

**STAFF REPORT ON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
TEXT AND PLANNED BIKEWAY NETWORK MAP  
AMENDMENT APPLICATION FILE NO. Z1500003-COMP, CITY OF SPOKANE**

**I. SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:** This application by the City of Spokane Planning & Development Department requests to make specific amendments to the Master Bike Plan within the Comprehensive Plan. Changes to text do not materially change any existing policy and are cleanup items, additions and reclassifications to the planned bikeway network, and explanatory statements.

Specifically, the proposal would add or change the designation of nine bikeway facility areas on Map TR 2 constructed since the Master Bike Plan’s last revision in 2009. In addition, the proposal would add or change 17 bikeways on Map TR 2. The full list of both built and proposed bikeways are included in **Exhibit A**, attached to the proposed Ordinance.

A number of text changes are proposed to the Comprehensive Plan Chapter 4 Transportation, in Sections 4.4 (Goals and Policies), 4.5 (Existing and Proposed Transportation Systems), and 4.9 (Spokane Master Bike Plan). These text changes, shown in **Exhibit B**, attached to the proposed Ordinance, support a renaming of the Bicycle Boulevard classification to Neighborhood Greenway, introduce the concept of a Bike Share Feasibility Study, and provide updates to text on the progress and future of specific projects since the last revision, such as the Fish Lake Trail and Centennial Trail.

Finally, proposed Ordinance **Exhibit C** shows the locations of the items to be added or changed in the Planned Bikeway Network Map (4.10 Map TR 2).

**Note: Exhibits, department and agency comments are attached to this report. Citizen comment letters are included in the file.**

**II. GENERAL INFORMATION:**

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Applicant:	City of Spokane Planning & Development
Location of Proposal:	Citywide and locations within the unincorporated Urban Growth Area
Zoning/Land Use Plan Designation:	Varies
SEPA Status:	SEPA threshold determination is expected to be issued after the public comment period closes on Feb. 23, 2015. The appeal period will close following the Plan Commission public hearing on Feb. 25, 2015.
Enabling Procedure:	SMC 17G. 020, Comprehensive Plan Amendment Procedure
Plan Commission Hearing Date:	February 25, 2015

### **III. FINDINGS OF FACT:**

- A. **Site Description:** The several locations affected are shown on the map of proposed changes in Exhibit C.
- B. **Project Description:** As authorized by Spokane Municipal Code chapter 17G.020, “Comprehensive Plan Amendment Procedure,” the applicant is requesting a comprehensive plan text change to the Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 4 Transportation, Sections 4.4 (Goals and Policies), 4.5 (Existing and Proposed Transportation Systems), 4.9 (Spokane Master Bike Plan), and Section 4.10 Map TR 2, Planned Bikeway Network Map. The changes would change classification of existing designations on the map or add new designated bikeways and make associated changes to the text to clarify, expand or update language related to bikeways and bicycle projects within the City of Spokane (see Section I above).
- C. **Existing and Proposed Text:** Exhibit B attached to the proposed Ordinance contains the proposed edits in “line in/line out” format, with text to be added indicated by underlining, and text to be deleted indicated with ~~strikeouts~~.
- D. **Applicable Municipal Code Regulations:** SMC 17G.020, Comprehensive Plan Amendment Procedures.
- E. **Procedural Requirements:**
- Application was submitted on January 9, 2015;
  - Notice of Application was posted, published, and mailed on January 24, 2015, which began a 30-day public comment period;
  - A SEPA threshold determination will be issued following the end of the public comment period February 23, 2015;
  - Notice of Plan Commission Public Hearing was posted and mailed February 10, 2015;
  - Notice of Public Hearing was published in the Spokesman Review on February 10 and February 17, 2015;
  - Plan Commission Public Hearing Date is scheduled for February 25, 2015.

### **IV. DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

Notice of this proposal was sent to City departments and outside agencies for their review. Department comments are included in the file.

### **V. CONCLUSIONS:**

SMC 17G.020.030 provides the criteria for decisions on amendments to the comprehensive plan. SMC 17G.020.040 provides the criteria for exceptions to the usual annual amendment cycle. Following the review criteria is an analysis of the consistency of the proposal with the review criteria.

#### **SMC 17G.020.030 Review Criteria**

The following is a list of considerations that shall be used, as appropriate, by the applicant in developing an amendment proposal, by planning staff in analyzing a proposal, and by the plan commission and city council in determining whether a criterion for approval has been met.

- A. **Regulatory Changes.**

Amendments to the comprehensive plan must be consistent with any recent state or federal legislative actions, or changes to state or federal regulations, such as changes to the Growth Management Act, or new environmental regulations.

Relevant facts: The proposal is consistent with the Growth Management Act, and the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) as discussed in this report.

**B. GMA.**

The change must be consistent with the goals and purposes of the state Growth Management Act.

Relevant facts: The “Legislative findings” included in the Revised Code of Washington pertaining to GMA is essentially a call for coordinated and planned growth that is done cooperatively between citizens, government, and the private sector. The complete text of the “Legislative findings” follows:

RCW 36.70A.010, Legislative findings.

The legislature finds that uncoordinated and unplanned growth, together with a lack of common goals expressing the public's interest in the conservation and the wise use of our lands, pose a threat to the environment, sustainable economic development, and the health, safety, and high quality of life enjoyed by residents of this state. It is in the public interest that citizens, communities, local governments, and the private sector cooperate and coordinate with one another in comprehensive land use planning.

The Growth Management Act contains 13 goals to guide the development and adoption of the comprehensive plans and development regulations (RCW 36.70A.020, “Planning Goals”). The proposed change as recommended by staff would be consistent with these goals.

Staff concludes that this criterion is met.

**C. Financing.**

In keeping with the GMA's requirement for plans to be supported by financing commitments, infrastructure implications of approved comprehensive plan amendments must be reflected in the relevant six-year capital improvement plan(s) approved in the same budget cycle.

Relevant facts: This proposal has been reviewed by city departments responsible for providing public services and facilities. No comments have been made to indicate that this proposal creates issues with public services and facilities. Staff concludes that this criterion is met.

**D. Funding Shortfall.**

If funding shortfalls suggest the need to scale back on land use objectives and/or service level standards, those decisions must be made with public input as part of this process for amending the comprehensive plan and capital facilities program.

Relevant facts: Staff has concluded that this criterion is not applicable to this proposal. There are no funding shortfall implications.

**E. Internal Consistency.**

The requirement for internal consistency pertains to the comprehensive plan as it relates to all of its supporting documents, such as the development regulations, capital facilities program, shoreline master program, downtown plan, critical area regulations, and any neighborhood planning documents adopted after 2001. In addition, amendments should strive to be consistent with the parks plan, and vice versa. For example, changes to the development regulations must be reflected in consistent

adjustments to the goals or policies in the comprehensive plan. As appropriate, changes to the map or text of the comprehensive plan must also result in corresponding adjustments to the zoning map and implementation regulations in the Spokane Municipal Code.

Relevant facts: The proposal is consistent with all supporting documents of the Comprehensive Plan and coordinated with the general update of the Comprehensive Plan as part of the LINK Spokane Transportation Update that will incorporate recently adopted neighborhood planning documents. The proposal does not result in the need for other amendments to the comprehensive plan or development regulations. Staff concludes the proposal is consistent with the especially relevant Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies listed below. See the full text of the Comprehensive Plan for discussion following each Policy.

### Relevant Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies

#### From Chapter 3 Land Use

Goal: LU 4 TRANSPORTATION

*Promote a network of safe and cost effective transportation alternatives, including transit, carpooling, bicycling, pedestrian-oriented environments, and more efficient use of the automobile, to recognize the relationship between land use and transportation.*

#### From Chapter 4 Transportation

Goal: TR 1 OVERALL TRANSPORTATION

Develop and implement a transportation system and a healthy balance of transportation choices that improve the mobility and quality of life of all residents.

- Policy TR 1.1 Transportation Priorities: *Make transportation decisions based upon prioritizing the needs of people as follows:*
  - *Design transportation systems that protect and serve the pedestrian first;*
  - *Next, consider the needs of those who use public transportation and non-motorized transportation modes;*
  - *Then consider the needs of automobile users after the two groups above.*

Goal: TR 2 TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Provide a variety of transportation options, including walking, bicycling, taking the bus, car pooling, and driving private automobiles, to ensure that all citizens have viable travel options and reduce dependency on automobiles.

- Policy TR 2.11 Pedestrian and Bicycle Access on Bridges: *Provide safe pedestrian and bicycle access and an aesthetically pleasing environment on bridges.*
- Policy TR 2.12 Pedestrian and Bicyclist Access to Schools: *Enhance the pedestrian and bicycle environment along routes to schools to provide a safe walking environment for children.*
- Policy TR 2.13 Viable Bicycling: *Promote and provide for bicycling as a viable alternative to driving.*
- Policy TR 2.14 Bikeways: *Provide safe, convenient, continuous bikeways between activity centers and through the city.*
- Policy TR 2.15 Bicycles on Streets: *Provide safe accommodations for bicyclists on the*

*street system, which will continue to be the primary route system for bicyclists.*

- Policy TR 2.16 Bicycle Lanes, ((Boulevards)) Neighborhood Greenways and Paths (Bicycle Facilities): *Use marked on-street bicycle lanes, bike routes and off-street bicycle paths in addition to the street system to provide for bicycle transportation within the city.*
- Policy TR 2.17 Facilities to Support Bicycling: *Provide facilities that support bicycling to make it more feasible for transportation and recreation.*

#### Goal: TR 3 TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE

Recognize the key relationship between the places where people live, work, and shop and their need to have access to these places; use this relationship to promote land use patterns, transportation facilities, and other urban features that advance Spokane’s quality of life.

#### Goal: TR 4 EFFICIENT AND SAFE MOBILITY

Design and maintain Spokane’s transportation system to have efficient and safe movement of people and goods within the city and region.

- Policy TR 4.1 Street Design and Traffic Flow: *Use street design to manage traffic flow and reduce the need for street expansions.*
- Policy TR 4.2 Self-Enforcing Street Design: *Design streets to discourage drivers from speeding and increase the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, other drivers, and every person and animal in the city.*
- Policy TR 4.4 Arterial Location and Design: *Assure that both the location and design of arterials are compatible with existing and proposed land uses in the areas through which they pass.*
- Policy TR 4.14 Signs: *Use signs to achieve transportation goals.*
- Policy TR 4.25 Pedestrian and Bicyclist Access to Parks: *Develop safe pedestrian access and bike ways/routes to city parks from surrounding neighborhoods.*

#### Goal: TR 5 NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION

Protect neighborhoods from the impacts of the transportation system, including the impacts of increased and faster moving traffic.

- Policy TR 5.2 Neighborhood Transportation Options: *Promote a variety of transportation options within neighborhoods.*

#### Goal: TR 6 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Minimize the impacts of the transportation system on the environment, including the region’s air quality and environmental features, such as nature corridors.

- Policy TR 6.3 Transportation Alternatives and the Environment: *Promote the use of alternatives to driving alone, such as walking, bicycling, use of transit, and carpooling to reduce transportation impacts on the environment.*

#### Goal: TR 7 SENSE OF PLACE

Foster a sense of community and identity through the availability of transportation choices and transportation design features, recognizing that both profoundly affect the way people interact and experience the city.

Goal: MBP 1 CITYWIDE BICYCLING POLICIES

Increase use of bicycling for all trip purposes and improve safety of bicyclists throughout Spokane.

- Policy MBP 1 Bikeway Network and Bicycle-friendly streets: *Establish a bikeway network that serves all Spokane residents and neighborhoods and make Spokane's streets safe and convenient for bicycling while considering the current and future needs of all other modes of transportation.*

From Chapter 9 Natural Environment

Goal: NE 13 CONNECTIVITY

Create a citywide network of paved trails, designated sidewalks, and soft pathways that link regional trails, natural areas, parks, sacred and historical sites, schools, and urban centers.

- Policy NE 13.1 Walkway and Bicycle Path System: *Identify, prioritize and connect places in the city with a walkway or bicycle path system.*

From Chapter 11 Neighborhoods

Goal: N 4 TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

Provide Spokane residents with clean air, safe streets, and quiet, peaceful living environments by reducing the volume of automobile traffic passing through neighborhoods and promoting alternative modes of circulation.

- Policy N 4.5 Multimodal Transportation: *Promote alternative forms of transportation.*
- Policy N 4.6 Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections: *Establish a continuous pedestrian and bicycle network within and between all neighborhoods.*

Goal: N 5 NEIGHBORHOODS

Increase the number of open gathering spaces, greenbelts, trails, and pedestrian bridges within and/or between neighborhoods.

- Policy N 5.3 Linkages: *Link neighborhoods with an open space greenbelt system or pedestrian and bicycle paths.*

Staff concludes that this criterion is met.

F. Regional Consistency.

All changes to the comprehensive plan must be consistent with the countywide planning policies (CWPP), the comprehensive plans of neighboring jurisdictions, applicable capital facilities or special district plans, the regional transportation improvement plan, and official population growth forecasts.

Relevant facts: The proposal supports the existing Planned Bikeway Network and the Countywide Planning Policies' alternative programs and regional transportation system of bikeways and trails. The proposal includes several facilities identified in, and is consistent with, the Citywide Capital Improvement Program.

G. Cumulative Effect.

All amendments must be considered concurrently in order to evaluate their cumulative effect on the comprehensive plan text and map, development regulations, capital

facilities program, neighborhood planning documents, adopted environmental policies and other relevant implementation measures.

1. Land Use Impacts.

In addition, applications should be reviewed for their cumulative land use impacts. Where adverse environmental impacts are identified, mitigation requirements may be imposed as a part of the approval action.

2. Grouping.

Proposals for area-wide rezones and/or site-specific land use plan map amendments may be evaluated by geographic sector and/or land use type in order to facilitate the assessment of their cumulative impacts.

Relevant facts: The text changes and addition or reclassification of bikeway designations will not impact the land use plan map or development regulations. Implementation of the changes will occur through eventual changes to the capital facilities program or development project approvals and may be subject to SEPA review at that time. The changes are coordinated with a related project, the LINK Spokane Comprehensive Plan Transportation Update, to implement neighborhood planning documents. The changes are aligned with environmental policies and the Master Bike Plan.

Staff concludes that this criterion is met.

H. SEPA.

SEPA review must be completed on all amendment proposals.

1. Grouping.

When possible, the SEPA review process should be combined for related land use types or affected geographic sectors in order to better evaluate the proposals' cumulative impacts. This combined review process results in a single threshold determination for those related proposals.

2. DS.

If a determination of significance (DS) is made regarding any proposal, that application will be deferred for further consideration until the next applicable review cycle in order to allow adequate time for generating and processing the required environmental impact statement (EIS).

Relevant facts: The application is being reviewed in accordance with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) that requires that the potential for adverse environmental impacts resulting from a proposal be evaluated during the decision-making process. On the basis of information contained with the environmental checklist, the written comments from local and State departments and agencies concerned with land development within the city, and a review of other information available to the Director of Planning and Development, a threshold determination is expected to be issued following the end of the public comment period February 23, 2015. Staff expects that the proposal meets this criterion by following such procedure.

I. Adequate Public Facilities.

The amendment must not adversely affect the City's ability to provide the full range of urban public facilities and services (as described in CFU 2.1 and CFU 2.2) citywide at the planned level of service, or consume public resources otherwise needed to support comprehensive plan implementation strategies.

Relevant facts: Staff finds the proposed amendment accurately updates information in the Comprehensive Plan about several built public facilities and will not have a substantial impact on the City's ability to provide services. All affected departments and

outside agencies providing services on the subject facilities have had an opportunity to comment on the proposal. Staff concludes that this criterion is met.

#### J. UGA.

Amendments to the urban growth area boundary may only be proposed by the city council or the mayor of Spokane and shall follow the procedures of the countywide planning policies for Spokane County.

Relevant fact: This criterion is not applicable.

#### K. Consistent Amendments.

##### 1. Policy Adjustments.

Proposed policy adjustments that are intended to be consistent with the comprehensive plan should be designed to provide correction or additional guidance so the community's original visions and values can better be achieved. The need for this type of adjustment might be supported by findings from feedback instruments related to monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the comprehensive plan. Examples of such findings could include:

- a. growth and development as envisioned in the plan is occurring faster, slower or is failing to materialize;
- b. the capacity to provide adequate services is diminished or increased;
- c. land availability to meet demand is reduced;
- d. population or employment growth is significantly different than the plan's assumptions;
- e. plan objectives are not being met as specified;
- f. the effect of the plan on land values and affordable housing is contrary to plan goals;
- g. transportation and/or other capital improvements are not being made as expected;
- h. a question of consistency exists between the comprehensive plan and its elements and chapter 36.70A RCW, the countywide planning policies, or development regulations.

Relevant facts: The proposed amendment to the text of the comprehensive plan is discussed under subsection "E. Internal Consistency" above. The changes to match built or expected bicycle improvements will achieve consistency. Actual changes to policies contained in Exhibit B to the Ordinance are limited to TR 2.16 Bicycle Lanes, Boulevards and Paths (Bicycle Facilities); Action 1.2 Complete the Bikeway Network (under MBP 1); and Action 3.1 Educate Spokane's transportation system users ... (Under MBP 3). In all cases these changes are not substantive but rather only involve changing the term "bicycle boulevard" to "neighborhood greenway." The addition of a Bike Share Feasibility Study occurs in commentary text in Section 4.5 Existing and Proposed Transportation Systems. Other project updates, renaming, reclassification and additions are limited to non-policy text. Staff concludes that these text changes will better achieve the community's original vision and values by better aligning funding of transportation improvements with a nationally recognized term, that they provide correction and additional guidance, and that they are consistent with neighborhood planning documents and the comprehensive plan.

##### 2. Map Changes.



Changes to the land use plan map (and by extension, the zoning map) may only be approved if the proponent has demonstrated that all of the following are true:

- a. The designation is in conformance with the appropriate location criteria identified in the comprehensive plan (e.g., compatibility with neighboring land uses, proximity to arterials, etc.);
- b. The map amendment or site is suitable for the proposed designation;
- c. The map amendment implements applicable comprehensive plan policies better than the current map designation.

**Relevant fact:** This criterion is not applicable.

3. Rezones, Land Use Plan Map Amendment.

Corresponding rezones will be adopted concurrently with land use plan map amendments as a legislative action of the city council. If policy language changes have map implications, changes to the land use plan map and zoning map will be made accordingly for all affected sites upon adoption of the new policy language. This is done to ensure that the comprehensive plan remains internally consistent and to preserve consistency between the comprehensive plan and supporting development regulations.

**Relevant fact:** This criterion is not applicable.

L. Inconsistent Amendments.

1. Review Cycle.

Because of the length of time required for staff review, public comment, and plan commission's in-depth analysis of the applicant's extensive supporting data and long-term trend analysis, proposals that are not consistent with the comprehensive plan are addressed only within the context of the required comprehensive plan update cycle every seven years pursuant to RCW 36.70A.130(4)(C) and every other year starting in 2005.

2. Adequate Documentation of Need for Change.

- a. The burden of proof rests entirely with the applicant to provide convincing evidence that community values, priorities, needs and trends have changed sufficiently to justify a fundamental shift in the comprehensive plan. Results from various measurement systems should be used to demonstrate or document the need to depart from the current version of the comprehensive plan. Relevant information may include:
- b. growth and development as envisioned in the plan is occurring faster, slower or is failing to materialize;
- c. the capacity to provide adequate services is diminished or increased;
- d. land availability to meet demand is reduced;
- e. population or employment growth is significantly different than the plan's assumptions;
- f. transportation and/or other capital improvements are not being made as expected;
- g. conditions have changed substantially in the area within which the subject property lies and/or Citywide;

- h. assumptions upon which the plan is based are found to be invalid; or
- i. sufficient change or lack of change in circumstances dictates the need for such consideration.

Relevant facts: This year (2015), the Plan Commission may consider proposals that are inconsistent with the comprehensive plan. Usually inconsistent amendments require amendments to the text of the comprehensive plan to achieve consistency with policies of the comprehensive plan. Consistency is discussed under subsections “E. Internal Consistency” and “K. Consistent Amendments” above. In this case, staff concludes that the changes to text do not materially change any existing policy and are cleanup items, additions and reclassifications to the planned bikeway network, and explanatory statements.

### 3. Overall Consistency.

If significantly inconsistent with the current version of the comprehensive plan, an amendment proposal must also include wording that would realign the relevant parts of the comprehensive plan and its other supporting documents with the full range of changes implied by the proposal.

Relevant facts: The proposed application has been determined to be consistent with the comprehensive plan. The criteria listed above are intended to be used to evaluate applications that are inconsistent with the comprehensive plan.

## M. SMC 17G.020.040 Amendment Exceptions Criteria

The following types of amendments may be considered more than once a year, provided that all of the amendment criteria have been met, and appropriate steps have been taken to ensure public participation.

- o D. Whenever an emergency exists. The plan commission will review a potential emergency situation, with advice from the city attorney’s office, to determine if the situation does, in fact, necessitate an emergency comprehensive plan amendment. Findings must demonstrate a need of neighborhood or community-wide significance, and not a personal emergency on the part of a particular applicant or property owner. Potential emergency situations may involve official, legal or administrative actions, such as those to immediately avoid an imminent danger to public health and safety, prevent imminent danger to public or private property, prevent an imminent threat of serious environmental degradation or address the absence of adequate and available public facilities or services.

Relevant facts: A discussion of how the application meets all applicable amendment criteria is provided above in Subsections A through L. The application public participation program followed the procedures of SMC chapter 17G.020, Comprehensive Plan Amendment Procedure. Findings are included in the draft Findings, Conclusions and Recommendation by the Plan Commission regarding the community-wide significance of the amendments that address the need for official action to address the absence of adequate and available public facilities and services. Staff concludes that these criteria have been met.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff concludes that the proposed amendment is consistent with the comprehensive plan, and the Spokane Municipal Code criteria for amendments to the comprehensive plan, and recommends approval.