

A YEAR IN REVIEW

CITY OF SPOKANE

# 2020 Plan Commission



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# Purpose of the Plan Commission

Plan Commission provides advice and makes recommendations on broad planning goals, policies, and other matters as requested by the City Council.

The Plan Commission provides opportunities for public participation in City planning by providing, through its own membership, an informed opinion to complement the work of the City's elected officials and administrative departments. They also solicit public comment on planning issues of City-wide importance or of a substantial community concern, evaluating those comments received. Assistance of experts and others with knowledge or ideas to contribute to City planning are secured as well.

In addition to and in specification of the general charge in Charter Section

128, the commission has authority over and responsibility for the following functions:

**Comprehensive Planning:** To propose the adoption, coordination, amendment and implementation, from time to time, of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Zoning:** To interpret and recommend amendments to the Spokane Municipal Code to determine specified zoning issues not entrusted to the Hearing Examiner, such as area-wide re-zones.

**Annexation:** To make recommendations to City Council on petitions for annexation of land to the City.

**Meeting date, time and location:** The Plan Commission meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m.

Authorized through  
Charter Section 128, in  
1910 and SMC 04.12

# Commission Members ::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::

A quorum is a majority of the current members of the Plan Commission but can't be less than five members.

**TODD  
BEYREUTHER**  
President  
01/01/19 - 12/31/22

**GREG  
FRANCIS**  
Vice President  
01/01/18 - 12/31/21

**MICHAEL  
BAKER**  
Commissioner  
01/01/14 - 12/31/20

**JOHN  
DIETZMAN**  
Commissioner  
01/01/14 - 12/31/20

**DIANA  
PAINTER**  
Commissioner  
01/01/18 - 02/10/21

**SYLVIA  
ST. CLAIR**  
Commissioner  
07/17/17 - 12/31/21

**CAROLE  
SHOOK**  
Commissioner  
07/17/17 - 12/31/21

## NEW MEMBERS IN 2020

Three new members were added to the Plan Commission on June 8th, 2020.

**THOMAS  
SANDERSON**  
Commissioner  
06/08/20 - 12/31/23

**CLIFFORD  
WINGER**  
Commissioner  
06/08/20 - 12/31/23

**JO ANNE  
WRIGHT**  
Commissioner  
06/08/20 - 12/31/23

## LIAISON MEMBERS

**CANDACE  
MUMM**  
City Council  
Liaison

**MARY  
WINKES**  
Community  
Assembly Liaison



# Plan Commission Workshops and Hearings

Workshops are working sessions of the Plan Commission held to discuss items in preparation for public hearings. City staff facilitates the dialogue, provides information, composes working drafts and answers questions. No public testimony is taken during workshops, however persons may be invited to speak by the President when appropriate, as long as all known parties have been notified and included.

Plan Commission holds public hearings and makes recommendations to the City Council regarding the following matters:

Amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan and the development regulations implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

Changes in the corporate limits of the City, including the land use designations and zoning to become effective upon the annexation of any area proposed for annexation or which might reasonably be expected to be annexed by the City at any future time.

Read the full Plan Commission Findings and Recommendations [HERE](#) on the City of Spokane Plan Commission webpage



# Plan Commission Workshop & Hearing Overview

## January - March

The year 2020 began with a set of unique challenges stemming from the Covid-19 Pandemic. In March, Governor Inslee's Stay Home, Stay Safe order prohibited in-person meetings making traditional Plan Commission meetings impossible. Adeptly adapting to changing circumstances, the City of Spokane moved the meeting to an online platform. However, from March to May, meetings were limited to urgent and time sensitive hearing Items.

### Hearings:

#### Street Name Change Package

A hearing to consider multiple proposed street name changes.

- By a vote of 6 to 0, the Plan Commission recommends to the City Council the approval of the proposed roadway name changes, subject to the following condition: "...that the City delay implementation of these changes for a time until ways of assisting the affected residents who have limited resources and abilities can be explored."

### Workshops:

#### Renaming of East Central Community Center

A process to consider new names for the Center was launched and the City of Spokane created a list of possible names for consideration. The options recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the City of Spokane, as well as names that have geographic or historical significance. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Family Outreach Center is the chosen name.

#### Update to Downtown Plan

A presentation of the updated Downtown Plan was discussed during the Plan Commission workshop. The Downtown Plan is expected to result in a series of recommended actions and guide new improvements for the next ten years.

#### Receivership Code Amendment

Changes needed to SMC sections 17F.070.470 and 17F.070.490 in order to allow receivership as an alternative to demolition of abandoned properties.

#### SRTC Division Street Study & US195 / I-90 Study

SRTC and partners seek creative strategies to mitigate congestion, improve traffic safety, and support land use and economic development goals all while preserving the ability of the corridors to facilitate regional throughout.

#### Design Guidelines Creation for Public Projects, PUD, Sky Buildings

This project entails crafting new design guidelines for Public Projects and Structures, Skywalks over Public Rights-of-Way, and City-Wide Guidelines. Also to evaluate the worth of continuing with design review of Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). If there is significant value in continuing design review for PUDs then the City will need Design Guidelines for this project type.

#### 6 Year Street Program Update

In order to comply with the provisions of the Growth Management Act and RCW 35.77.010, and for the City of Spokane to qualify for grant and low interest loan funds, it is required that the City maintain a 6-Year Capital Improvement plan for its capital street program.

#### South University District Subarea Plan

Planning Services staff and Project Team have developed a draft South University District Subarea Plan to guide future development in a 214-acre area just east of the Downtown core. Based on the framework provided by the subarea plan's goals and policies, a proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment and corresponding map changes would focus higher-density commercial development and more detailed design requirements along the Sprague Avenue and Sherman Street corridors.



# Plan Commission Workshop & Hearing Overview

April - June

## Hearings:

### 6 Year Street Program Consistency Review

These capital plans provide a blueprint for improving the City's sewer, water, and transportation infrastructure in a rational, coordinated, cost-effective manner.

- By a vote of 7 to 0, the Plan Commission recommended the approval of these amended documents by the City Council.

## Workshops:

### Northbank Subarea Plan

The City will be conducting a planning process for the North Bank this year, which will focus on the vision and strategies to guide new development and ensure a vibrant North Bank.

### Proposed Cannon Streetcar Historic District

Historic designation is one method of ensuring that changes to your neighborhood occur thoughtfully, preserving the fabric that people love—homes with history, vital dwellings that preserve the past, while acknowledging modern lifestyles. Historic district designation can preserve the essential features of a neighborhood, while permitting contemporary improvements and additions that contribute to the historic character of the area.

### 6 Year City Wide Capital Program Consistency Review

The Six Year Comprehensive Programs are annually updated and presented to the City Plan Commission for recommendation and to the City Council for adoption. Staff works directly with the departments within Public Works and Utilities to identify and coordinate capital projects and to scope projects. The Capital Programs Section performs strategic infrastructure planning, conducts special studies and provides general planning functions to support the Public Works and Utilities Departments. Staff seeks, develops and administers grants, loans and other revenue sources for the City's capital projects.

### Comprehensive Plan Amendments

The City of Spokane accepts applications to amend the text or maps in the Comprehensive Plan between September 1 and October 31 of each year, per SMC 17G.020. All complete applications received will be reviewed by a city council subcommittee and those placed on the Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program for the City of Spokane will begin full review early in the calendar year. Anyone may make a proposal to amend the City's Comprehensive Plan. There were nine proposed Amendments this year: Z19-499COMP, Z19-501COMP, Z19-502COMP, Z19-503COMP, Z19-504COMP, Z19-505COMP, Z20-019COMP, Z20042COMP, Z20-045COMP

### Grand Blvd. Transportation & Land Use Study

Grand Boulevard is a key north-south arterial for the City of Spokane through the South Hill neighborhoods. The Grand Blvd. corridor study was commissioned to understand existing issues for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles, develop potential streetscape improvements, and identify economic opportunities and zoning needs.



Property in proposed Cannon Streetcar Historic District

# Plan Commission Workshop & Hearing Overview

July- September

## Hearings:

### South University District Subarea Plan

Provides a vision for future development of a 214-acre area just east of the downtown core. The subarea plan includes a vision statement, goals, and policies to guide future development in the South University District, and proposes specific zone changes in a 90-acre area focused on the frontages of E. Sprague Avenue and S. Sherman Street.

- By a vote of 9 to 1, Plan Commission recommended that City Council recognize the subarea plan and approve the map amendments.

### Grand Boulevard Transportation & Land Use Study

Is a record of the neighborhood's ongoing desire and effort to continue building vibrant, healthy, active, safe, and connected neighborhoods for all residents.

- By a vote of 9 to 0 the Spokane City Council APPROVE the Resolution recognizing the Study.

### North Foothills CC3 Overlay Zone Expansion

Applying a CC-3 overlay allowed a unified development approach. Properties to the

southwest of the CC-1 center already had a planning overlay zone which allowed property in a different zoning category, such as Light Industrial, to use the standards of the CC-1 zone for development. Expanding the CC-3 overlay to the north and to a portion northeast of the existing CC-1 zoning allowed both proposed projects the option to develop to the CC-1 Standards.

### Comprehensive Plan Amendments

The City of Spokane accepts applications to amend the text or maps in the Comp. Plan between 9- 1 and 10- 31 of each year. Those applications placed on the Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment Work Program will begin full review early in the year. Anyone may make a proposal to amend the City's Comprehensive Plan.

- Z19-4 99COMP- by a vote of 9 to 0, the Spokane Plan Commission recommends City Council APPROVE the requested amendment
- Z19-501COMP- by a vote of 9 to 0, the Spokane Plan Commission recommends City Council DENY the requested amendment
- Z19-502COMP- by a vote of 9 to 0, the Spokane Plan Commission recommends City Council APPROVE the proposed amendment for parcels 35273.0305 and 35273.0306 to the Land Use Plan Map of the City's Comprehensive Plan with corresponding amendment to the

City's Zoning Map, and by a vote of 9 to 0, recommends City Council DENY the requested amendment for parcels 35273.0219 and 35273.0220 to the Land Use Plan Map

- Z19-503COMP- by a vote of 8 to 1, the Spokane Plan Commission recommends City Council APPROVE the requested amendment
- Z19-504COMP- by a vote of 9 to 0, the Spokane Plan Commission recommends City Council APPROVE the requested amendment
- Z19-505COMP - by a vote of 7 to 0 and 1 abstention, the Spokane Plan Commission recommends City Council DENY the requested amendment
- Z20-019COMP- by a vote of 8 to 0, the Spokane Plan Commission recommends City Council APPROVE the requested amendment
- Z20-042COMP- by a vote of 9 to 0, the Spokane Plan Commission recommends City Council APPROVE the requested amendment
- Z20-045COMP- by a vote of 9 to 0, the Spokane Plan Commission recommends City Council APPROVE the requested amendment



# Plan Commission ..... Workshop & Hearing Overview

July- September

## Workshops:

### Street Engineering Design Standards Chapters and SMC Updates

The City Design Standards guide and govern the development, redevelopment, and reconstruction of facilities built in the right-of-way. This transportation chapter update will include the current state of practice across the nation, with focus and reference sections that bring the design of pedestrian and bicycle facilities up to standards for better serving all ages and abilities. These standards also promote continuity and networking of the City's streets and sidewalks, as well as the integration of utilities that share right-of-way space.

### Housing Action Plan

The City of Spokane is creating the Housing Action Plan to help increase housing options that are affordable and accessible for people and families of all incomes. The plan will provide a strategic approach to address current and future housing needs of the Spokane community. It will provide a coordinated vision that supports more people being able to find a home that meets their needs with access to opportunities, services and amenities.

### North Foothills CC3 Overlay Zone Expansion

The City received requests from two groups - Catholic Charities Eastern Washington and Spokane Public Schools to consider expanding the CC-3 Overlay Zone. Property located in a CC-3 Overlay Zone may "opt-in" and use the CC-1 or CC-2 standards (see Spokane Municipal Code 17C.122.020 for a list of allowed uses and development standards). Both applicant groups were aiming to aggregate properties in a mix of zoning categories: primarily a mix of CC-1-EC and LI (Light Industrial), making site design and use considerations problematic. Applying a CC-3 overlay allowed a unified development approach. Properties to the southwest of the CC-1 center already had a planning overlay zone which allowed property in a different zoning category, such as Light Industrial, to use the standards of the CC-1 zone for development. Expanding the CC-3 overlay to the north and to a portion northeast of the existing CC-1 zoning allowed both proposed projects the option to develop to the CC-1 Standards.



Affordable Housing at Jayne Auld Manor

# Plan Commission Workshop & Hearing Overview

October - December

## Hearings:

### Street Engineering Design Standards Chapter 3 and SMC Updates

The City Design Standards guide and govern the development, redevelopment, and reconstruction of facilities built in the right-of-way. This transportation chapter update will include the current state of practice across the nation, with focus and reference sections that bring the design of pedestrian and bicycle facilities up to standards for better serving all ages and abilities. These standards also promote continuity and networking of the City's streets and sidewalks, as well as the integration of utilities that share right-of-way space.

- By a vote of 8 to 0, the Spokane City Plan Commission is certifying that the update to Chapter 3 of the Engineering Design Standards and accompanying Spokane Municipal Code revisions, Findings of Fact, Conclusions, and Recommendation Engineering Design Standards Chapter 3 and SMCs p. 3 are in conformance with the City of Spokane's Comprehensive Plan as required by RCW 36.70A and are recommended for adoption by the Spokane City Council.

### 6 Year City Wide Capital Program

The Six Year Comprehensive Programs are annually updated and presented to the City Plan

Commission for recommendation and to the City Council for adoption. Staff works directly with the departments within Public Works and Utilities to identify and coordinate capital projects and to scope projects. The Capital Programs Section performs strategic infrastructure planning, conducts special studies and provides general planning functions to support the Public Works and Utilities Departments. Staff seeks, develops and administers grants, loans and other revenue sources for the City's capital projects.

- By a vote of 8 to 0, the Spokane City Plan Commission is certifying that the 2021-2026 Six Year Citywide CIP is in full compliance with the existing Spokane Comprehensive Plan as required by RCW 36.70A and RCW 35.77.010 and is recommended for adoption by the Spokane City Council.

### Renaming Fort George Wright Drive

An application was submitted by the Councilmembers Karen Stratton and Betsy Wilkerson for a Street Name Change for the renaming of Ft. George Wright Drive, between Government Way and TJ Meenach Bridge, to be renamed "Whistalks Way."

- By a vote of 10 to 0, the Plan Commission recommends to the City Council the approval of the proposed street name changes, to

include historical signage on the former name, the new name, and why the name was changed.

### Receivership Code Text Amendment SMC 17F

The Building Official process is an administrative hearing process aimed at resolving substandard, abandoned, unfit, or nuisance properties in the City of Spokane.

However, this process could have a greater impact with the ability to direct properties towards a receivership process. With the assistance of the Legal Department, the Building Official and Code Enforcement staff could petition the courts for a receiver to be appointed upon failure to comply with the Building Official's orders within a specified time. Code text amendments would be necessary to formalize receivership as an option for the Building Official process.

- By a vote of 8 to 0, the Plan Commission recommends approval of the proposed amendments to the Spokane Municipal Code as they relate to the Existing Building and Conservation Code.



Newly Renamed Whistalks Way

# Plan Commission Workshop & Hearing Overview

October - December

## Hearings Continued:

### Remanded Z19-502COMP - 29th & Ray - Comprehensive Plan Amendment

At its hearing on the annual comprehensive plan amendment proposals, the City Council remanded application Z19-502COMP to the Plan Commission for further consideration. Specifically, the City Council requested input from the Plan Commission and neighborhood council whether to modify the proposal to change the Land Use Plan Map Designation to Residential 15-30 on the parcels east of Ray Street, instead of the Office designation requested by the applicant.

○ By a vote of 7 to 1 with one abstention on the final motion, the Plan Commission recommends Residential 10-20 for the two subject parcels, was made according to the following findings by the Plan Commission:

- The residential two-family zoning category is more restrictive than a multi-family zoning category, while still providing for greater density to serve the nearby Lincoln Heights District Center.

- Residential uses were envisioned by the City Council remand, and the public has had sufficient opportunity to provide input and comment on a residential use in this location.

- Residential Two-Family (RTF) zoning would not allow a conditional use permit for Office use on these parcels, as would be possible under Residential Multi-Family zoning category.

- Existing Land Use Plan Map Designations and Zoning designations around the Lincoln Heights District Center already provide for transitional land uses described in LU 3.2, Centers and Corridors.

- In consideration of decision criteria outlined in Spokane Municipal Code 17G.020.030, the Plan Commission finds the following:

- The modified proposal recommended by Plan Commission meets the decision criteria outlined in 17G.020.030.A through J, including meeting the requirements of GMA and the Comprehensive Plan; without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the modified proposal is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and regional plans and population forecasts.

- A Land Use Plan Map designation of "Residential 10-20" and a zoning designation of "Residential Two-Family" would better

meet the decision criteria outlined by Spokane Municipal Code 17G.020.030, especially as it relates to the location criteria in the Comprehensive Plan (criterion K.2.a), and would better implement the Comprehensive Plan (criterion K.2.c).

- The site may not be entirely suitable for development of a single-family home due to access, traffic, and parking impacts related to the adjacent intersection (criterion K.2.b).



29th and Ray



# Plan Commission Workshop & Hearing Overview

October - December

## Workshops:

### Receivership Code Text Amendment SMC 17F

In a workshop, the Building Official process was discussed and City staff explained how this process could have a greater impact with the ability to direct properties towards a receivership process. With the assistance of the Legal Department, the Building Official and Code Enforcement staff could petition the courts for a receiver to be appointed upon failure to comply with the Building Official's orders within a specified time. Code text amendments would be necessary to formalize receivership as an option for the Building Official process.

### Code Maintenance, Spokane Municipal Code - various sections

The 2020 Unified Development Code (UDC) Maintenance Project is a list of proposals for changes to some Titles in the Spokane Municipal Code (SMC). These are most often proposed by City Planning and Developer Services staff over time. The Maintenance project purpose is to respond to needed corrections, changing conditions, and the potential for improvements for all users.

This is the first overall maintenance effort undertaken and adopted since 2015. Several chapters of the SMC will be included. Shaping Spokane, the 2017 adopted City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan Chapter 3 Land Use policy

7.2 calls out a continuing review process; the continuing need for periodic maintenance of the SMC is intended to aid the public in preparing applications for development and reviews by staff for relying on code citations and the enforcement of same.

The first Phase of this Proposal was presented to Plan Commission and concerns minor changes which include redundant phrasing or inaccurate word choice without changing meaning or substance.

### Housing Action Plan Update

The City of Spokane is preparing a Housing Action Plan to address current and future housing needs of the Spokane community. The Housing Action Plan will provide a strategic approach for the City to increase housing options that meet the needs of residents at all income levels. The planning process will follow a data-driven, community-informed approach with a focus on equity built on inclusive outreach and engagement with residents, partners, and City leaders. The outcome will be a coordinated vision that focuses attention, builds community support, and promotes accountability for enacting change.

The City hosted a series of roundtable discussion in September and October 2020 with community stakeholders to engage in deeper discussions and guide the development of key priorities around

development regulations, land use and housing policy, equity, and affordable housing and rental housing. The City worked with EcoNorthwest (a consultant) to complete a draft housing needs assessment that provides data which helps inform gaps and housing needs. Staff will also be publishing a community survey in November 2020 to gather experiences and issues related to housing from community members. This survey will be available in multiple languages, a first for a planning survey in Spokane.

### International Fire Code Update

Spokane Fire Marshal presented updates/amendments made to the International Fire Code and subsequent changes made to the Spokane Municipal Fire Code.



Single Family Residence Converted into a duplex

