
MEMORANDUM

TO: CITY OF SPOKANE PLAN COMMISSION
FROM: CITY COUNCIL MEMBER CANDACE MUMM
SUBJECT: CROSSWALK ORDINANCE REVISION
DATE: JULY 9, 2014
CC: SCOTT CHESNEY

The City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan of 2001 anticipated an economic trend that is being documented as a primary economic driver in 2014. “The future growth of walkable urban places could provide the same economic base in the 21st century that drivable sub-urbanism did in the mid- to late-20th century.”¹ Spokane’s Comprehensive Plan anticipated economic development in targeted development areas, the City’s 20 Centers and 3 Corridors, which were designated for walkable urban revitalization. To date, this revitalization has been sporadic at best, primarily because the transportation policy developed in the Comprehensive Plan has seen only limited adoption and implementation. This revision to the City’s crosswalk ordinance (17H.010.210) and addition of a regional trails section (17H.010.215) seeks to begin to amend this oversight by adopting a foundational element of economic vitality: functional crosswalks.

Ten policy elements of the Transportation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan are implemented in this ordinance:

- TR 1.1: Design transportation systems that protect and serve the pedestrian first;
- TR 2.6: Promote and provide for walking as a viable alternative to driving;
- TR 2.9: Establish and maintain crosswalks at key locations used by pedestrians;
- TR 3.3: Incorporate physical features in neighborhood centers to promote walking, bicycling, and other non-motorized modes of transportation to and within the centers, reducing the need for driving;
- TR 4.20: Design pedestrian buffer strips, medians, traffic circles and other right-of-way streetscape elements so that they enhance public safety and Spokane’s visual and environmental quality and can be effectively maintained;
- TR 4.25: Develop safe pedestrian access and bike ways/routes to city parks from surrounding neighborhoods;
- TR 5.1: Orient, design, and maintain neighborhoods for pedestrians;
- TR 7.1: Create transportation improvements that promote Spokane’s character, enhance the character of its neighborhoods, and foster community pride;

¹ Foot Traffic Ahead: Ranking Walkable Urbanism in America’s Largest Metros; Leinberger & Lynch, George Washington University School of Business.

- TR 7.2: Promote a healthy street life in commercial areas, especially downtown, through transportation facilities that are designed with care to enhance both their use and the surrounding street environment;
- TR 9.3 The City of Spokane shall dedicate some amount of its annual transportation capital budget to retrofitting the street system to meet the city's pedestrian design standards.

Preliminary studies indicate a correlation between economic development and regionally significant walkable urban places. "Wealth-creating development in many metropolitan areas has begun a permanent shift away from drivable sub-urban to walkable urban."² Walkable urbanism and per capita GDP are also positively correlated.

Neighborhood sub-area planning since Comprehensive Plan adoption has restated and reinforced citizen intention to establish walkable neighborhoods and commercial areas. These include:

- [Five Mile Neighborhood Plan for Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements](#)
- The Southgate Neighborhood [Transportation and Connectivity Plan](#)
- The South Hill Coalition Connectivity and Livability Strategic Plan (five neighborhoods)

All of these sub-area plans emphasize the importance of walkability to the economic vitality and safety of their neighborhoods. The proposed revision to the crosswalk ordinance and the addition of a regional trails component is consistent with these neighborhood plans and supports and affirms these citizen planning initiatives.

² IBID