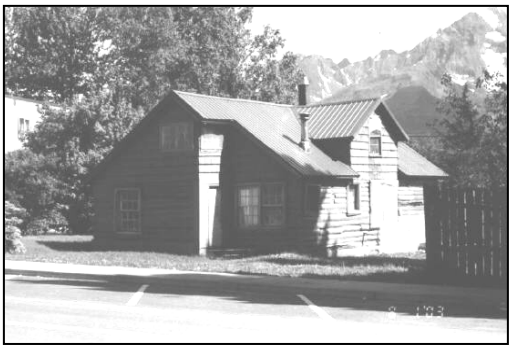

Photo 6. Johnson Property

Johnson Property: The Johnson Property (Original Seward Townsite, Lots 34, 35, and part of 36) consists of a 1,480 square foot, two-story structure built in 1942. The small, green house is constructed partly of logs and located on two lots on the east side of 5th Avenue north of the Harbor Dinner Club and between Washington Street and Adams Street. The house has four bedrooms and has been rented for several years. It is currently vacant, but may be rented on a month-to-month basis. The cabin has undergone some alterations including the addition of modern windows, doors, and a metal roof. The preliminary DOE for the "Seward Historic Commercial District" found the Johnson Property not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Washington Street: Washington Street is a City-owned right of way north of Railway Avenue and between 4th and 5th Avenues (Figure 2 and Photo 2). The right of way is approximately 220 feet long between 4th Avenue and 5th Avenue and 60 feet wide, making up an area of approximately 13,200 square feet.

Alley Between Arcade Building and Old Solly's: The alley between the Arcade Building and Old Solly's Building sites is a City-owned right of way connecting Washington Street and Railway Avenue. The right of way is approximately 55 feet long and 15 feet wide, making up an area of approximately 825 square feet.

Existing Facilities

Existing Kenai Fjords National Park Headquarters: The KEFJ visitor center and headquarters is located at the south end of the boat harbor between 4th Avenue and the water's edge (Figure 1). The current 5,150 square foot facility offers information to travelers, a small exhibit and sales area, a 30-person multipurpose auditorium, and restrooms. Visitor functions occupy an area of about 2,400 square feet. The remainder of the building is used for staff offices, a small library, a conference and lunchroom, storage, and circulation and mechanical space. Administrative and visitor service space requirements currently exceed the capacity of the existing facility. The NPS has a maintenance facility on Exit Glacier Road and rents office space for about 15 personnel in the Ray Building on 5th Avenue in downtown Seward.

Existing Chugach National Forest Seward Ranger District Office: The Seward Ranger District Office is located at 334 4th Avenue in a 3,568 square foot wood frame structure built in 1964. Due to increasing numbers of district personnel, the district placed two mobile units (384 square feet each) behind the main building to use as additional office space. The office contains a public information area where maps, brochures, and historic photos are on display. The total office space is not adequate for the district's current and future needs, does not meet accessibility standards for people with disabilities, and has limited parking space. Additionally, the office is located outside of the more heavily traveled tourist and public travel routes, reducing the ability of the USFS to optimize public outreach.

The Seward Ranger District also maintains and operates the Kenai Lake Work Center, about 23 miles from Seward, near Moose Pass. This large facility consists of administrative offices, warehouse, various shop facilities, storage, dining hall, and crew quarters. The USFS is currently refurbishing and upgrading various parts of the facility. Approximately one-third of the workforce will continue to operate out of the work center.

Visitor Experience

Over 743,000 people visited Seward and the surrounding area in 2003 (Johnson, 2004). Visitors to the nearby CNF can enjoy over two million acres of backcountry, 200 miles of hiking trails, 15 campgrounds, and 40 public use cabins. KEFJ visitors can hike the trails at Exit Glacier, kayak and camp in the fjords, or enjoy three coastal public use cabins. Visitors can also view the park from tour boats headquartered in Seward. The Alaska SeaLife Center draws many visitors to the downtown area, as do the many shops and restaurants situated both downtown at the small boat harbor. The City's biggest event occurs over the Fourth of July, as tens of thousands of visitors enjoy the annual celebration associated with the Mount Marathon race.

The existing NPS KEFJ visitor center and USFS Seward Ranger District Office have limited space to accommodate visitors and provide information via interpretive displays and informational presentations, resulting in a less than ideal visitor experience. The KEFJ lobby and auditorium are frequently overcrowded in the summer, particularly when tour boats and buses disembark visitors. The USFS Seward Ranger District is located outside of the more heavily traveled tourist areas and is therefore not as easily accessed as the KEFJ visitor center. The general increase in visitation to Seward would exacerbate crowded conditions.

Visual Resources

The City of Seward is strongly influenced by the natural setting of mountains, glaciers, and Resurrection Bay. Views from downtown out into Resurrection Bay are framed by the Alaska SeaLife Center and waterfront promenade. The downtown area is influenced by Seward's historic setting, which the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan identifies as an important feature to preserve while encouraging commercial, cultural, and tourist-oriented development (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004). The comprehensive plan also stresses the importance of community appearance, including preservation of Seward's eclectic architecture and landscape. Existing buildings in downtown Seward are no more than three stories tall, allowing views of the mountains and Resurrection Bay to remain visible from most buildings and rights of way.

Transportation and Parking

Seward's grid of streets is settled on a gentle cross slope to the southeast. Tightly defined by water and mountains on its west, south, and east sides, the downtown area is compact. Downtown has a very strong north-south orientation and weaker east-west connections, with the exception of Railway Avenue (Figure 2). Third Avenue is the extension of Highway 9 (the Seward Highway), which provides the primary vehicular access in and out of the downtown area. Third Avenue is primarily residential, resulting in much of the business and visitor traffic bypassing commercial activity in the downtown waterfront area (The Portico Group, 2003).

Fourth Avenue can be considered Seward's "Main Street" with retail establishments situated on both sides of the street.

The State of Alaska Department of Transportation has collected peak daily traffic data and annual average daily traffic (AADT) data for several intersections near the proposed development sites (see Appendix B for details):

- Peak daily traffic collected from June 22 to June 29, 2000, at the Jefferson Street and 3rd Avenue intersection (two blocks north of Washington Street) was 5,314 trips (both north and south bound) on June 23, 2000. The peak hour was between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m. when 424 trips were made. The median daily traffic count during this period was 4,725 trips.
- AADT at the Jefferson Street and 3rd Avenue intersection was 4,145 in 2002.
- AADT at the Railway Avenue and 3rd Avenue intersection between 1996 and 1999 varied between 2,497 and 2,900; the four-year average AADT was about 2,700.

An additional traffic analysis was performed using methods outlined in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual (1997) to calculate traffic as a function of the existing buildings' size and usage. As shown in Table 4, this analysis indicates that the buildings located on Railway and 5th Avenues (Arcade Building, Old Solly's Building, and Legend's Restaurant) experience nearly three times the traffic compared to the buildings located mid-block on the east side of 5th Avenue (Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property). These calculations assume that the existing buildings are in use on a full-time basis, and although several of the buildings are currently vacant, the analysis considers the potential vehicle trips per day should the properties again come into use.

Table 4: Existing Weekday Peak Traffic Estimates – 5th Avenue Mid-Block and Railway and 5th Avenue Locations

Existing Buildings	Gross Square Footage (gsf)	Classification Codes*	Predicted Weekday Traffic
Mai Property	1,070 gsf	210	10 vehicles/day
Harbor Dinner Club	4,656 gsf	831	419 vehicles\/day
Johnson Property**	1,480 gsf	210	10 vehicles/day
Total for 5th Avenue Mid-Block			**439 vehicles/day**
Arcade Building**	8,340 gsf	220/815/832	540 vehicles/day
Old Solly's Building**	5,498 gsf	710/814/836/880	429 vehicles/day
Legend's Restaurant**	3,538 gsf	310/443	297 vehicles/day
Total for Railway and 5th Avenue			**1,266 vehicles/day**

*Codes taken from Institute of Transportation Engineers (1997). Codes are used to characterize building use and calculate anticipated traffic to the building.

**Currently vacant; the condition of vacant property will decrease the traffic impact, however this analysis considers the *potential* vehicle trips per day each existing property could generate.

Currently, public parking at the small boat harbor is not adequate to serve existing demand during peak summer conditions, especially during peak weekends, holidays, and special events. When these peak conditions occur, convenient parking is generally difficult to secure anywhere near the small boat harbor. Conditions in the downtown area are somewhat less congested, except during unusual peak events (such as the Fourth of July). From Memorial Day through

Labor Day the Chamber of Commerce offers rides on a trolley between the cruise ship terminal and the downtown area for a small fee.

Land Use and Land Use Plans

The central business district in Seward is located north of Railway Avenue. Public facilities such as the City Hall, post office, and fire hall are located in this area, as well as many city shops. The main street in Seward is 4th Avenue, which has the heaviest concentration of large buildings and commercial uses. Additional commercial buildings are located on 3rd and 5th Avenues. Areas north of the central business district, west of 3rd Avenue, and east of 6th Avenue are primarily residential.

All of the properties proposed for development are located within the central business district in downtown Seward. The properties are zoned as commercial according to the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004).

Cultural Resources

Preliminary historic research has been completed. Additional investigation of historic properties located within the proposed project area will be completed in accordance with the Cultural Compliance Schedule (Appendix D). The final DOE will be completed and sent to SHPO for concurrence (see the Cultural Compliance Schedule attached as Appendix D).

The final archeological assessment has been completed. Possible subterranean remains will be assessed for their historical and archeological significance. Archeological survey and historic research would occur in accordance with the Cultural Compliance Schedule (Appendix D).

Natural Hazards

Areas within the City of Seward are susceptible to natural hazards such as earthquakes and tsunamis. Seward is located in a zone of highest seismic risk because of the frequency and magnitude of recorded earthquakes. The existing KEFJ visitor center is located in the area of highest seismic risk, which corresponds to the area of fractured ground damaged by the 1964 earthquake. Following the 1964 earthquake, many southcentral Alaska communities experienced wave “run-up” between the 50- and 100-foot elevation contours marking the upper limit of potential coastal high hazard areas subject to tsunamis. The existing KEFJ visitor center, Seward Ranger District Office, and the six properties considered for development are within the 50-foot and 100-foot contour lines. The existing KEFJ visitor center was within the area of wave “run-up” caused by the 1964 earthquake.

Local Economy

The City of Seward has a diverse local economy. Major components of Seward’s local economy include commercial services, for which recent development has been in response to increasing tourism and residential growth; industrial operations, including mineral extraction; transportation, including the Alaska Railroad, cruise ships, and ferries; commercial fishing; institutional/government; and recreation/tourism (URS, 2004). The City partially supports services to its residents through local taxes, including a property tax of 3.12 mils levied by the

City, and an additional property tax of 7.10 mils levied by the Kenai Peninsula Borough (Kenai Peninsula Borough, 2004).

NPS and USFS offices located in the City of Seward provide local jobs and associated expenditures to the community. In addition, local scenery and proximity to Prince William Sound and National Parks, Forests, and Wildlife Refuges have created a growing tourism sector, which is supported by visitor services offered by the NPS and USFS offices.

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4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section provides an evaluation of the potential direct and indirect effects of the four action alternatives and the no action alternative on the resources described in Section 1.2 Issues/Impact Topics.

Cumulative impacts were analyzed to determine the impact on the environment resulting from the incremental impact of the alternatives combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Cumulative effects are defined as the combination of impact from the proposed alternative when added to impacts from actions external to the proposed project. Therefore, if the proposed alternative is determined to have no effect on a given issue topic or resource, there is also no cumulative effect on that issue or resource. Possible future external actions included in the cumulative impacts analysis were ascertained from the Preliminary Draft City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (URS, 2004), and the Seward Waterfront Study (The Portico Group, 2003).

Potential external actions in the downtown area that could contribute to cumulative effects include developing the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district by expanding the central business district south to the waterfront between 3rd and 5th Avenues and gradually replacing warehouse functions with community, entertainment, and tourist-oriented uses; relocating the Teen Center to a site along Railway Avenue; developing a new public safety building on 4th Avenue near Adams Street; extending the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries; and increasing development within the small boat harbor area as a result of increasing tourism.

No Action Alternative

Visitor Experience: The general increase in visitation to Seward would cause the NPS KEFJ visitor center to experience greater and more frequent seasonal crowding. Visitors could find it more difficult to obtain information and many may be unable to attend special programs or view audio-visual presentations in the visitor center. In-depth information on the Kenai Peninsula and park resources would be limited, as space limitations hamper interpretive exhibits and joint-agency visitor services. Facility crowding could make the experience more unpleasant during peak summer periods. Parking in the area is already crowded in the summer months and would continue to be a problem as tourism in Seward continues to increase. The difficulty of finding parking and the traffic congestion associated with searching for a parking space in the small boat harbor area would decrease the potential for a positive visitor experience.

The close proximity of the KEFJ visitor center site to the boat harbor provides optimum access to fjord sightseers. Interpretation can build on visitors' actual experience of the KEFJ. This site is also most convenient for recreational boaters using the boat harbor and people who arrive in Seward by rail.

The USFS Seward Ranger District Office has a reception/public information area available for displays, providing brochures or other public information. With the increased demand for

hiking, fishing, and recreational cabins, the USFS may lack the space needed to inform the public of programs and recreational opportunities offered by CNF's resources.

Projected increases in tourism coupled with undersized visitor facilities would make it increasingly difficult for the NPS and USFS to provide adequate visitor services for tourists in Seward. The quality of the visitor experience would likely continue to diminish due to insufficient facilities.

Cumulative Effects: Additional development in the small boat harbor area could increase the number of tourists in the immediate vicinity of the existing KEFJ visitor center facilities. Additionally, potential future actions or existing tourist attractions in the downtown area could impact the Seward Ranger District Office by increasing the number of tourists who wish to access visitor information. These external actions would further diminish the quality of the visitor experience.

Conclusions: Even though the existing KEFJ visitor center is convenient for recreational boaters and persons arriving by cruise ship and rail, the no action alternative would have a negative effect on the visitor experience due to overuse and crowding of the existing center. The existing NPS and USFS facilities in the City of Seward would continue to be inadequate for the needs of both agencies.

Visual Resources: The visual character of the small boat harbor or downtown area would not change under the no action alternative. Existing buildings, urban trees, and shrubbery would remain, and the existing NPS and USFS facilities would continue to be used.

Cumulative Effects: Visual resources in the downtown area would not change under the no action alternative; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects.

Conclusions: The character of the downtown area and small boat harbor would not change under the no action alternative; therefore, the no action alternative would have no effect on visual resources.

Transportation and Parking: Accessibility of the KEFJ visitor center and Seward Ranger District Office could be hindered due to increased competition for available parking spaces. Existing traffic congestion during the summer near the small boat harbor would continue and would be exacerbated by the general increase of tourism in Seward. In addition, the Seward Ranger District Office is made less accessible by being located outside of the most heavily traveled tourist and public travel routes. Existing weekday traffic levels at the 5th Avenue mid-block and Railway and 5th Avenue downtown locations (Table 4) would not be expected to change under this alternative.

Many visitors stop by the KEFJ visitor center as they tour the small boat harbor area on foot. Visitors combine stops at shops and restaurants, harbor sightseeing, and fishing charters. Visitors likely park in public parking for a period longer than their stay at the visitor center as they tour harbor attractions. Parking availability for visitor center guests, as well as visitors participating in other activities, would become increasingly more difficult with increased visitor activity in Seward.

Cumulative Effects: Expansion of the downtown business district and potential future expansion of the 4th Avenue dock could remove some traffic and parking pressure from the area of the small boat harbor area. However, the area would likely remain congested due to the many small shops, restaurants, and other tourist attractions located there.

Conclusions: The no action alternative would continue to have a negative impact on traffic congestion and availability of parking spaces in the area of the small boat harbor. However, the alternative would not impact parking or traffic in the downtown area.

Land Use and Land Use Plans: Land uses associated with the no action alternative would not change. The continued use of NPS and USFS offices would be consistent with the Seward Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004).

Cumulative Effects: Anticipated land uses would not change under the no action alternative; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects on land use.

Conclusions: The no action alternative would have no effect on land use.

Cultural Resources: The continued use of the NPS and USFS offices would have no effect on cultural resources.

Cumulative Effects: The no action alternative would have no effect on cultural resources; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects on cultural resources.

Conclusions: The no action alternative would have no effect on cultural resources.

National Park and National Forest Management: Administrative and visitor service space requirements would continue to exceed the capacity of the KEFJ visitor center and headquarters facility for current and future needs. The continued separation of park offices between two buildings would make communication among park staff more difficult than if all offices were located in the same building.

The current USFS offices would continue to be inadequate for the Seward district's future needs. Existing offices are scattered between small offices on two floors, two annex buildings, and offices at the Kenai Lake Work Center some 23 miles north of Seward. Staff coordination and management would continue to be hampered and time would continue to be lost due to travel between the offices. The offices would continue to be unable to meet accessibility standards for the disabled. The current office is located in an area of Seward that is not optimally visible to the public.

Interactions with the public and coordination with other federal and state agencies would continue to be at less than optimum levels for both the KEFJ visitor center and Seward Ranger District Office.

Cumulative Effects: Park and forest management would continue to be adversely impacted by the no action alternative. Other development in the small boat harbor could serve to further impact efficient use of the already insufficient facilities.

Conclusions: The no action alternative would have a long-term negative effect on administrative needs due to inefficiencies caused by separation of NPS and USFS offices. Continued use of existing NPS and USFS facilities in the City of Seward would continue to be inadequate for the needs of both agencies.

Public Safety: The existing KEFJ visitor center and Seward Ranger District Office are at risk from tsunamis. Both offices are within the 50-foot and 100-foot contour lines that mark the upper limit of potential coastal high hazard areas subject to tsunamis. The existing KEFJ visitor center and a large portion of Seward were within the area of wave "run-up" caused by the 1964 earthquake.

The KEFJ visitor center is located within the area of fractured ground damaged by the 1964 earthquake, which is an area of high seismic risk identified in the City of Seward's Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004).

The existing KEFJ visitor center and Seward Ranger District Office are not located in the 100-year floodplain, but the KEFJ visitor center was damaged during an intense 3-day storm in October 1986. The potential for impacts to the KEFJ visitor center and Seward Ranger District Office due to flooding would be low.

Cumulative Effects: The current risk of impacts to public safety would not change under the no action alternative; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects on public safety.

Conclusions: The potential threat to visitors and NPS/USFS offices and personnel from natural hazards such as tsunamis, seismic activity, and floods would continue under the no action alternative, with the KEFJ visitor center being at greater risk than the Seward Ranger District Office.

Local Economy: The continued use of the NPS and USFS offices would have no change from the current condition of the local economy. The properties proposed for development would remain privately owned and would continue to generate property tax revenues for the City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough.

Cumulative Effects: There would be no change to the economy from the no action alternative; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects on the local economy.

Conclusions: The local economy would not change under the no action alternative.

Alternative 1: Single Site, Mid-Block Parcel

Visitor Experience: The development of a larger, more integrated Multi-Agency Center would provide a larger number of visitors greatly expanded opportunities to obtain information about local public lands, facilities, and programs; watch audio-visual presentations; participate in educational programs; and engage in interpretive exhibits. The experience could increase visitors' awareness, inspire visitors to take greater care of local resources, and stimulate increased recreation in the KEFJ and CNF. The Center would provide visitors with greater comfort during seasonal crowding, improving the quality of the visitor experience. The addition of the conference center would provide benefits to visitors and local residents alike.

Under Alternative 1, visitor service and conference functions would be located on the building's first floor, allowing a smooth transition for conference attendees to view interpretive exhibits and obtain information about the KEFJ and CNF.

Locating the Multi-Agency Center in the downtown area would require visitors to the small boat harbor area to either drive or take public transportation downtown to access the Center. However, the Center's close proximity to the Alaska SeaLife Center, with its focus on local marine habitats, would nicely complement the experience received at the visitor center. In addition, visitors would be able to easily access restaurants and shops located in downtown Seward.

The mid-block location would be farther north and east of the Alaska SeaLife Center than parcels located at Railway and 5th Avenue (proposed in several other alternatives). However, the parcel is located only one block to the east of 4th Avenue, which serves as Seward's main street. Most people wishing to visit the Multi-Agency Center, Alaska SeaLife Center, and "Main Street" on 4th Avenue would be able to easily walk between the attractions once reaching one location.

The USFS's ability to inform the public about its programs and the recreational opportunities available in the CNF would be greatly expanded by relocating the Seward Ranger District Office to 5th Avenue, which is a much more highly traveled area compared to the current location of the district office.

Cumulative Effects: Future plans identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (URS, 2004) to develop the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district by expanding the central business district south to the waterfront between 3rd and 5th Avenues and gradually replacing warehouse functions with community, entertainment, and tourist-oriented uses would further serve to enhance the visitor experience. In addition to the attractions of the Alaska SeaLife Center and the visitor attractions proposed under this alternative, tourists would have even more reasons to visit the downtown area. A potential extension of the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries would also add to the positive cumulative effects for visitor experience under Alternative 1.

Conclusions: This alternative would improve the quality of the visitor experience by integrating NPS and USFS visitor services, relieving crowding, and improving exhibits and educational programs. Relocation of the KEFJ visitor center away from the small boat harbor would be offset by improved access to the Alaska SeaLife Center and downtown businesses and improved visitor experience.

<u>Visual Resources</u>: Construction of the Multi-Agency Center in the mid-block location would have temporary negative effects on visual resources in downtown Seward. Construction equipment and activities would be visible in the downtown business district until completion of the project.

The proposed project design would incorporate architectural elements and landscaping that would blend with the historic character of the downtown area. In addition, the building would be limited to a two-story design so as not to block views of the mountains and Resurrection Bay.

Existing trees and shrubbery may be removed, but the site would be landscaped and revegetated. Parking areas would incorporate landscaped islands that visually break up the expanse of asphalt and provide a more appealing view for the community.

Replacing some of the buildings in the downtown area with upgraded buildings could have the indirect effect of increasing the desire to upgrade or redevelop other properties in the area.

Cumulative Effects: Future plans identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (URS, 2004) to re-vitalize the central business district by phasing out warehouses and empty lots would add positively to the visual aesthetics of the downtown area. In conjunction with Alternative 1, the overall effects would be to positively enhance the visual resources of the downtown area.

Conclusions: The project could have temporary negative impacts to visual resources due to construction. The proposed project design would be consistent with the historic character and strongly influenced by the natural environment of Seward.

Transportation and Parking: In order to determine the projected increase in traffic that would result from addition of a Multi-Agency Center at 5th Avenue under Alternative 1, the following assumptions were made (refer also to the Traffic and Parking Analysis in Appendix B):

- The peak hourly visitation would be 739 persons (peak visitation for the visitor center and conference center simultaneously).
- Arrival to the site would be equally distributed by passenger vehicle, bus/trolley, and on foot (246 persons by each mode of travel).
- More than half of the visitors would already be in the area to visit the Alaska SeaLife Center or to conduct other business downtown.
- 2.5 persons would occupy each passenger vehicle (98.5 trips, or 246 divided by 2.5).
- 30 persons would occupy each bus/trolley (8 trips, or 246 divided by 30).
- Persons walking to the center would have had to arrive in the downtown area by vehicle (98.5 vehicles).

Based upon these assumptions, addition of the Multi-Agency Center under Alternative 1 could result in an increase of about 205 extra trips to the downtown area (98.5 vehicles and eight busses or trolleys coming directly to the site, plus an additional 98.5 vehicles arriving at some location in the downtown area). These trips do not account for the administrative functions of the building, which would add to the number of vehicles entering the downtown area on a given day. Since there are no available data describing specific traffic use of 5th Avenue near the mid-block parcels, the four-year AADT of 2,700 at the intersection of Railway and 3rd Avenues (located several blocks to the west and south of the Alternative 1 building site location) was used to represent existing downtown traffic conditions (see Section 3.0). An increase in AADT from 2,700 to about 2,905 (8 percent) during peak use times would not likely have a substantial impact on overall Seward traffic conditions, particularly at the heavily used Railway Avenue and 3rd Avenue intersection.

It is also important to consider projected building use and predicted traffic based on this use specifically at the mid-block parcel site, which could then be compared to expected peak-use traffic at the Multi-Agency Center. However, because specific traffic data at the mid-block location along 5th Avenue are lacking, methods from the ITE (1997) that consider typical traffic associated with building use type were employed.

As described in Section 3.0 and shown on Table 4, weekday peak traffic calculated using ITE methods for the existing buildings located at the 5th Avenue mid-block site is predicted to be about 439 vehicles per day. Addition of the Multi-Agency Center under Alternative 1 could result in total weekday peak traffic as high as 1,270 vehicles per day in the area (Table 5). This represents an increase of nearly 200 percent over existing calculated peak traffic in the 5th Avenue mid-block location, which would likely be a noticeable increase in this quieter section of town. This assumes a full-use scenario where the conference facility, visitor center, auditorium, and administration offices are being used simultaneously at full capacity. When the conference room and auditorium are not in use, expected vehicle trips decrease to 390 vehicles per day under Alternative 1 (Auditorium and Meeting Room rows in Table 5 would be changed to 0), which is comparable to existing predicted traffic at the mid-block parcels.

Table 5: Alternative 1 Weekday Traffic Estimate

Type of Use	Gross Square Footage (gsf)	Classification Code*	Predicted Weekday Peak Traffic
Administration Building (NPS, USFS, Combined Law)	12,941 gsf	710	142 vehicles/day
Visitor Services: General Areas	8,650 gsf	495	198 vehicles\/day
Visitor Services: Auditorium	3,000 gsf (200 seats)	443	352 vehicles/day
Conference Facility: General Areas	2,198 gsf	495	50 vehicles/day
Conference Facility: Meeting Room	4,500 gsf (300 seats)	443	528 vehicles/day
		Total	**1,270 vehicles/day**

*Codes taken from Institute of Transportation Engineers (1997). Codes are used to characterize building use and calculate anticipated traffic to the building.

Pedestrian traffic would also likely increase dramatically between the Multi-Agency Center and the Alaska SeaLife Center located several blocks away to the south and west. Some increase in pedestrian traffic would occur between the proposed Multi-Agency Center and parking sites and other businesses along 4th and 5th Avenues. Traffic flow in all other directions would likely remain constant.

Relocation of the existing KEFJ and Seward Ranger District functions to a new, integrated facility and installation of the appropriate number of parking spaces would help alleviate parking problems associated with existing facility locations. Visitors to the small boat harbor area would need to either drive or take public transportation to the downtown area to access the Center. Increased public transportation such as shuttle buses could help reduce downtown traffic and parking volumes.

As proposed, Alternative 1 would fall short of the required parking spaces by eight spaces. Under peak conditions in the summer and when all functions (administrative, visitor, and conference) simultaneously experience maximum usage, available parking may not be sufficient. However, under normal daily use, ample parking would be available.

Cumulative Effects: Alternative 1 in combination with the external actions of developing the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district, relocating the Teen Center to a site along Railway Avenue, developing a new public safety building on 4th Avenue near Adams Street, and extending the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries, would all serve to bring in additional tourists and employees to the main downtown area, further increasing traffic and congestion. As part of the expansion of the central business district, it will be important to consider traffic and parking requirements for each development in concert with existing facilities and attractions.

Conclusions: Under normal conditions, expected vehicle trips per day under Alternative 1 would be comparable to existing predicted traffic at the 5th Avenue mid-block parcels, and it is not expected that traffic congestions would occur in downtown Seward. Under the full-use scenario, Alternative 1 could result in a maximum possible increase in vehicle trips per day of nearly 200 percent over existing conditions. Therefore, on the few occasions when all proposed facilities are simultaneously in use, there would likely be a noticeable traffic increase in this area of town. Proposed parking under Alternative 1 would fall short of the required parking spaces by eight spaces, which, under normal conditions, would provide ample parking availability, but could result in insufficient parking during peak conditions.

Land Use and Land Use Plans: The Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, Mai Property, and Legend's Restaurant lots are currently located in the central business district, which is zoned for commercial use. The Johnson and Mai Properties are currently used as residential properties; the type of land use currently associated with these lots would be converted from residential to commercial under Alternative 1, and the properties would be removed from the City's housing pool. However, construction of the Multi-Agency Center and associated parking on these properties would be consistent with the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004).

Cumulative Effects: Alternative 1 would not change the designated land use for the lots; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects on land use.

Conclusions: Alternative 1 would be consistent with land uses designated in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan.

Cultural Resources: Alternative 1 for the proposed Seward Multi-Agency Center would have "no adverse effect on cultural resources." Development and compliance activity would follow the Cultural Compliance Schedule in Appendix D.

Historic research has identified the relevant historic theme of "commercial development." A preliminary DOE for the National Register of Historic Places for historic properties within the potential area of effect has been completed. The preliminary DOE for the "Seward Historic Commercial District" found the existing buildings not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Further investigation will take place and the DOE will be finalized according to the Cultural Compliance Schedule in Appendix D.

The archeological background review revealed that there is a potential for archeological resources associated with the themes of "prehistoric" and "early Seward commercial development."

Should it be determined that archeological or historic resources are present, the NPS in consultation with the SHPO will make an assessment of Adverse Effect. If the SHPO and NPS find that significant historic properties will be adversely affected, consultation would result in a Memorandum of Agreement that would outline agreed upon measures to resolve the adverse effect (see Cultural Compliance Schedule attached as Appendix D).

If historic properties are discovered or unanticipated effects on historic properties found after the completion of the Section 106 process without an agreement document, the NPS will apply the requirement of 36 CFR 800.13(b), Discoveries Without Prior Planning. If the Section 106 process results in a Memorandum of Agreement, that agreement will define a process to resolve the discovery of historic properties or the unanticipated effect.

Cumulative Effects: The proposed alternative would have no adverse effects on cultural resources; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects to cultural resources.

Conclusions: The proposed project would have no adverse effect on known archeological or historic resources. Unknown effects would be mitigated through the Section 106 consultation.

National Park and National Forest Management: Under this alternative, all visitor center and office space requirements would be provided in one building. The consolidation of the KEFJ visitor center and Seward Ranger District Office would facilitate better communication and coordination within and between the agencies. The new facility would improve the efficiency of both agencies by providing adequate work and storage spaces, accessibility, and parking.

A combined facility would also reduce costs for the NPS and USFS by eliminating the duplication of facilities, and improve operating efficiencies by allowing shared reception services, mailroom functions, phone system, and other necessary services.

Cumulative Effects: External actions such as re-vitalization of the central business district and expansion of the 4th Avenue dock would not impact NPS or USFS management. Therefore, there would not be any cumulative effects.

Conclusions: Alternative 1 would maximize efficiency of both the NPS and USFS by incorporating all of their functions into a single building in downtown Seward.

Public Safety: The Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property lots are located within the 50- and 100-foot contour lines that mark the upper limit of potential coastal high hazard areas subject to tsunamis. The properties were not within the area of wave "run-up" from the 1964 earthquake.

The Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property lots are not located within the area of fractured ground damaged by the 1964 earthquake, which corresponds to the area of high seismic risk identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004). Nevertheless, the Multi-Agency Center would be susceptible to

potential damage from earthquakes. The building would be designed according to seismic standards outlined in the Uniform Building Code.

Cumulative Effects: Additional development in the downtown area would be subject to the same or similar potential for tsunamis or earthquakes. All new development, including the Multi-Agency Center would need to be considered in disaster planning for the City of Seward.

Conclusions: The new facilities would be located in the coastal high hazard area subject to tsunamis but not in the area of high seismic risk.

Local Economy: Construction of the project would create temporary construction jobs in Seward and would increase expenditures for local goods and services. These positive impacts would be short-term and realized only during construction.

Relocation of the existing KEFJ functions to a new, integrated facility would shift government workers and visitors from the harbor area to the downtown area. The new KEFJ location on 5th Avenue would help to draw visitors from the small boat harbor to the downtown area. The conference center would bring in additional visitors throughout the year, benefiting local residents by stimulating local businesses and the economy on a long-term basis.

Removal of commercial and residential properties from the downtown area would impact property tax revenues generated for the City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough. Based on current mil rates and assessed property values, the properties proposed for use under Alternative 1, including property required for parking, generate approximately $11,600 in combined taxes per year for the City and Borough (Kenai Peninsula Borough, 2004). Once these properties are under federal ownership, these taxes would no longer be available to the City and Borough. Some of the lost property tax revenue would be mitigated by federal payment in lieu of taxes to the City and the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

Replacing some of the buildings in the downtown area with new, upgraded buildings could have the indirect effect of increasing the desire to upgrade or redevelop other properties in the area, further stimulating the local economy.

Cumulative Effects: Potential external actions in the downtown area that could contribute to positive cumulative effects on the local economy include developing the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district, expanding the central business district south to the waterfront between 3rd and 5th Avenues, relocating the Teen Center to a site along Railway Avenue, developing a new public safety building on 4th Avenue near Adams Street, and extending the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries. Any or all of these external actions, in conjunction with Alternative 1, would serve to further stimulate the local economy by increasing employment and bringing in additional tourists.

Conclusions: Construction of the Multi-Agency Center would create construction jobs and construction-related spending for the City of Seward thereby stimulating the local economy on a short-term basis. The new conference center would bring in additional visitors throughout the year, benefiting the local economy in the long term. The City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough could lose approximately $11,600 in combined property tax revenues per year, some of which would be offset by federal payment in lieu of taxes.

Alternative 2: Single Site, Railway and 5th Avenue Parcel

Visitor Experience: The development of a larger, more integrated Multi-Agency Center would provide a larger number of visitors greatly expanded opportunities to obtain information about local public lands, facilities, and programs; watch audio-visual presentations; participate in educational programs; and engage in interpretive exhibits. The experience could increase visitors' awareness, inspire visitors to take greater care of local resources, and stimulate increased recreation in the KEFJ and CNF. The Center would provide visitors with greater comfort during seasonal crowding, improving the quality of the visitor experience. The addition of the conference center would benefit visitors and local residents alike.

Under Alternative 2, the visitor service and conference functions would be split between two floors, primarily within the former Legend's site, with most of the visitor services on the first floor and the conference facilities on the second floor. This would somewhat separate the conference functions from interpretive displays and information provided for visitor service functions. Transition between the functions may not be as smooth as if they were all situated on one floor. However, these displays would still be accessible to conference attendees as they enter or exit the building. The administrative and staff functions would also occupy two floors, primarily within the former Arcade and Old Solly's sites.

Locating the Multi-Agency Center in the downtown area would require visitors to the small boat harbor area to either drive or take public transportation downtown to access the Center. However, the Railway Avenue location places the Multi-Agency Center directly across from the Alaska SeaLife Center and one block away from the shops on 4th Avenue. The Center's close proximity to the Alaska SeaLife Center, with its focus on local marine habitats, would nicely complement the experience received at the visitor center. In addition, visitors would be able to easily access restaurants and shops located in downtown Seward.

The USFS's ability to inform the public about its programs and the recreational opportunities available in the CNF would be greatly expanded by relocating the Seward Ranger District Office to Railway and 5th Avenue, which is a much more highly traveled area compared to the current location of the district office.

Cumulative Effects: Future plans identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (URS, 2004) to develop the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district by expanding the central business district south to the waterfront between 3rd and 5th Avenues and gradually replacing warehouse functions with community, entertainment, and tourist-oriented uses would further serve to enhance the visitor experience. In addition to the attractions of the Alaska SeaLife Center and the visitor attractions proposed under this alternative, tourists would have even more reasons to visit the downtown area. A potential extension of the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries would also add to the positive cumulative effects for visitor experience under Alternative 2.

Conclusions: This alternative would improve the quality of the visitor experience by integrating NPS and USFS visitor services, relieving crowding, and improving exhibits and educational programs. Relocation of the KEFJ visitor center away from the small boat harbor would be

offset by improved access to the Alaska SeaLife Center and downtown businesses and improved visitor experience.

Visual Resources: Construction of the Multi-Agency Center on Railway and 5th Avenue would have temporary negative effects on visual resources in downtown Seward. Construction equipment and activities would be visible in the downtown business district until completion of the project.

The proposed project design would incorporate architectural elements and landscaping that would blend with the historic character of the downtown area. In addition, the building would be limited to a two-story design so as not to block views of the mountains and Resurrection Bay. Existing trees and shrubbery may be removed, but the site would be landscaped and revegetated. Vacation of Washington Street would allow for a landscaped pedestrian area. Parking areas would incorporate landscaped islands that visually break up the expanse of asphalt and provide a more appealing view for the community.

Replacing some of the buildings in the downtown area with upgraded buildings could have the indirect effect of increasing the desire to upgrade or redevelop other properties in the area.

Cumulative Effects: Future plans identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (URS, 2004) to re-vitalize the central business district by phasing out warehouses and empty lots would add positively to the visual aesthetics of the downtown area. In conjunction with Alternative 2, the overall effects would be to positively enhance the visual resources of the downtown area.

Conclusions: The project could have temporary negative impacts to visual resources due to construction. The proposed project design would be consistent with the historic character and strongly influenced by the natural environment of Seward.

Transportation and Parking: In order to determine the projected increase in traffic that would result from addition of a Multi-Agency Center at 5th and Railway Avenues under Alternative 2, the following assumptions were made (refer also to the Traffic and Parking Analysis in Appendix B):

- The peak hourly visitation would be 739 persons (peak visitation for the visitor center and conference center simultaneously).
- Arrival to the site would be equally distributed by passenger vehicle, bus/trolley, and on foot (246 persons by each mode of travel).
- More than half of the visitors would already be in the area to visit the Alaska SeaLife Center or to conduct other business downtown.
- 2.5 persons would occupy each passenger vehicle (98.5 trips, or 246 divided by 2.5).
- 30 persons would occupy each bus/trolley (8 trips, or 246 divided by 30).
- Persons walking to the center would have had to arrive in the downtown area by vehicle (98.5 vehicles).

Based upon these assumptions, addition of the Multi-Agency Center under Alternative 2 could result in an increase of about 205 extra trips to the downtown area (98.5 vehicles and eight busses or trolleys coming directly to the site, plus an additional 98.5 vehicles arriving at some location in the downtown area). These trips do not account for the administrative functions of the building, which would add to the number of vehicles entering the downtown area on a given day. Since there are no available data describing specific traffic use of Railway and 5th Avenues, the four-year AADT of 2,700 at the intersection of Railway and 3rd Avenues (located one block to the west of the Alternative 2 building site location) was used to represent existing downtown traffic conditions (see Section 3.0). An increase in AADT from 2,700 to about 2,905 (8 percent) during peak use times would not likely have a substantial impact on overall Seward traffic conditions, particularly at the heavily used Railway Avenue and 3rd Avenue intersection.

It is also important to consider projected building use and predicted traffic based on this use specifically at the Railway and 5th Avenue site, which could then be compared to expected peak-use traffic at the Multi-Agency Center. However, because specific traffic data at Railway and 5th Avenues are lacking, methods from the ITE (1997) that consider typical traffic associated with building use type were employed.

As described in Section 3.0 and shown on Table 4, weekday peak traffic calculated using ITE methods for the existing buildings located at the Railway and 5th Avenue site is predicted to be about 1,270 vehicles per day. Addition of the Multi-Agency Center under Alternative 2 could result in total weekday peak traffic as high as 1,271 vehicles per day in the area (Table 6). Therefore, there would not be a noticeable change from existing calculated peak traffic at the Railway and 5th Avenue location. This assumes a full-use scenario where the conference facility, visitor center, auditorium, and administration offices are being used simultaneously at full capacity. When the conference room and auditorium are not in use, expected vehicle trips decrease to 391vehicles per day under Alternative 2 (Auditorium and Meeting Room rows in Table 6 would be changed to 0), which is lower than existing predicted traffic at the location.

Table 6: Alternative 2 Weekday Traffic Estimate

Type of Use	Gross Square Footage (gsf)	Classification Code*	Predicted Weekday Peak Traffic
Administration Building (NPS, USFS, Combined Law)	13,121 gsf	710	144 vehicles/day
Visitor Services: General Areas	8,650 gsf	495	198 vehicles\/day
Visitor Services: Auditorium	3,000 gsf (200 seats)	443	352 vehicles/day
Conference Facility: General Areas	2,198 gsf	495	49 vehicles/day
Conference Facility: Meeting Room	4,500 gsf (300 seats)	443	528 vehicles/day
		Total	**1,271 vehicles/day**

*Codes taken from Institute of Transportation Engineers (1997). Codes are used to characterize building use and calculate anticipated traffic to the building.

Pedestrian traffic would also likely increase dramatically between the Multi-Agency Center and the Alaska SeaLife Center across Railway Avenue. Some increase in pedestrian traffic would occur between the Multi-Agency Center and parking sites and other businesses along 5th Avenue. Traffic flow in all other directions would likely remain constant.

All or a portion of Washington Street and the alley between the Arcade and Old Solly's sites would be vacated under this alternative. Use of Washington Street could be changed from vehicular to pedestrian, although vehicular access to the alley between the buildings on 4th and 5th Avenues, north of Washington Street, would be maintained for service or emergency purposes. Vacation of Washington Street would alter the east/west flow of traffic through south downtown Seward. Traffic that currently uses the vacated portion of Washington Street for east/west access would likely transfer to Railway Avenue; however, since Washington Street does not likely experience high traffic volumes, the change in traffic volumes along Railway Avenue would be small. There has been some public concern expressed regarding the vacation of Washington Street and potential restriction of access to the alley.

Relocation of the existing KEFJ and Seward Ranger District functions to a new, integrated facility and installation of the appropriate number of parking spaces would help alleviate parking problems associated with existing facility locations. Visitors to the small boat harbor area would need to either drive or take public transportation to the downtown area to access the Center. Increased public transportation such as shuttle buses could help reduce downtown traffic and parking volumes.

As proposed, Alternative 2 would fall short of the required parking spaces by six or seven spaces. Under peak conditions in the summer and when all functions (administrative, visitor, and conference) simultaneously experience maximum usage, available parking may not be sufficient. However, under normal daily use, ample parking would be available.

Cumulative Effects: Alternative 2 in combination with the external actions of developing the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district, relocating the Teen Center to a site along Railway Avenue, developing a new public safety building on 4th Avenue near Adams Street, and extending the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries, would all serve to bring additional tourists and employees to the main downtown area, further increasing traffic and congestion. As part of the expansion of the central business district, it will be important to consider traffic and parking requirements for each development in concert with existing facilities and attractions.

Conclusions: Under normal conditions, expected vehicle trips per day under Alternative 2 would be comparable to or lower than existing predicted traffic at Railway Avenue. Vacation of Washington Street and the alley between the Arcade and Old Solly's sites would likely result in a slight increase in traffic along Railway Avenue. Even under the full-use scenario, the increase in vehicle trips per day under Alternative 2 would be low compared to existing conditions. Proposed parking under Alternative 2 would fall short of the required parking spaces by six or seven spaces, which, under normal conditions, would provide ample parking availability, but could result in insufficient parking during peak conditions.

<u>Land Use and Land Use Plans</u>: The Arcade Building, Legend's Restaurant, Old Solly's Building, Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property lots are currently located in the central business district, which is zoned for commercial use. The Johnson and Mai Properties, which could be converted to parking lots under Alternative 2, are currently used as residential properties; the type of land use currently associated with these lots would be converted from residential to commercial under Alternative 2, and the properties would be

removed from the City's housing pool. However, construction of the Multi-Agency Center and associated parking on these properties would be consistent with the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004).

Cumulative Effects: Alternative 2 would not change the designated land use for the lots; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects on land use.

Conclusions: Alternative 2 would be consistent with land uses designated in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan.

Cultural Resources: The proposed Seward Multi-Agency Center would have "no adverse effect on cultural resources." Development and compliance activity would follow the Cultural Compliance Schedule in Appendix D.

Historic research has identified the relevant historic theme of "commercial development." A preliminary DOE for the National Register of Historic Places for historic properties within the potential area of effect has been completed. The preliminary DOE for the "Seward Historic Commercial District" found the existing buildings not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Further investigation will take place and the DOE will be finalized according to the Cultural Compliance Schedule in Appendix D.

The archeological background review revealed that there is a potential for archeological resources associated with the themes of "prehistoric" and "early Seward commercial development."

Should it be determined that archeological or historic resources are present, the NPS in consultation with the SHPO will make an assessment of Adverse Effect. If the SHPO and NPS find that significant historic properties will be adversely affected, consultation would result in a Memorandum of Agreement that would outline agreed upon measures to resolve the adverse effect (see Cultural Compliance Schedule attached as Appendix D).

If historic properties are discovered or unanticipated effects on historic properties found after the completion of the Section 106 process without an agreement document, the NPS will apply the requirement of 36 CFR 800.13(b), Discoveries Without Prior Planning. If the Section 106 process results in a Memorandum of Agreement, that agreement will define a process to resolve the discovery of historic properties or the unanticipated effect.

Although Old Solly's Building has had many alterations throughout its history that have impacted its historic integrity, the building is an important landmark for local residents. This alternative would demolish Old Solly's.

Cumulative Effects: Alternative 2 would have no adverse effects on cultural resources; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects on cultural resources.

Conclusions: This alternative would have no adverse effect on known archeological or historic resources. Unknown effects would be mitigated through the Section 106 consultation.

National Park and National Forest Management: Under this alternative, all visitor center and office space requirements would be provided in one building. The consolidation of the KEFJ visitor center and Seward Ranger District Office would facilitate better communication and coordination within and between the agencies. The new facility would improve the efficiency of both agencies by providing adequate work and storage spaces, accessibility, and parking.

A combined facility would also reduce costs for the NPS and USFS by eliminating the duplication of facilities, and improve operating efficiencies by allowing shared reception services, mailroom functions, phone system, and other necessary services.

Cumulative Effects: External actions such as re-vitalization of the central business district and expansion of the 4th Avenue dock would not impact NPS or USFS management. Therefore, there would not be any cumulative effects.

Conclusions: Alternative 2 would maximize efficiency of both the NPS and USFS by incorporating all of their functions into a single building in downtown Seward.

Public Safety: The Arcade Building, Legend's Restaurant, and Old Solly's Building lots are located within the 50- and 100-foot contour lines that mark the upper limit of potential coastal high hazard areas subject to tsunamis. The properties were not within the area of wave "run-up" from the 1964 earthquake.

The Arcade Building, Legend's Restaurant, and Old Solly's Building lots are not located within the area of fractured ground damaged by the 1964 earthquake, which corresponds to the area of high seismic risk identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004). Nevertheless, the Multi-Agency Center would be susceptible to potential damage from earthquakes. The building would be designed according to seismic standards outlined in the Uniform Building Code.

Cumulative Effects: Additional development in the downtown area would be subject to the same or similar potential for tsunamis or earthquakes. All new development, including the Multi-Agency Center would need to be considered in disaster planning for the City of Seward.

Conclusions: The new facilities would be located in the coastal high hazard area subject to tsunamis but not in the area of high seismic risk.

Local Economy: Construction of the project would create temporary construction jobs in Seward and would increase expenditures for local goods and services. These positive impacts would be short-term and realized only during construction.

Relocation of the existing KEFJ functions to a new, integrated facility would shift government workers and visitors from the harbor area to the downtown area. The new KEFJ location on Railway and 5th Avenue would help to draw visitors from the small boat harbor to the downtown area. The conference center would bring in additional visitors throughout the year, benefiting local residents by stimulating local businesses and the economy on a long-term basis.

Removal of commercial and residential properties from the downtown area would impact property tax revenues generated for the City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough. Based on

current mil rates and assessed property values, and depending on which property is selected for parking (Mai and Johnson properties or Harbor Dinner Club), the properties proposed for use under Alternative 2 generate approximately $11,500 or $13,800 in combined taxes per year for the City and Borough (Kenai Peninsula Borough, 2004). Once these properties are under federal ownership, these taxes would no longer be available to the City and Borough. Some of the lost property tax revenue would be mitigated by federal payment in lieu of taxes to the City and the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

Replacing some of the buildings in the downtown area with upgraded buildings could have the indirect effect of increasing the desire to upgrade or redevelop other properties in the area, further stimulating the local economy.

Cumulative Effects: Potential external actions in the downtown area that could contribute to positive cumulative effects on the local economy include developing the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district, expanding the central business district south to the waterfront between 3rd and 5th Avenues, relocating the Teen Center to a site along Railway Avenue, developing a new public safety building on 4th Avenue near Adams Street, and extending the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries. Any or all of these external actions, in conjunction with Alternative 2, would serve to further stimulate the local economy by increasing employment and bringing in additional tourists.

Conclusions: Construction of the Multi-Agency Center would create construction jobs and construction-related spending for the City of Seward thereby stimulating the economy on a short-term basis. The new conference center would bring in additional visitors throughout the year, benefiting the local economy in the long term. The City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough could lose approximately $11,500 or $13,800 in combined property tax revenues per year, some of which would be offset by federal payment in lieu of taxes.

Alternative 3: Two Sites, Railway Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels

Visitor Experience: The development of a larger, more integrated Multi-Agency Center would provide a larger number of visitors greatly expanded opportunities to obtain information about local public lands, facilities, and programs; watch audio-visual presentations; participate in educational programs; and engage in interpretive exhibits. The experience could increase visitors' awareness, inspire visitors to take greater care of local resources, and stimulate increased recreation in the KEFJ and CNF. The Center would provide visitors with greater comfort during seasonal crowding, improving the quality of the visitor experience. The addition of the conference center would benefit visitors and local residents alike.

Under Alternative 3, the visitor service and conference functions would be located in a single building on 5th Avenue, but would be split between two floors in the building, with most of the visitor services on the first floor and the conference facilities on the second floor. This would somewhat separate the conference functions from interpretive displays and information provided for visitor service functions. Transition between the functions may not be as smooth as if they were all situated on one floor. However, these displays would still be accessible to conference attendees as they enter or exit the building. Administrative functions for the KEJF and CNF would be located in a separate building at Railway Avenue.

Locating the Multi-Agency Center in the downtown area would require visitors to the small boat harbor area to either drive or take public transportation downtown to access the Center. However, the Center's close proximity to the Alaska SeaLife Center, with its focus on local marine habitats, would nicely complement the experience received at the visitor center. In addition, visitors would be able to easily access restaurants and shops located in downtown Seward.

The visitor service and conference functions would be located on 5th Avenue, which is farther north and east of the Alaska SeaLife Center than parcels located at Railway and 5th Avenue. However, the parcel is located only one block to the east 4th Avenue, which serves as Seward's main street. Most people wishing to visit the Multi-Agency Center, Alaska SeaLife Center, and "Main Street" on 4th Avenue would be able to easily walk between the attractions once reaching one location.

The USFS's ability to inform the public about its programs and the recreational opportunities available in the CNF would be greatly expanded by relocating the Seward Ranger District Office to Railway Avenue, which is a much more highly traveled area compared to the current location of the district office.

Cumulative Effects: Future plans identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (URS, 2004) to develop the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district by expanding the central business district south to the waterfront between 3rd and 5th Avenues and gradually replacing warehouse functions with community, entertainment, and tourist-oriented uses would further serve to enhance the visitor experience. In addition to the attractions of the Alaska SeaLife Center and the visitor attractions proposed under this alternative, tourists would have even more reasons to visit the downtown area. A potential extension of the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries would also add to the positive cumulative effects for visitor experience under Alternative 3.

Conclusions: This alternative would improve the quality of the visitor experience by integrating NPS and USFS visitor services, relieving crowding, and improving exhibits and educational programs. Relocation of the KEFJ visitor center away from the small boat harbor would be offset by improved access to the Alaska SeaLife Center and downtown businesses and improved visitor experience.

Visual Resources: Construction of the Multi-Agency Center in the mid-block location and on Railway Avenue would have temporary negative effects on visual resources in downtown Seward. Construction equipment and activities would be visible in the downtown business district until completion of the project.

The proposed project design would incorporate architectural elements and landscaping that would blend with the historic character of the downtown area. In addition, the buildings would be limited to two stories so as not to block views of the mountains and Resurrection Bay. Existing trees and shrubbery may be removed, but the sites would be landscaped and revegetated. Parking areas would incorporate landscaped islands that visually break up the expanse of asphalt and provide a more appealing view for the community.

Replacing some of the buildings in the downtown area with upgraded buildings could have the indirect effect of increasing the desire to upgrade or redevelop other properties in the area.

Cumulative Effects: Future plans identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (URS, 2004) to re-vitalize the central business district by phasing out warehouses and empty lots would add positively to the visual aesthetics of the downtown area. In conjunction with Alternative 3, the overall effects would be to positively enhance the visual resources of the downtown area.

Conclusions: The project could have temporary negative impacts to visual resources due to construction. The proposed project design would be consistent with the historic character and strongly influenced by the natural environment of Seward.

Transportation and Parking: In order to determine the projected increase in traffic that would result from addition of a Multi-Agency Center in the 5th Avenue mid-block location and on Railway Avenue under Alternative 3, the following assumptions were made (refer also to the Traffic and Parking Analysis in Appendix B):

- The peak hourly visitation would be 739 persons (peak visitation for the visitor center and conference center simultaneously).
- Arrival to the site would be equally distributed by passenger vehicle, bus/trolley, and on foot (246 persons by each mode of travel).
- More than half of the visitors would already be in the area to visit the Alaska SeaLife Center or to conduct other business downtown.
- 2.5 persons would occupy each passenger vehicle (98.5 trips, or 246 divided by 2.5).
- 30 persons would occupy each bus/trolley (8 trips, or 246 divided by 30).
- Persons walking to the center would have had to arrive in the downtown area by vehicle (98.5 vehicles).

Based upon these assumptions, addition of the Multi-Agency Center under Alternative 3 could result in an increase of about 205 extra trips to the downtown area (98.5 vehicles and eight busses or trolleys coming directly to the site, plus an additional 98.5 vehicles arriving at some location in the downtown area). These trips do not account for the administrative functions of the building, which would add to the number of vehicles entering the downtown area on a given day. Since there are no available data describing specific traffic use at the Railway and 5th Avenue intersection or at the 5th Avenue mid-block parcel, the four-year AADT of 2,700 at the intersection of Railway and 3rd Avenues was used to represent existing downtown traffic conditions (see Section 3.0). An increase in AADT from 2,700 to about 2,905 (8 percent) during peak use times would not likely have a substantial impact on overall Seward traffic conditions, particularly at the heavily used Railway Avenue and 3rd Avenue intersection.

Under Alternative 3, the visitor center and conference functions would be located on 5th Avenue at the mid-block parcels. As shown on Table 5, these functions generate most of the expected traffic to the facility (about 140 vehicles for the administration functions compared to over 1,100 vehicles for peak use of the visitor and conference facilities). Therefore, it is important to consider projected building use and predicted traffic based on this use specifically at the mid-

block parcel site, which could then be compared to expected peak-use traffic at the Multi-Agency Center.

As described in Section 3.0 and shown on Table 4, weekday peak traffic calculated using ITE methods for the existing buildings located at the 5th Avenue mid-block site is predicted to be about 439 vehicles per day. As shown on Table 5, total weekday peak traffic for the visitor and conference centers located at the mid-block parcels could be over 1,100 vehicles per day under Alternative 3. This represents an increase of 150 percent over existing calculated peak traffic in the 5th Avenue mid-block location, which would likely be a noticeable increase in this quieter section of town. This assumes a full-use scenario where the conference facility, visitor center and auditorium are being used simultaneously at full capacity. When the conference room and auditorium are not in use, expected vehicle trips decrease to 390 vehicles per day under Alternative 3 (Auditorium and Meeting Room rows in Table 5 would be changed to 0), which is comparable to existing predicted traffic at the mid-block parcels.

Pedestrian traffic would also likely increase dramatically between the Multi-Agency Center and the Alaska SeaLife Center located several blocks away to the south and west from the visitor and conference center. Some increase in pedestrian traffic would occur between the proposed Multi-Agency Center and parking sites and other businesses along 4th and 5th Avenues. Traffic flow in all other directions would likely remain constant.

The alley between the Arcade and Old Solly's would be vacated under this alternative, but Washington Street would still connect 4th and 5th Avenues north of the proposed buildings. The loss of access to Washington Street from the alley is not expected to be detrimental to overall traffic flow.

Relocation of the existing KEFJ and Seward Ranger District functions to a new, integrated facility and installation of the appropriate number of parking spaces would help alleviate parking problems associated with existing facility locations. Visitors to the small boat harbor area would need to either drive or take public transportation to the downtown area to access the Center. Increased public transportation such as shuttle buses could help reduce downtown traffic and parking volumes.

As proposed, Alternative 3 would provide the required number of parking spaces.

Cumulative Effects: Alternative 3 in combination with the external actions of developing the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district, relocating the Teen Center to a site along Railway Avenue, developing a new public safety building on 4th Avenue near Adams Street, and extending the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries, would all serve to bring in additional tourists and employees to the main downtown area, further increasing traffic and congestion. As part of the expansion of the central business district, it will be important to consider traffic and parking requirements for each development in concert with existing facilities and attractions.

Conclusions: Under normal conditions, expected vehicle trips per day under Alternative 3 would be comparable to existing predicted traffic at the 5th Avenue mid-block parcels, and it is not expected that traffic congestion would occur in downtown Seward. Vacation of the small

portion of the alley between the Arcade and Old Solly's sites would not likely greatly impact traffic flow in the vicinity of the proposed administration building. Under the full-use scenario, the increase in vehicle trips per day under Alternative 3 could be about 150 percent over existing conditions. Therefore, on the few occasions when all proposed facilities are simultaneously in use, there would likely be a noticeable traffic increase in this area of town. Sufficient parking spaces would be installed to accommodate employee parking and increased visitor parking that would be needed for the Center.

Land Use and Land Use Plans: The Arcade Building, Legend's Restaurant, Old Solly's Building, Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property lots are currently located in the central business district, which is zoned for commercial use. The Johnson and Mai Properties are currently used as residential properties; the type of land use currently associated with these lots would be converted from residential to commercial under Alternative 3, and the properties would be removed from the City's housing pool. However, construction of the Multi-Agency Center and associated parking on these properties would be consistent with the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004).

Cumulative Effects: Alternative 3 would not change the designated land use for the lots; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects on land use.

Conclusions: Alternative 3 would be consistent with land uses designated in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan.

Cultural Resources: The proposed Seward Multi-Agency Center would have "no adverse effect on cultural resources." Development and compliance activity would follow the Cultural Compliance Schedule in Appendix D.

Historic research has identified the relevant historic theme of "commercial development." A preliminary DOE for the National Register of Historic Places for historic properties within the potential area of effect has been completed. The preliminary DOE for the "Seward Historic Commercial District" found the existing buildings not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Further investigation will take place and the DOE will be finalized according to the Cultural Compliance Schedule in Appendix D.

The archeological background review revealed that there is a potential for archeological resources associated with the themes of "prehistoric" and "early Seward commercial development."

Should it be determined that archeological or historic resources are present, the NPS in consultation with the SHPO will make an assessment of Adverse Effect. If the SHPO and NPS find that significant historic properties will be adversely affected, consultation would result in a Memorandum of Agreement that would outline agreed upon measures to resolve the adverse effect (see Cultural Compliance Schedule attached as Appendix D).

If historic properties are discovered or unanticipated effects on historic properties found after the completion of the Section 106 process without an agreement document, the NPS will apply the requirement of 36 CFR 800.13(b), Discoveries Without Prior Planning. If the Section 106

process results in a Memorandum of Agreement, that agreement will define a process to resolve the discovery of historic properties or the unanticipated effect.

Although Old Solly's Building has had many alterations throughout its history that have impacted its historic integrity, the building is an important landmark for local residents. This alternative would demolish Old Solly's.

Cumulative Effects: Alternative 3 would have no adverse effects on cultural resources; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects on cultural resources.

Conclusions: The proposed project would have no adverse effect on known archeological or historic resources. Unknown effects would be mitigated through the Section 106 consultation.

National Park and National Forest Management: Under this alternative, the visitor center functions would be housed in one building, and office space requirements would be provided in a separate building only several hundred feet away. This would be less efficient than having all functions in one building because it would require separate building systems and potential duplication of some administrative staff and janitorial facilities. However, a new facility under Alternative 3 would greatly improve the efficiency of both agencies over the status quo by providing adequate work and storage spaces, accessibility, and parking. The consolidation of the KEFJ visitor center and Seward Ranger District Office would facilitate better communication and coordination within and between the agencies.

A combined facility would also reduce costs for the NPS and USFS by eliminating the duplication of facilities, and improve operating efficiencies by allowing shared reception services, mailroom functions, phone system, and other necessary services.

Cumulative Effects: External actions such as re-vitalization of the central business district and expansion of the 4th Avenue dock would not impact NPS or USFS management. Therefore, there would not be any cumulative effects.

Conclusions: Housing visitor center and administrative functions in two separate buildings would be less efficient than having both functions in a single facility. However NPS and USFS administrative functions would be much improved over the status quo, and efficiency of both the NPS and USFS would be greatly increased.

Public Safety: The Arcade Building, Old Solly's Building, Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property lots are located within the 50- and 100-foot contour lines that mark the upper limit of potential coastal high hazard areas subject to tsunamis. The properties were not within the area of wave "run-up" from the 1964 earthquake.

The Arcade Building, Old Solly's Building, Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property lots are not located within the area of fractured ground damaged by the 1964 earthquake, which corresponds to the area of high seismic risk identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004). Nevertheless, the Multi-Agency Center would be susceptible to potential damage from earthquakes. The building would be designed according to seismic standards outlined in the Uniform Building Code.

Cumulative Effects: Additional development in the downtown area would be subject to the same or similar potential for tsunamis or earthquakes. All new development, including the Multi-Agency Center would need to be considered in disaster planning for the City of Seward.

Conclusions: The new facilities would be located in the coastal high hazard area subject to tsunamis but not in the area of high seismic risk.

Local Economy: Construction of the project would create temporary construction jobs in Seward and would increase expenditures for local goods and services. These positive impacts would be short-term and realized only during construction

Relocation of the existing KEFJ functions to a new, integrated facility in two downtown locations would shift government workers and visitors from the harbor area to the downtown area. The new KEFJ building locations, one on Railway Avenue and one in the mid-block location on 5th Avenue, would help to draw visitors from the small boat harbor to the downtown area. The conference center would bring in additional visitors throughout the year, benefiting local residents by stimulating local businesses and the economy on a long-term basis.

Removal of commercial and residential properties from the downtown area would impact property tax revenues generated for the City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough. Based on current mil rates and assessed property values, and depending on whether Alternative 3a or 3b is selected, the properties proposed for use under Alternative 3 generate between $14,800 and $15,100 in combined property taxes per year for the City and Borough (Kenai Peninsula Borough, 2004). Once these properties are under federal ownership, these taxes would no longer be available to the City and Borough. Some of the lost property tax revenue would be mitigated by federal payment in lieu of taxes to the City and the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

Replacing some of the buildings in the downtown area with upgraded buildings could have the indirect effect of increasing the desire to upgrade or redevelop other properties in the area, further stimulating the local economy.

Cumulative Effects: Potential external actions in the downtown area that could contribute to positive cumulative effects on the local economy include developing the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district, expanding the central business district south to the waterfront between 3rd and 5th Avenues, relocating the Teen Center to a site along Railway Avenue, developing a new public safety building on 4th Avenue near Adams Street, and extending the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries. Any or all of these external actions, in conjunction with the proposed Alternative 3, would serve to further stimulate the local economy by increasing employment and bringing in additional tourists.

Conclusions: Construction of the Multi-Agency Center would create construction jobs and construction-related spending for the City of Seward thereby stimulating the economy on a short-term basis. The new conference center would bring in additional visitors throughout the year, benefiting the local economy. The City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough would lose between $14,800 and $15,100 in combined property tax revenues per year, some of which would be offset by federal payment in lieu of taxes.

Alternative 4: Two Sites, Railway and 5th Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels

Visitor Experience: The development of a larger, more integrated Multi-Agency Center would provide a larger number of visitors greatly expanded opportunities to obtain information about local public lands, facilities, and programs; watch audio-visual presentations; participate in educational programs; and engage in interpretive exhibits. The experience could increase visitors' awareness, inspire visitors to take greater care of local resources, and stimulate increased recreation in the KEFJ and CNF. The Center would provide visitors with greater comfort during seasonal crowding, improving the quality of the visitor experience. The addition of the conference center would benefit visitors and local residents alike.

Under Alternative 4, the visitor service and conference functions would be located in a single building at the 5th Avenue mid-block location, and would be split between two floors with most of the visitor services on the first floor and the conference facilities on the second floor. This would somewhat separate the conference functions from interpretive displays and information provided for visitor service functions. Transition between the functions may not be as smooth as if they were all situated on one floor. However, these displays would still be accessible to conference attendees as they enter or exit the building. The administrative and staff functions would be located in a separate building at Railway and 5th Avenue. This alternative leaves open the possibility for visitor/conference functions and administrative staff functions to switch sites.

Locating the Multi-Agency Center in the downtown area would require visitors to the small boat harbor area to either drive or take public transportation downtown to access the Center. However, the Center's close proximity to the Alaska SeaLife Center, with its focus on local marine habitats, would nicely complement the experience received at the visitor center. In addition, visitors would be able to easily access restaurants and shops located in downtown Seward.

The USFS's ability to inform the public about its programs and the recreational opportunities available in the CNF would be greatly expanded by relocating the Seward Ranger District Office to downtown Seward, which is a much more highly traveled area compared to the current location of the district office.

Cumulative Effects: Future plans identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (URS, 2004) to develop the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district by expanding the central business district south to the waterfront between 3rd and 5th Avenues and gradually replacing warehouse functions with community, entertainment, and tourist-oriented uses would further serve to enhance the visitor experience. In addition to the attractions of the Alaska SeaLife Center and the visitor attractions proposed under this alternative, tourists would have even more reasons to visit the downtown area. A potential extension of the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries would also add to the positive cumulative effects for visitor experience under Alternative 4.

Conclusions: This alternative would improve the quality of the visitor experience by integrating NPS and USFS visitor services, relieving crowding, and improving exhibits and educational programs. Relocation of the KEFJ visitor center away from the small boat harbor would be

offset by improved access to the Alaska SeaLife Center and downtown businesses and improved visitor experience.

Visual Resources: Construction of the Multi-Agency Center in two buildings located in the mid-block location on 5th Avenue and on Railway and 5th Avenue would have temporary negative effects on visual resources in downtown Seward. Construction equipment and activities would be visible in the downtown business district until completion of the project.

The proposed project design would incorporate architectural elements and landscaping that would blend with the historic character of the downtown area. In addition, the buildings would be limited to two stories so as not to block views of the mountains and Resurrection Bay. Existing trees and shrubbery may be removed, but the sites would be landscaped and revegetated. Parking areas would incorporate landscaped islands that visually break up the expanse of asphalt and provide a more appealing view for the community.

Replacing some of the buildings in the downtown area with upgraded buildings could have the indirect effect of increasing the desire to upgrade or redevelop other properties in the area.

Cumulative Effects: Future plans identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (URS, 2004) to re-vitalize the central business district by phasing out warehouses and empty lots would add positively to the visual aesthetics of the downtown area. In conjunction with Alternative 4, the overall effects would be to positively enhance the visual resources of the downtown area.

Conclusions: The project could have temporary negative impacts to visual resources due to construction. The proposed project design would be consistent with the historic character and strongly influenced by the natural environment of Seward.

Transportation and Parking: In order to determine the projected increase in traffic that would result from addition of a Multi-Agency Center in the mid-block location on 5th Avenue and on Railway and 5th Avenue under Alternative 4, the following assumptions were made (refer also to the Traffic and Parking Analysis in Appendix B):

- The peak hourly visitation would be 739 persons (peak visitation for the visitor center and conference center simultaneously).
- Arrival to the site would be equally distributed by passenger vehicle, bus/trolley, and on foot (246 persons by each mode of travel).
- More than half of the visitors would already be in the area to visit the Alaska SeaLife Center or to conduct other business downtown.
- 2.5 persons would occupy each passenger vehicle (98.5 trips, or 246 divided by 2.5).
- 30 persons would occupy each bus/trolley (8 trips, or 246 divided by 30).
- Persons walking to the center would have had to arrive in the downtown area by vehicle (98.5 vehicles).

Based upon these assumptions, addition of the Multi-Agency Center under Alternative 4 could result in an increase of about 205 extra trips to the downtown area (98.5 vehicles and eight

busses or trolleys coming directly to the site, plus an additional 98.5 vehicles arriving at some location in the downtown area). These trips do not account for the administrative functions of the building, which would add to the number of vehicles entering the downtown area on a given day. Since there are no available data describing specific traffic use at the Railway and 5th Avenue intersection or at the 5th Avenue mid-block parcel, the four-year AADT of 2,700 at the intersection of Railway and 3rd Avenues was used to represent existing downtown traffic conditions (see Section 3.0). An increase in AADT from 2,700 to about 2,905 (8 percent) during peak use times would not likely have a substantial impact on overall Seward traffic conditions, particularly at the heavily used Railway Avenue and 3rd Avenue intersection.

Under Alternative 4, the visitor center and conference functions would be located on 5th Avenue at the mid-block parcels. As shown on Table 5, these functions generate most of the expected traffic to the facility (about 140 vehicles for the administration functions compared to over 1,100 vehicles for peak use of the visitor and conference facilities). Therefore, it is important to consider projected building use and predicted traffic based on this use specifically at the mid-block parcel site, which could then be compared to expected peak-use traffic at the Multi-Agency Center.

As described in Section 3.0 and shown on Table 4, weekday peak traffic calculated using ITE methods for the existing buildings located at the 5th Avenue mid-block site is predicted to be about 439 vehicles per day. As shown on Table 5, total weekday peak traffic for the visitor and conference centers located at the mid-block parcels could be over 1,100 vehicles per day under Alternative 4. This represents an increase of 150 percent over existing calculated peak traffic in the 5th Avenue mid-block location, which would likely be a noticeable increase in this quieter section of town. This assumes a full-use scenario where the conference facility, visitor center and auditorium are being used simultaneously at full capacity. When the conference room and auditorium are not in use, expected vehicle trips decrease to 390 vehicles per day under Alternative 4 (Auditorium and Meeting Room rows in Table 5 would be changed to 0), which is comparable to existing predicted traffic at the mid-block parcels.

Pedestrian traffic would likely increase dramatically between the Multi-Agency Center and the Alaska SeaLife Center. Some increase in pedestrian traffic would occur between the Center and parking sites and other businesses along 5th Avenue. Traffic flow in all other directions would likely remain constant.

All or a portion of Washington Street would be vacated under this alternative. Use of Washington Street could be changed from vehicular to pedestrian, although vehicular access to the alley between the buildings on 4th and 5th Avenues, north of Washington Street, would be maintained for service or emergency purposes. Vacation of Washington Street would alter the east/west flow of traffic through south downtown Seward. Traffic that currently uses the vacated portion of Washington Street for east/west access would likely transfer to Railway Avenue; however, since Washington Street does not likely experience high traffic volumes, the change in traffic volumes along Railway Avenue would be small. The portion of the alley between the Arcade and Old Solly's Buildings, south of Washington Street, would not be vacated under this alternative. There has been some public concern expressed regarding the vacation of Washington Street and potential impacts to traffic flow in the vicinity.

Relocation of the existing KEFJ and Seward Ranger District functions to a new, integrated facility and installation of the appropriate number of parking spaces would help alleviate parking problems associated with existing facility locations. Visitors to the small boat harbor area would need to either drive or take public transportation to the downtown area to access the Center. Increased public transportation such as shuttle buses could help reduce downtown traffic and parking volumes.

As proposed, Alternative 4 would provide the required number of parking spaces.

Cumulative Effects: Alternative 4 in combination with the external actions of developing the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district, relocating the Teen Center to a site along Railway Avenue, developing a new public safety building on 4th Avenue near Adams Street, and extending the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries, would all serve to bring in additional tourists and employees to the main downtown area, further increasing traffic and congestion. As part of the expansion of the central business district, it will be important to consider traffic and parking requirements for each development in concert with existing facilities and attractions.

Conclusions: Under normal conditions, expected vehicle trips per day under Alternative 4 would be comparable to existing predicted traffic at the 5th Avenue mid-block parcels, and it is not expected that traffic congestions would occur in downtown Seward. Vacation of Washington Street would likely result in a slight increase in traffic along Railway Avenue. Under the full-use scenario, the increase in vehicle trips per day under Alternative 4 could be about 150 percent over existing conditions. Therefore, on the few occasions when all proposed facilities are simultaneously in use, there would likely be a noticeable traffic increase in this area of town. Sufficient parking spaces would be installed to accommodate employee parking and increased visitor parking that would be needed for the Center.

Land Use and Land Use Plans: The Old Solly's Building, Legend's Restaurant, Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property lots are currently located in the central business district, which is zoned for commercial use. The Johnson and Mai Properties are currently used as residential properties; the type of land use currently associated with these lots would be converted from residential to commercial under Alternative 4, and the properties would be removed from the City's housing pool. However, construction of the Multi-Agency Center and associated parking on these properties would be consistent with the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004).

Cumulative Effects: Alternative 4 would not change the designated land use for the lots; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects on land use.

Conclusions: Alternative 4 would be consistent with land uses designated in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan.

Cultural Resources: The proposed Seward Multi-Agency Center would have "no adverse effect on cultural resources." Development and compliance activity would follow the Cultural Compliance Schedule in Appendix D.

Historic research has identified the relevant historic theme of "commercial development." A preliminary DOE for the National Register of Historic Places for historic properties within the potential area of effect has been completed. The preliminary DOE for the "Seward Historic Commercial District" found the existing buildings not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Further investigation will take place and the DOE will be finalized according to the Cultural Compliance Schedule in Appendix D.

The archeological background review revealed that there is a potential for archeological resources associated with the themes of "prehistoric" and "early Seward commercial development."

Should it be determined that archeological or historic resources are present, the NPS in consultation with the SHPO will make an assessment of Adverse Effect. If the SHPO and NPS find that significant historic properties will be adversely affected, consultation would result in a Memorandum of Agreement that would outline agreed upon measures to resolve the adverse effect (see Cultural Compliance Schedule attached as Appendix D).

If historic properties are discovered or unanticipated effects on historic properties found after the completion of the Section 106 process without an agreement document, the NPS will apply the requirement of 36 CFR 800.13(b), Discoveries Without Prior Planning. If the Section 106 process results in a Memorandum of Agreement, that agreement will define a process to resolve the discovery of historic properties or the unanticipated effect.

Although Old Solly's Building has had many alterations throughout its history that have impacted its historic integrity, the building is an important landmark for local residents. This alternative would demolish Old Solly's.

Cumulative Effects: Alternative 4 would have no adverse effects on cultural resources; therefore, there would be no cumulative effects on cultural resources.

Conclusions: The proposed project would have no adverse effect on known archeological or historic resources. Unknown effects would be mitigated through the Section 106 consultation.

<u>National Park and National Forest Management</u>: Under this alternative, the visitor center functions would be housed in one building, and office space requirements would be provided in a separate building only several hundred feet away. This would be less efficient than having all functions in one building because it would require separate building systems and potential duplication of some administrative staff and janitorial facilities. However, a new facility under Alternative 4 would greatly improve the efficiency of both agencies over the status quo by providing adequate work and storage spaces, accessibility, and parking. The consolidation of the KEFJ visitor center and Seward Ranger District Office would facilitate better communication and coordination within and between the agencies.

A combined facility would also reduce costs for the NPS and USFS by eliminating the duplication of facilities, and improve operating efficiencies by allowing shared reception services, mailroom functions, phone system, and other necessary services.

Cumulative Effects: External actions such as re-vitalization of the central business district and expansion of the 4th Avenue dock would not impact NPS or USFS management. Therefore, there would not be any cumulative effects.

Conclusions: Housing visitor center and administrative functions in two separate buildings would be less efficient than having both functions in a single facility. However, the buildings are in close proximity to each other and NPS and USFS functions and efficiency would be much improved over the status quo.

Public Safety: The Old Solly's Building, Legend's Restaurant, Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property lots are located within the 50- and 100-foot contour lines that mark the upper limit of potential coastal high hazard areas subject to tsunamis. The properties were not within the area of wave "run-up" from the 1964 earthquake.

The Old Solly's Building, Legend's Restaurant, Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property lots are not located within the area of fractured ground damaged by the 1964 earthquake, which corresponds to the area of high seismic risk identified in the City of Seward Comprehensive Plan (City of Seward, 1985; City of Seward, 1990; URS, 2004). Nevertheless, the Multi-Agency Center would be susceptible to potential damage from earthquakes. The building would be designed according to seismic standards outlined in the Uniform Building Code.

Cumulative Effects: Additional development in the downtown area would be subject to the same or similar potential for tsunamis or earthquakes. All new development, including the Multi-Agency Center would need to be considered in disaster planning for the City of Seward.

Conclusions: The new facilities would be located in the coastal high hazard area subject to tsunamis but not in the area of high seismic risk (fracture zone).

Local Economy: Construction of the project would create temporary construction jobs in Seward and would increase expenditures for local goods and services. These positive impacts would be short-term and realized only during construction.

Relocation of the existing KEFJ functions to a new, integrated facility would shift government workers and visitors from the harbor area to the downtown area. The new KEFJ building locations, one on Railway and 5th Avenues and one at the mid-block location on 5th Avenue, would help to draw visitors from the small boat harbor to the downtown area. The conference center would bring in additional visitors throughout the year, benefiting local residentsby stimulating local businesses and the economy on a long-term basis.

Removal of commercial and residential properties from the downtown area would impact property tax revenues generated for the City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough. Based on current mil rates and assessed property values, and depending on which property is selected for parking (Mai or Johnson property) and whether Alternative 4a or 4b is selected, the properties proposed for use under Alternative 4 generate between $14,000 and $14,400 in combined property taxes per year for the City and Borough (Kenai Peninsula Borough, 2004). Once these properties are under federal ownership, these taxes would no longer be available to the City and

Borough. Some of the lost property tax revenue would be mitigated by federal payment in lieu of taxes to the City and the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

Replacing some of the buildings in the downtown area with upgraded buildings could have the indirect effect of increasing the desire to upgrade or redevelop other properties in the area, further stimulating the local economy.

Cumulative Effects: Potential actions in the downtown area that could contribute to positive cumulative effects on the local economy include developing the 4th Avenue waterfront as a tourist-oriented commercial district, expanding the central business district south to the waterfront between 3rd and 5th Avenues, relocating the Teen Center to a site along Railway Avenue, developing a new public safety building on 4th Avenue near Adams Street, and extending the 4th Avenue dock to better serve large cruise ships and ferries. Any or all of these external actions, in conjunction with the proposed Alternative 4, would serve to further stimulate the local economy by increasing employment and bringing in additional tourists.

Conclusions: Construction of the Multi-Agency Center would create construction jobs and construction-related spending for the City of Seward thereby stimulating the economy on a short-term basis. The new conference center would bring in additional visitors throughout the year, benefiting the local economy. The City of Seward and Kenai Peninsula Borough could lose between $14,000 and $14,400 in combined property tax revenues per year, some of which would be offset by federal payment in lieu of taxes.

5.0 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Consultation and Coordination

A public information meeting was held at the K.M. Rae Building in Seward on April 14, 2004, to present project history, current status, and the design process. The meeting was facilitated by the NPS and involved staff from The Portico Group, the architectural/engineering contactor for the project. Thirty-six attendees signed in for the public information meeting.

List of Preparers

Sue Ban, Project Manager, URS Corporation
Tara Howell, Environmental Scientist, URS Corporation
Joan Kluwe, PhD, Environmental Scientist, URS Corporation
Paul Schrooten, Landscape Architect, National Park Service
Glen Yankus, Contracting Officer's Representative, National Park Service
Norman Gutcher, Principal Engineer, Tryck Nyman Hayes, Inc.

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APPENDIX A
ANILCA Section 810(a) Summary of Evaluations and Findings

I. Introduction

This evaluation and finding was prepared to comply with Title VIII, Section 810 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). It evaluates the potential restrictions to subsistence uses that could possibly result from the proposed development of a Multi-Agency Center in the City of Seward, Alaska.

II. The Evaluation Process

Section 810(a) of ANILCA states the following:

> "In determining whether to withdraw, reserve, lease, or otherwise permit the use, occupancy, or disposition of public lands…the head of the Federal agency…over such lands…shall evaluate the effect of such use, occupancy, or disposition on subsistence uses and needs, the availability of other lands for the purposes sought to be achieved, and other alternatives which would reduce or eliminate the use, occupancy, or disposition of public lands needed for subsistence purposes. No such withdrawal, reservation, lease, permit, or other use, occupancy or disposition of such lands which would significantly restrict subsistence uses shall be effected until the head of such Federal agency:
>
> 1. gives notice to the appropriate State agency and the appropriate local committees and regional councils established pursuant to section 805;
> 2. gives notice of, and holds, a hearing in the vicinity of the area involved; and
> 3. determines that (A) such a significant restriction of subsistence uses is necessary, consistent with sound management principles for the utilization of the public lands, (B) the proposed activity would involve the minimal amount of public lands necessary to accomplish the purposes of such use, occupancy, or other disposition, and (C) reasonable steps would be taken to minimize adverse impacts upon subsistence uses and resources resulting from such actions."

ANILCA created new units and additions to existing units of the national park system in Alaska. Kenai Fjords National Park, containing approximately 567,000 acres of public lands, was created by ANILCA, section 201(5) for the following purposes:

> "The park shall be managed for the following purposes, among others: To maintain unimpaired the scenic and environmental integrity of the Harding Icefield, its outflowing glaciers, and coastal fjords and islands in their natural state; and to protect seals, sea lions, other marine mammals, and marine and other birds and to maintain their hauling and breeding areas in their natural state, free of human activity which is disruptive to their natural processes. In a manner consistent with the foregoing, the Secretary is authorized to develop access to the Harding Icefield and to allow use of mechanized equipment on the icefield for recreation."

The potential for significant restriction must be evaluated for the proposed action's effect upon "subsistence uses and needs, the availability of other lands for the purposes sought to be achieved and other alternatives which would reduce or eliminate the use" (Section 810(a), ANILCA).

III. Proposed Action on Federal Lands

The National Park Service (NPS) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) are considering the development of a Multi-Agency Center in Seward, Alaska. The Center will include administrative space and visitor functions for the Kenai Fjords National Park (KEFJ) and Chugach National Forest (CNF). *The Environmental Assessment For a Multi-Agency Center in Seward, Alaska, June 2004* describes the no action alternative and four action alternatives:

No Action
Under the no action alternative the NPS and USFS would continue to use existing administrative facilities in the City of Seward. The NPS would maintain the KEFJ visitor center and administrative building at Seward's small boat harbor while the USFS would continue to use the Seward Ranger District Office in Seward and the Kenai Lake Work Center near Moose Pass for administrative purposes. There would be no expansion of existing facilities.

Alternative 1: Single Site, Mid-Block Parcel
Alternative 1 would use three parcels mid-block on the east side of 5th Avenue (Johnson Property, Harbor Dinner Club, and Mai Property) to make a single site. A single, two-story building would be constructed on the site; the building would have a footprint of approximately 22,800 square feet and would incorporate areas of outdoor "green space" (e.g., lawns and landscaped areas). The visitor service and conference functions would be located on the building's first floor, and the administrative and staff functions would be located on the second floor.

Alternative 1 could achieve 152 of the 160 required parking spaces using 25 on-street parking spaces on 5th Avenue, 92 off-street spaces provided by the NPS-owned property and City Waterfront property, and 35 off-street parking spaces possible on the Legend's Restaurant site.

Alternative 2: Single Site, Railway and 5th Avenue Parcel
Alternative 2 would use a combination of the three parcels on Railway and 5th Avenues (Arcade Building, Old Solly's Building, and Legend's Restaurant) and a portion of Washington Street to make a single site. A single, two-story building would be constructed on the site; the building would have a footprint of approximately 19,800 square feet and would incorporate areas of outdoor "green space" (e.g., lawns and landscaped areas). The visitor service and conference functions would be split between two floors with most of the visitor services on the first floor and the conference facilities on the second floor. The administrative and staff functions would also occupy two floors and would be located primarily within the former Arcade and Old Solly's sites.

All or a portion of Washington Street and the alley between the Arcade and Old Solly's sites would be vacated under this alternative. Use of Washington Street could be changed from vehicular to pedestrian, although vehicular access to the alley between the buildings on 4th and

5th Avenues, north of Washington Street, would be maintained for service or emergency purposes.

Alternative 2 could achieve 153 or 154 of the 160 required parking spaces using 20 on-street parking spaces on 4th and 5th Avenues, 92 off-street spaces provided by the NPS-owned property and City Waterfront property, and either 41 off-street parking spaces possible on the Harbor Dinner Club site or 42 off-street parking spaces possible on the Mai and Johnson Properties combined.

Alternative 3: Two Sites, Railway Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels
Alternative 3 would use a combination of two of the three parcels mid-block on the east side of 5th Avenue for one building, and the Arcade Building and Old Solly's Building lots to create a parcel for a second building along Railway Avenue. Of the mid-block parcels, either the Johnson Property and Harbor Dinner Club lots would be combined (Alternative 4a), or the Harbor Dinner Club and Mai Property lots would be combined (Alternative 4b). A two-story building with a footprint of approximately 12,900 square feet would be constructed on the mid-block site, and an additional two-story building with a footprint of approximately 10,800 square feet would be constructed on the Railway Avenue site. The mid-block building would incorporate areas of outdoor "green space" (e.g., lawns and landscaped areas). The visitor service and conference functions would be located at the mid-block site with visitor services on the first floor and the conference facilities on the second floor. The administrative and staff functions would be located on two floors within the former Arcade and Old Solly's sites.

The alley between the Arcade and Old Solly's sites would be vacated under this alternative.

Alternative 3 could achieve 162 of the 160 required parking spaces using 35 on-street parking spaces on 5th Avenue and Washington Street, 92 off-street spaces provided by the NPS-owned property and City Waterfront property, and 35 off-street parking spaces possible on the Legend's Restaurant site.

Alternative 4: Two Sites, Railway and 5th Avenue and Mid-Block Parcels
Alternative 4 would use a combination of two of the three parcels mid-block on the east side of 5th Avenue for one building, and the Old Solly's Building lot, Legend's Restaurant lot, and a portion of Washington Street to create a parcel for a second building. Of the mid-block parcels, either the Johnson Property and Harbor Dinner Club lots would be combined (Alternative 5a), or the Harbor Dinner Club and Mai Property lots would be combined (Alternative 5b). A two-story building with a footprint of approximately 11,000 square feet would be constructed on the mid-block site, and an additional two-story building with a footprint of approximately 9,000 square feet would be constructed at the former Old Solly's and Legend's sites. The combined sites would be larger than the area needed for the buildings; therefore, outdoor park space and on-site parking would be incorporated into the design. The visitor service and conference functions would be located at the mid-block site with visitor services on the first floor and the conference facilities on the second floor. The administrative and staff functions would be located on two floors within the former Old Solly's and Legend's sites. This alternative would also allow the visitor/conference functions and administrative/staff functions to switch sites.

All or a portion of Washington Street would be vacated under this alternative. Use of Washington Street could be changed from vehicular to pedestrian, although vehicular access to the alley between the buildings on 4th and 5th Avenues, north of Washington Street, would be maintained for service or emergency purposes.

Alternative 4 could achieve 165 of the 160 required parking spaces using 52 on-street parking spaces, 92 off-street spaces provided by the NPS-owned property and City Waterfront property, and 21 off-street parking spaces possible on either the Mai or Johnson Property.

IV. Affected Environment

The proposed development sites are located within the City of Seward. Current regulations prohibit the discharge of firearms within the City of Seward. Federal subsistence regulations do not apply to state or private lands.

Section 803 of ANILCA defines subsistence uses as "the customary and traditional uses by rural Alaska residents of wild, renewable resources for direct personal or family consumption as food, shelter, fuel, clothing, tools, or transportation; for the making and selling of handicraft articles out of non-edible by-products of fish and wildlife resources taken for personal or family consumption; for barter, or sharing for personal or family consumption; and for customary trade."

ANILCA and NPS regulations authorize subsistence use of resources in all Alaska national parks, monuments, and preserves with the exception of KEFJ, Glacier Bay National Park, Katmai National Park, Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, "old" Mount McKinley National Park, and Sitka National Historical Park (codified in 36 CFR part 13, Subparts A, B, and C). Consequently there are no federal subsistence open seasons for wildlife harvest within KEFJ.

KEFJ was established by ANILCA in 1980. Located on the Kenai Peninsula in Game Management Unit 7, KEFJ contains superlative geologic features, scenery, wildlife, and human history.

In accordance with Title VIII of ANILCA, subsistence uses are allowed on adjacent federal public lands within the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and CNF. Federal regulations allow qualified rural residents to use fish and wildlife population for subsistence purposes on National Forest and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lands. The region's subsistence resource harvest activities include hunting, trapping, fishing, marine mammal harvest, digging for clams, catching shellfish, gathering firewood, berries, wild plants, and bird eggs. Historical resource utilization patterns, such as fish camps or communal hunts, are linked to traditional social and subsistence use patterns. Sharing of resource occurs between communities, as well as within communities, throughout the region.

Some of the major resources used for subsistence are black bear, brown bear, moose, mountain goat, beaver, snowshoe hare, fox, lynx, mink, wolf, wolverine, ptarmigan, waterfowl, otter, marine mammals, salmon, trout, halibut, crab, clams, berries, wild edible plants, and other wood resources.

The following documents contain additional descriptions of the affected subsistence environment of the region: Kenai Fjords National Park, Final General Management Plan, Alaska Regional Office, National Park Service 1984; and Kenai Fjords National Park, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Wilderness Recommendation, National Park Service, 1988.

The NPS recognizes that patterns of subsistence activity vary from time to time and from place to place depending on the availability of wildlife and other renewable natural resources. A subsistence harvest in a given year may vary considerably from previous years because of weather, migration patterns, and natural population cycles.

V. Subsistence Uses and Needs Evaluation

To determine the potential impacts on existing subsistence activities for the four action alternatives, three evaluation criteria were analyzed relative to existing subsistence resources:

1. The potential to reduce important subsistence fish and wildlife populations by (a) reductions in number, (b) redistribution of subsistence resources, or (c) habitat losses;
2. The effect the action might have on subsistence fisherman or hunter access;
3. The potential for the action to increase fisherman or hunter competition for subsistence resources.

1. The potential to reduce populations:

(a) Reduction in Numbers:
All alternatives are not expected to manipulate subsistence habitats or result in any measurable reduction in or redistribution of wildlife or other subsistence resources. Provisions of ANILCA, Federal Subsistence Board, USFS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and NPS regulations provide the tools for adequate protection of fish and wildlife populations within region while ensuring a subsistence priority for local rural residents. In addition, the federal managers may enact closures and/or restrictions if necessary to assure the continued viability of a particular fish or wildlife population.

(b) Redistribution of Resources:
All alternatives are not expected to cause a significant disturbance to habitat thereby reducing certain subsistence wildlife resources.

(c) Habitat Loss:
All alternatives are not expected to significantly impact critical habitat for moose, furbearers, waterfowl, and other subsistence resources.

2. Restriction of Access:

All alternatives are not expected to significantly change regional subsistence use patterns. Access for subsistence uses within USFS and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service areas are granted pursuant to ANILCA, sections 811(a)(b) and 1110(a). ANILCA allows access within Kenai Fjords National Park by certain specified means, including motorboats, for traditional activities.

3. Increase in Competition:

All alternatives are not expected to result in an increase in competition for subsistence resource on federal public lands, which are open to eligible subsistence users. Federal regulations and provisions of ANILCA mandate that if and when it is necessary to restrict taking of fish or wildlife subsistence users are given a priority over other user groups. Continued implementation of the ANILCA provisions should mitigate any increased competition from resource users other than subsistence users. Federal managers may enact restrictions if necessary to protect the continued viability of a particular fish or wildlife population.

VI. Availability of Other Lands

All alternatives are consistent with NPS and USFS mandates.

VII. Findings

This analysis concludes that all four action alternatives would not result in a significant restriction of subsistence uses.

APPENDIX B
Traffic and Parking Analysis

1 *Existing Parking Conditions:*

Existing on-street parking exists to serve the downtown businesses, and a nearby off-street parking area south of Railway Avenue serves the Alaska SeaLife Center.

On-street parking is available on Fourth Avenue, Fifth Avenue, and Washington Street. Pedestrian traffic at this location will be of moderate to high volume due to the Multi-Agency Center proximity to downtown businesses, the Alaska SeaLife Center, and the waterfront.

2 *Existing Traffic Conditions:*

The State of Alaska Department of Transportation has collected average annual daily traffic (AADT) data for the area.

Five blocks north on Third Avenue, at the A Street intersection, AADT is as follows:

1999AADT	4960
2000AADT	6591
2001AADT	6940
2002AADT	7711

The four- year average is about 6550.

AADT at the intersection of Jefferson Avenue and Third Avenue totaled 4145 in 2002.

AADT records at the intersection of Railway Avenue and Third Street are as follows:

1996AADT	2883
1997AADT	2900
1998AADT	2497
1999AADT	2520

The four-year average is about 2700.

3 *Regulatory Requirements:*

Upon initial review, it appears that City land use regulations will require a minimum of 160 parking spaces (see Tables 1, 2, and 3) for the expanded Multi-Agency Center. The potential exists to share parking areas between user groups and in fact, the Seward Waterfront Study promotes the idea of optimizing use of fewer and smaller parking lots that benefit multiple owners/users. The alternative of constructing expansive lots that remain unoccupied can be detrimental to the socioeconomic health of this portion of the community. Administrative parking will be normally needed on weekdays from 8 AM to 5 PM. These spaces could be utilized for other activities during evening or weekend hours.

4 *Off-street Parking Layout Requirements:*

Dimensional standards per City land use regulations require that spaces be at least 8.5 feet wide by 18 feet long. The minimum widths of traffic aisles providing access to parking lot spaces vary from 11 feet to 20 feet in width depending on direction and angle of the spaces. No requirements regarding recreational vehicles or other such larger conveyances are mentioned, but for purposes of this project, these spaces will be at least 10 feet wide by 36 feet long.

5 *Accessible Parking Requirements:*

City land use regulations require that spaces must be at least 12 feet wide. Although no adjacent access aisle is mentioned, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires one that is at least 60 inches wide. Accessible spaces will be designated for a certain percentage of spaces according to City regulations or ADA, whichever is more stringent. Accessible van spaces will require a 96-inch aisle, and at least one will be provided for each separate parking area. As per City regulations, all accessible spaces shall be within 200 feet of an accessible building entrance.

Table 1: Parking Analysis per City of Seward Planning and Land Use Regulations

Facility	Land Use	Requirement
Auditorium	Auditoriums and places of assembly	1 Space/4 seats
Visitor Services	Public libraries, museums, galleries	1 Space/1000 gsf
NPS/USFS/City Admin	Office buildings	1 Space/500 gsf
Conference	Auditoriums and places of assembly	1 Space/4 seats

Table 2: Comparisons of Concept Alternative Parking Spaces Required per City of Seward Planning and Land Use Regulations

Facility	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3A and 3B	Alternative 4A and 4B
Auditorium	50 (200 seats)	50 (200 seats)	50 (200 seats)	50 (200 seats)
Visitor Services	8 (7,600 gsf)	8 (7,600 gsf)	8 (7,600 gsf)	8 (7,600 gsf)
NPS/USFS/City Admin	27 (13,229 gsf)	27 (13,409 gsf)	27 (13,469 gsf)	26 (13,181 gsf)
Conference	75 (300 seats)	75 (300 seats)	75 (300 seats)	75 (300 seats)
Total	160	160	160	159

Table 3: Accessible Parking Analysis per City of Seward Planning and Land Use Regulations

Facility	Total Spaces Required	City Land Use Requirement	ADA Requirement
Visitor Center	58	2 Spaces	3 Spaces
Conference Center	75	3 Spaces	3 Spaces
Admin	27	2 Spaces	2 Spaces
Total	160	7 Spaces	8 Spaces

6 *Projected Peak Need:*

The Multi-Agency Center, of the size currently projected, could possibly receive up to approximately 739 visitors in any one hour (peak condition), although this would be extremely rare since it assumes peak visitation for the visitor center and conference center simultaneously. Peak visitation for the visitor center will most likely be in June, July, or August with peak visitation for the conferencing facilities in the fall or mid- to late-winter. This is based on historic visitation patterns at the existing Kenai Fjords Visitor Center, the anticipated maximum capacity for any marketed conference event, and a projection of visitation related to the available programs and space in the proposed visitor center on this site. On the rare occasion that peak conditions could occur simultaneously, it would probably be limited to a few summer season days.

It is important to recognize the potential parking impacts on any given day. The following assumptions are used for planning and programmatic purposes:

- Average length of stay for visitors is one (1) hour
- Visitor numbers will be distributed evenly between personal vehicles, buses, and pedestrians
- Parking for public personal vehicles will be distributed so that 90% are designated for passenger vehicles and 10% for recreational vehicles (up to 35 feet in length)
- Total need may vary depending on the amount of on-street parking available and the number of Alaska SeaLife Center visitors who walk from that facility rather than drive
- Public parking areas should be segregated from administrative spaces

Administrative facilities, as currently projected, will be occupied by up to 106 permanent staff. During the public visitation season up to 27 seasonal staff will also be present. The following assumptions are used for planning and programmatic purposes:

- Not every employee will require a parking space for personal vehicle
- A predetermined number of government vehicles will be retained on site or at a nearby site on a seasonal basis
- Administrative spaces will be segregated from public spaces as much as possible on site or by locating at a nearby site
- Spaces will be designated by user group as much as the site will allow

7 *Projected Parking Impact:*

The existing on-street parking will continue to be used as such, albeit somewhat reconfigured and expanded to meet City parking regulations. Table 4 shows an *approximate* number of spaces available on each lot or street section:

Table 4: Parking Space Summary

Location	Number of Spaces Available
Off-Street	
Arcade Building	21
Old Solly's Building	4
Legend's Restaurant	35
Mai Property	21
Harbor Dinner Club	41
Johnson Property	21
NPS Property	32
City Waterfront Property (currently vacant/parking area)	60
Total Possible Off-Street Parking	**235**
On-Street	
4th Avenue (diagonal spaces west of Arcade Building)	8
Washington Street (parallel spaces north of Arcade/Old Solly's)	8
5th Avenue (diagonal spaces east of Legend's Restaurant)	7
5th Avenue (diagonal spaces east of Washington Street, if vacated)	5
5th Avenue (west of Mai Property)	7
5th Avenue (west of Harbor Dinner Club)	11
5th Avenue (west of Johnson Property)	7
Total Possible On-Street Parking	**53**
Grand Total Possible Parking Spaces	**288**

Table 5 shows the potential number of parking spaces that would remain after a building or buildings was placed on lots as depicted in each alternative. In each case, the number of spaces exceeds the 160 required by City regulation.

If Alternative 1 were fully developed using its 25 on-street parking spaces, the 92 off-street parking spaces provided by the NPS Property and Waterfront, and the 35 off-street parking spaces possible on the Legend's Restaurant site, approximately 152 of the 160 spaces might be achieved.

If Alternative 2 were fully developed using its 20 on-street parking spaces, the 92 off-street parking spaces provided by the NPS Property and Waterfront, and either the 41 off-street parking spaces possible on the Harbor Dinner Club site or the 42 off-street parking spaces possible on the Mai and Johnson Properties, approximately 153 or 154 of the 160 spaces might be achieved.

If Alternative 3 were fully developed using its 35 on-street parking spaces, the 92 off-street parking spaces provided by the NPS Property and Waterfront, and either the 35 off-street parking

spaces possible on the Legend's Restaurant site or the 42 off-street parking spaces possible on the Mai and Johnson Properties, approximately 162 or 169 of the 160 spaces might be achieved.

If Alternative 4 were fully developed using its 52 on-street parking spaces, the 92 off-street parking spaces provided by the NPS Property and Waterfront, and the 21 off-street parking spaces possible on the Johnson or Mai Properties, approximately 165 of the 160 spaces might be achieved.

Separate off-street parcels depict the introduction of at least three new parking lots to accommodate 113 to 134 vehicles for government use and peak visitation. One lot already owned by NPS will be developed for parking government and staff vehicles. The second parking lot east of the Alaska SeaLife Center parking lot on public land will be developed by the City to provide conference event parking and for peak facility use. The third lot and, if necessary, a fourth would be purchased and developed for visitor parking. It should be noted that the parking described does not represent any particular design solution or the final design solution. It is merely provided to ascertain potential parking capacity and possible traffic flow patterns. Due to proposed changes in traffic flow patterns within the parking lots and spaces striped according to City regulations, significant efficiency can be gained. The required number of accessible parking stalls can easily be accommodated within 200 feet of the building entrance.

Although not specifically addressed by this assessment, some parking may be accommodated within the footprint of the building expansion. If a multiple story structure is constructed, there may be an opportunity to create a parking structure below the upper levels to facilitate accessibility and convenience to the visitor center and administrative offices. However, it is important to recognize that the current budget does not include funding for any such parking structure. The exact capacity is unknown at this time, but a range of 35 to 70 spaces may be achieved based on the proposed building footprint area.

The proposed parking lots would also emphasize a display of landscaped islands that visually break up the expanse of asphalt and provide a more appealing association with the community and the multi-agency center.

Table 5: Comparison of Concept Alternative Total Available Parking Spaces Projected per On-Street and Off-Street Calculations

Parking Type	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3A and 3B	Alternative 4A and 4B
On-Street	25	20	35	52
Off-Street	152	175	148	134
Total	177	195	183	186

8 *Projected Traffic Impact:*

Since no specific vehicle traffic data exists for the site and projections need to be made to account for the increased use of the facility, a number of assumptions have been made regarding average annual daily traffic and peak traffic.

- The peak hourly visitation will be 739 persons

- Arrival to the site will be equally distributed by passenger vehicle, bus and on foot; this type of distribution is expected since 1) many visitors arrive by tour bus or community trolley and 2) many visitors who park at the Alaska SeaLife Center or on the downtown streets will have a desire or be encouraged to park vehicles once and walk between the two attractions
- More than half of the visitors to this facility will already be in the area to visit the Alaska SeaLife Center or conduct business downtown
- Of the one-third visiting by passenger vehicle it is assumed that 2.5 persons will occupy each vehicle; of the one-third arriving by bus/trolley it is assumed that 30 persons will occupy each vehicle

Using these assumptions and in relationship to the AADT cited, the addition of the Multi-Agency Center could result in an increase of approximately 205 trips or about 8 percent higher than the 2700 average daily total at the intersection of Railway Avenue and Third Avenue.

Pedestrian traffic will likely increase dramatically between the site and the Alaska SeaLife Center. Some increase in pedestrian traffic will occur between the multi-agency center site and the remote parking sites less than one-half block away. Traffic flow in all other directions will probably continue to remain constant with other downtown functions.

9 *Traffic Recommendations:*

A number of recommendations to minimize the increased traffic impact would include the following:

- Closure of Washington Street between 4th and 5th Avenue for use as part of the building footprint, pedestrian use only, or as a public plaza
- Maintain the utility and service access in the alley between Fourth and Fifth Avenue
- Reconfigure the on-street diagonal parking along any affected perimeter of new construction for Fourth and Fifth Avenues
- Create a trolley stop and tour bus stop on Railway Avenue at the Railroad Depot
- Develop visitor programs that spread the visitation load over the length of the day rather than concentrating at peak hours
- Promote the ease and convenience of travelling between area venues on foot
- Encourage pedestrian traffic flow by designing visual links and delineating preferred pathways
- Optimize safety by maintaining the three-way stop at the intersections of Railway Avenue/Fourth Avenue and Railway/Fifth Avenue, including improved crosswalk

APPENDIX C
Cost Estimates

10% Concept Design Estimate Executive Summary		
Site Alternative #1		
	Estimate of Probable Construction Cost	$ 11,503,428
	LCC Total 20 Year Cost	$ 3,216,918
	LCC Average Annual Cost	$ 160,846
Site Alternative #2		
	Estimate of Probable Construction Cost	$ 11,587,659
	LCC Total 20 Year Cost	$ 3,263,726
	LCC Average Annual Cost	$ 163,186
Site Alternative #3		
	Estimate of Probable Construction Cost	$ 13,419,114
	LCC Total 20 Year Cost	$ 3,705,432
	LCC Average Annual Cost	$ 185,272
Site Alternative #4		
	Estimate of Probable Construction Cost	$ 13,351,860
	LCC Total 20 Year Cost	$ 3,219,456
	LCC Average Annual Cost	$ 160,973

LCC – Life-Cycle Cost Analysis

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APPENDIX D
Cultural Compliance Schedule

Completion Date	Task
FY 2004	Initiate Section 106 Process
	Preliminary assessment of archeological resources (completed)
	Preliminary assessment of historic properties prepared, "Report on the Preliminary Determination of Eligibility as a National Historic District: Downtown Commercial District of Seward, Alaska." (completed)
May 2004	Final Assessment of archeological resources: Provide copies of documentation to be included in NPS EA. (completed)
June 2004	Preliminary Determination of Eligibility to the National Register assessment of historic properties within the Potential Area of Effect. (completed)
July 2004	Final Determination of Eligibility to the National Register for assessment of historic properties within the Potential Area of Effect.
	Prepare site maps for the DOEs and Archeological Assessment report.
	Provide appropriate consulting parties with copies of DOE and/or the Archeological Assessment.
	Consultation with SHPO, Seward Historic Preservation Commission, and public (including associated Alaska Native groups as appropriate)
	SHPO to review DOE and Archeological Assessment reports
August 2004	Develop strategy for archeological work
Sept FY04 or Spring FY05	Archeological field season

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