
MEMORANDUM

TO: CITY OF SPOKANE PLAN COMMISSION
FROM: CITY COUNCIL MEMBER CANDACE MUMM
SUBJECT: CROSSWALK ORDINANCE REVISION
DATE: AUGUST 13, 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 17 Centers and 3 Corridors, which were designated for walkable urban revitalization.

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.

This revision to the City’s crosswalk ordinance (17H.010.210) and addition of a regional trails section (17H.010.215) provides 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;

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

² IBID

- 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;
- 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.

Neighborhood sub-area planning since Comprehensive Plan adoption has restated and reinforced our citizens' 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)
- Emerson-Garfield [Neighborhood Action Plan](#)

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.