October 2016

Fort George Wright Drive

Station & Corridor Plan

Mr. Dennis Dellwo
President, City of Spokane Plan Commission
808 W. Spokane Falls Boulevard
Spokane, WA 99201

Subject: **Ft. George Wright Drive Station & Corridor Plan**

Dear Mr. Dellwo:

We are very excited at the opportunity to present this station and corridor plan for the Fort George Wright Boulevard/Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC) area - an excitement we hope you'll share as you become familiar with the tremendous opportunities it presents for our community.

This plan exemplifies how planning and collaborative investment can help solve multiple objectives - implementing comprehensive plan goals, and yielding benefits for entities including Spokane Falls Community College, Mukogawa Institute, Spokane Transit Authority, the West Hills Neighborhood, River Run PUD and others. Features called for in this plan address real and immediate public safety needs, improve provision of transit, encourage new and much-needed land uses, boost bike and pedestrian usability, and set the stage for the growth of the area into a far more cohesive and vital neighborhood center.

It's clear the type of collaborative effort that helped develop this plan will need to persist, requiring strong support and leadership from the City and Planning Commission, STA, SFCC, and the West Hills Neighborhood. Together, and with coordinated public investment, private investment is likely to follow, creating an area sure to be valued by locals as well as by students and visitors.

Please feel free to contact any of us with questions or ways to improve this plan and the outcomes it envisions. Thanks in advance for your support – we're hopeful and excited for the future of this area!

Sincerely,

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1 Planning Context

Introduction

In 2015, the West Hills Neighborhood Council decided to combine their allocation from the City of approximately $21,000 in neighborhood planning funds with $60,000 from the Spokane Transit Authority (STA) to "engage in a coordinated planning process that would encourage a vibrant neighborhood and improve access to multi-modal transportation." This plan is the result of that process, advancing land use objectives supported by the neighborhood and the City's Comprehensive Plan and addressing STA's desire for improved transit facilities serving Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC).

The planning process included extensive public outreach, including stakeholder interviews; open-house meetings; a set of "storefront studio" workshops; multiple presentations to neighborhood and agency representatives; presentations to the Spokane Planning Commission; and a project web page to secure a wide variety of perspectives and reflect the needs and desires of the community.

This plan identifies a set of actions and investments that address specific functional and safety criteria mandated by STA, as well as developing the type of walkable, mixed-use "neighborhood center" desired by the West Hills residents. It incorporates and helps implement portions of SFCC's master plan, and supports and helps orient the final phase of the River Run Planned Unit Development (PUD)

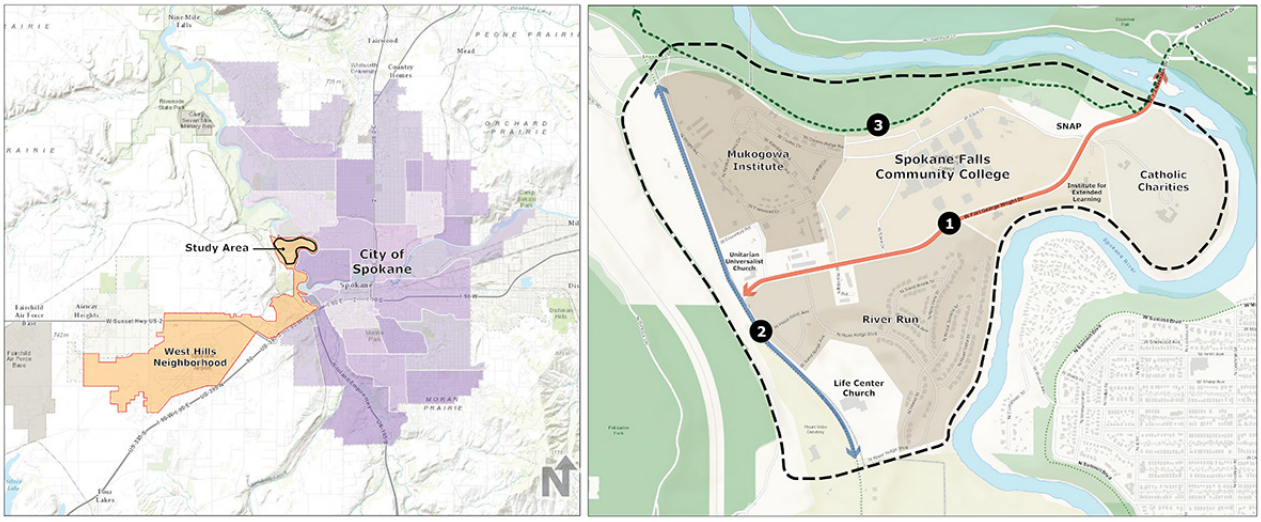


Figure 1.01 – *The project study area, as located in the City of Spokane and the West Hills Neighborhood (left) and in its immediate vicinity (right). The image at right also outlines areas associated with SFCC, the River Run PUD, Mukogawa Institute, Catholic Charities, SNAP, and the Life Center church. Ft. George Wright Boulevard is highlighted in red (1) Government Way in blue (2) and the Centennial Trail in dotted green (3). (Image: Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

abutting Ft. George Wright Boulevard (FGW). Taken as a whole, this plan directs relatively small investments in transit facilities to prompt extensive investment in the area, creating a more valued, dynamic environment.

This plan also included a basic traffic analysis, modeling the potential viability of street-related recommendations. (See Chapter 2)

The following sections introduce the various conditions present in the plan's study area, including site history, the policy context, land uses and transportation conditions. More complete coverage on these topics is contained in the plan's appendices.

Site Context

History

The location of this plan's study area is within the northern-most portion of Spokane's West Hills Neighborhood, roughly central to the City's overall limits and abutting unincorporated Spokane County along N. Government Way. North and east portions of the study area are bounded by the Spokane River. (See **Figure 1.01**)

The site's developed history began in 1894, when land known locally as "Twickenham Park" was deeded to the US government for the creation of the Fort George Wright military post. Between 1899 and 1940, the Fort housed and trained mounted infantry units, including the famous "Company M" Black Infantry Regiment, stationed as the post's first residents from 1899 to 1908.

In 1957, the site was declared surplus by the government, who gave educational institutions priority to purchase the property. In 1960, 76 acres of the former post was purchased by the Sisters of the Holy Names convent, who established a liberal arts college for women. In 1990, the college's land

and buildings were purchased by the Mukogawa Women's Academy, which remains in operations today. In 1967, Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC) purchased 113 acres of the former post, leveling all structures and creating its new campus.

Remaining structures and associated land from the former fort are now part of the Fort George Wright Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Another large portion of the study area includes the 130-acre "River Run" subdivision, developed on land used for gravel mining and processing between 1905 and 2001. The first phase of the River Run development commenced in 2005, with subsequent work continuing through to present day.

29 acres of the River Run site were sold to the Life Center Foursquare Church, which sees an average weekly attendance of 4,000 persons. The church and its 1,000-stall surface lot dominates street frontage where commercial uses had been envisioned as part of the River Run master plan.

The portion of the study area north of Ft. George Wright Boulevard was annexed by the City of Spokane in 1966, and the portion south in 1996.

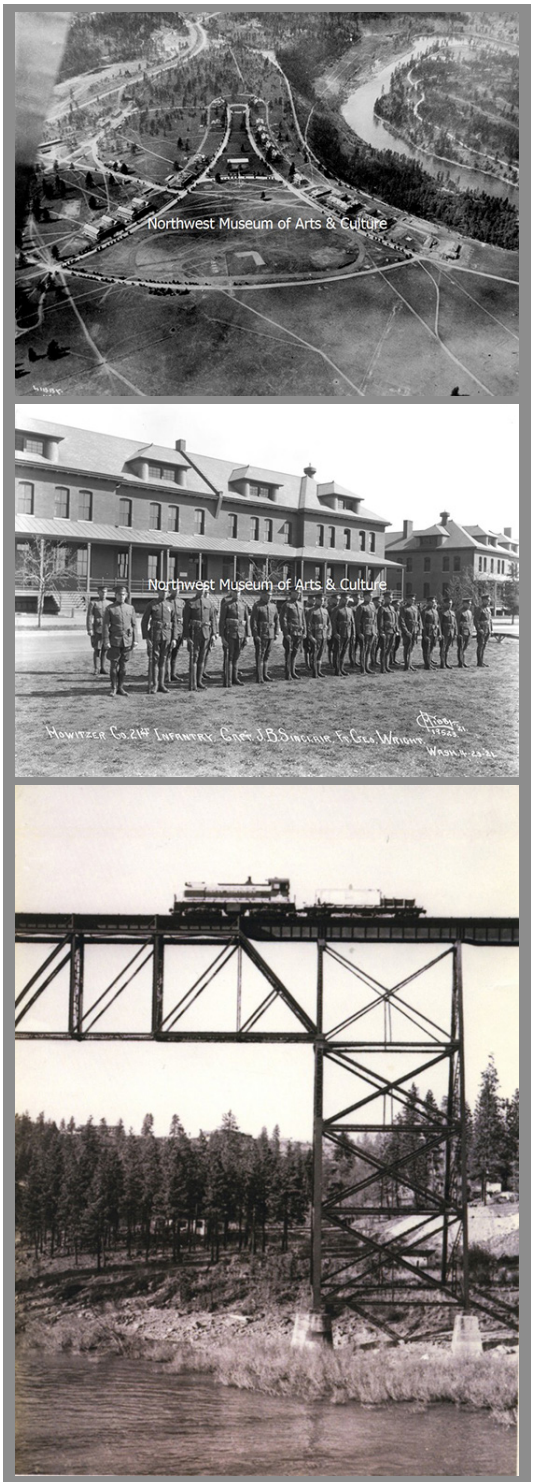


Figure 1.02 – *(Top to bottom) aerial photo, Ft. George Wright ca. 1935; barracks and troops; engine and now-demolished trestle spanning the Spokane River between N. Summit Boulevard and the former Central Pre-Mix gravel mine (now River Run). (Images: Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture)*

Relevant Plans

Aside from the overall Comprehensive Plan for the City, there is currently no neighborhood plan for the West Hills neighborhood nor any plans specific to the study area. Plans exist that deal with different portions of the study area, including SFCC, River Run, and Copper River at Holy Names (formerly Sisters of the Holy Names convent), as well as plans regarding improvements or services in the area, including the Spokane Transit Authority (STA), the Centennial Trail, and City of Spokane Capital Facilities plans. These are summarized below:

SFCC Master Plan

SFCC's 2011 campus master plan expresses several objectives relevant to this plan:

- *The desire to create and enhance spaces for students to study, socialize, relax, and eat between classes. These are envisioned as open spaces, promenades and use features - for example, plazas and cafés;*
- *Improved cross-campus pedestrian connectivity and axial organization, including an east-west promenade envisioned as the "main street" of campus;*

- *Prioritization of pedestrian movement over vehicular movement;*
- *Improved bicycle access, noting the absence of bike lanes on Ft. George Wright Boulevard (FGW) and few bike racks on campus; and*
- *Creation of a transit hub, including pull outs or off-street loading.*

These and other goals are intended to encourage more students to come to campus regardless of mode - and stay on campus throughout the day.

River Run PUD

In 2000, the River Run planned unit development (PUD) proposed numerous housing types, including four-unit townhomes, single-family homes with off-alley garages, multi-family units, and a sizable portion of land dedicated to commercial uses. Today, River Run is nearly complete but contains far fewer commercial areas and housing types than originally envisioned, with single-family housing predominant and multi-family apartments confined to the northwest corner of the property. Commercial uses were envisioned where these apartments now exist, as well as on land extending eastward as far as Randolph Road. Multi-family and mixed-use buildings were also envisioned fronting FGW from the eastern edge of the Fort Wright Apartments as far as SFCC's Lodge Building 9 near the intersection of Mitchell Drive (see Figure 1.02). River Run developers now hope to complete development of townhomes eastward between FGW and the bluff and to realize some form of commercial development along FGW between River Ridge Boulevard and Randolph Road.

Catholic Charities

During the course of developing this plan, the convent and land belonging to the Sisters of the Holy Names was put up for sale and purchased by Catholic Charities.

Applications filed with the City indicate plans for three transitional housing projects, an

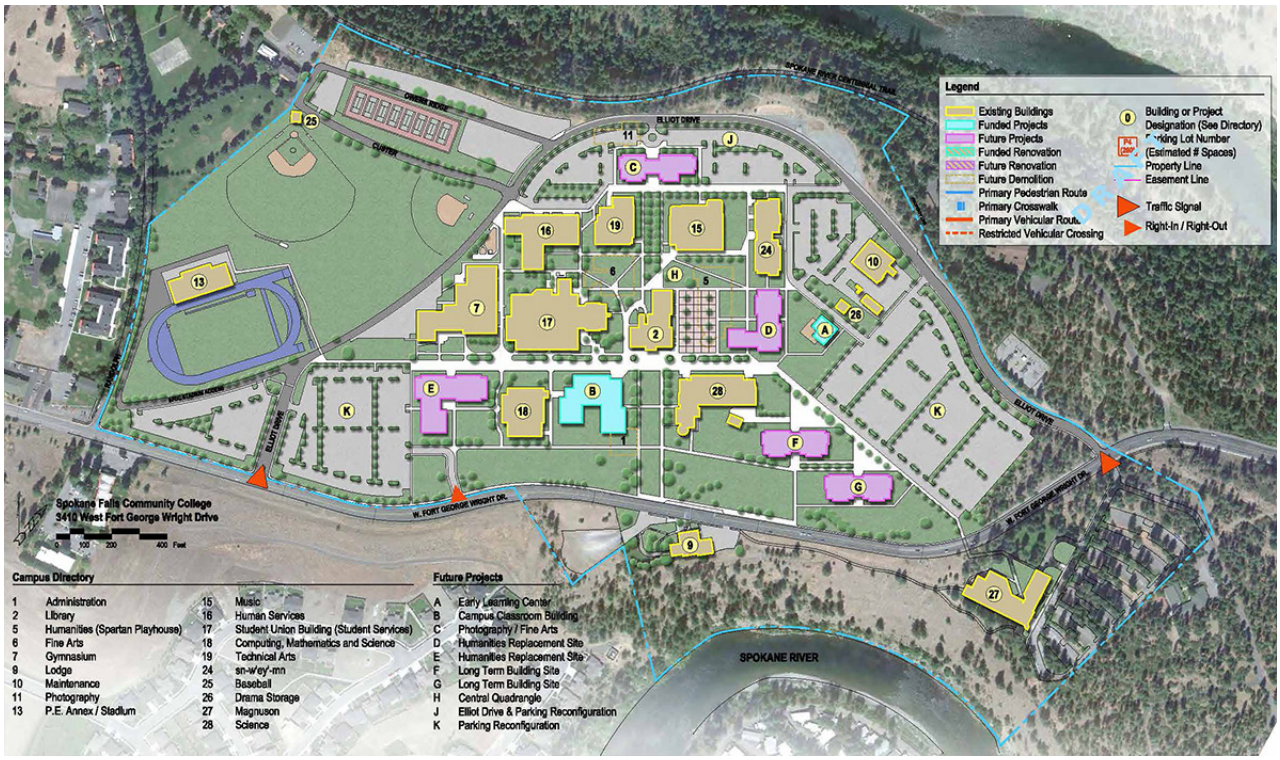


Figure 1.03 – *SFCC's master plan envisions re-purposing some existing parking, helping give it a more visible presence along FGW, as well as improving walkability and making the campus feel more cohesive. (Image: Spokane Falls Community College)*

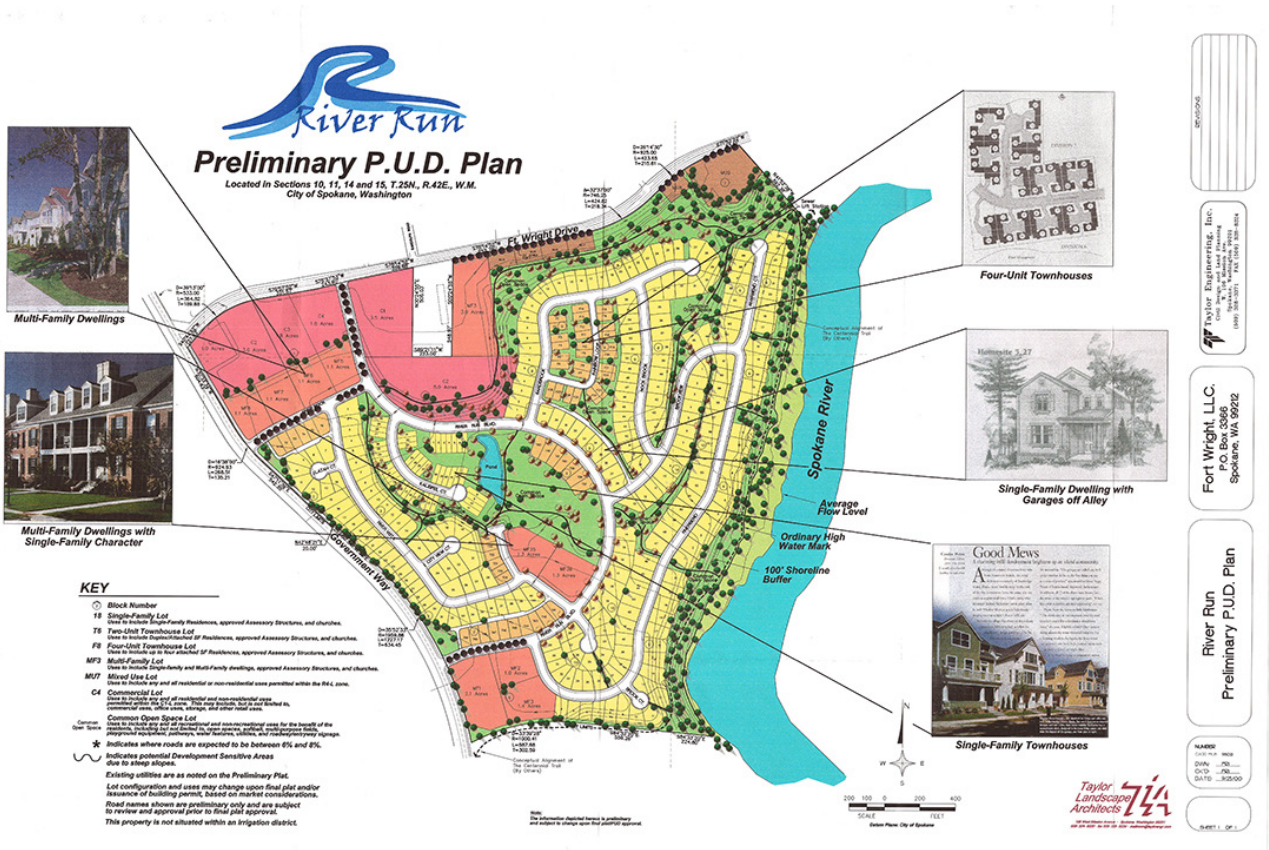


Figure 1.04 – *Initial plans for the River Run PUD featured a wide range of housing types as well as retail and mixed-use buildings. Though the build-out differs in some ways, developers hope to provide retail near Randolph Road, as well as townhomes along FGW where indicated in this 2000 plan. (Image: City of Spokane)*

associated park and 33.5 acres of conservation lands along the Spokane River shoreline. Proposed housing includes:

- *"Copper River Apartments," 232 units;*
- *"Catholic Charities Family Housing," 75 units; and*
- *"Catholic Charities Senior Housing" 75 units.*

Catholic Charities refers to the entire development as "Copper River at Holy Names." City pre-development notes indicate that the City will require a 12-foot pathway (in lieu of a sidewalk), to connect the Centennial Trail near the T. J. Meenach Bridge with an existing pathway along the south side of FGW. Catholic Charities, noting the acute need for transit servicing low-income and senior residents, are considering options to optimize access between STA stops along FGW and their units, which are to be constructed near the center of the 65-acre property.

Spokane Transit Authority (STA)

STA's desire to improve safety and services by constructing an off-street transit station at SFCC played a strong role in setting this plan in motion.

STA's 2015 *Transit Development Plan* recommends changes for service to the study area (Route 33), with frequency improved from one-hour to 30 minute cycles on Saturdays in 2016, and further changes in 2017 to include 30-minute frequencies on Sundays and holidays.

Figure 1.05 – *The Centennial Trail passes through this plan's study area. Bike lanes envisioned for FGW will greatly improve access to the trail from SFCC and elsewhere on the western (river left) side of the Spokane River. (Image: Friends of the Centennial Trail)*

Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners (SNAP)

Headquarters for this organization are housed in the former convent facilities just north of FGW along the Spokane River shoreline. The organization does not have published plans for the site, but a 2016 interview with management indicated SNAP foresees little facility expansion, and anticipates continued growth of their vocational training / business incubator uses on the property. SNAP is also considering up to 50 affordable housing units adjoining their main facility and recognizes that transit is critical to a majority of those likely to reside and / or work on the SNAP site.

Centennial Trail

Spokane's Centennial Trail is a 37-mile paved trail extending from the Washington / Idaho border to Sontag Park in Nine Mile Falls. Significant gaps exist along the route, with one of those gaps located near this plan's study area, at "Mile 26" from N. Summit Boulevard to the T.J. Meenach Bridge. City plans indicate the construction of a new trail segment to close this gap, including a 14-foot shared use path and an eight-foot gravel jogging shoulder along Pettet Drive to the eastern landing of the bridge. The project is being created in coordination with installation of a new Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) tank near the intersection of Pettet Drive and FGW.

Capital Facilities Plan

The City of Spokane's six-year Capital Facilities Plan indicates the following improvements are planned for FGW:

- *2016 - FGW from Government Way to Elliot Drive W.; arterial grind and overlay, total cost: $335,798;*
- *2017 - FGW from Elliot Drive W. to 850' east of SFCC signal; arterial grind and overlay, total cost: $420,117; and*
- *2018 - FGW from 850' east of SFCC signal to T.J. Meenach Bridge; arterial grind and overlay, total cost: $343,938.*

Recognition that these improvements might coincide with other community objectives helped affirm City support for development of this plan.

Policy Conditions

The following sections describe policy-related conditions in and / or influencing the study area for the FGW Corridor and Station Area Plan.

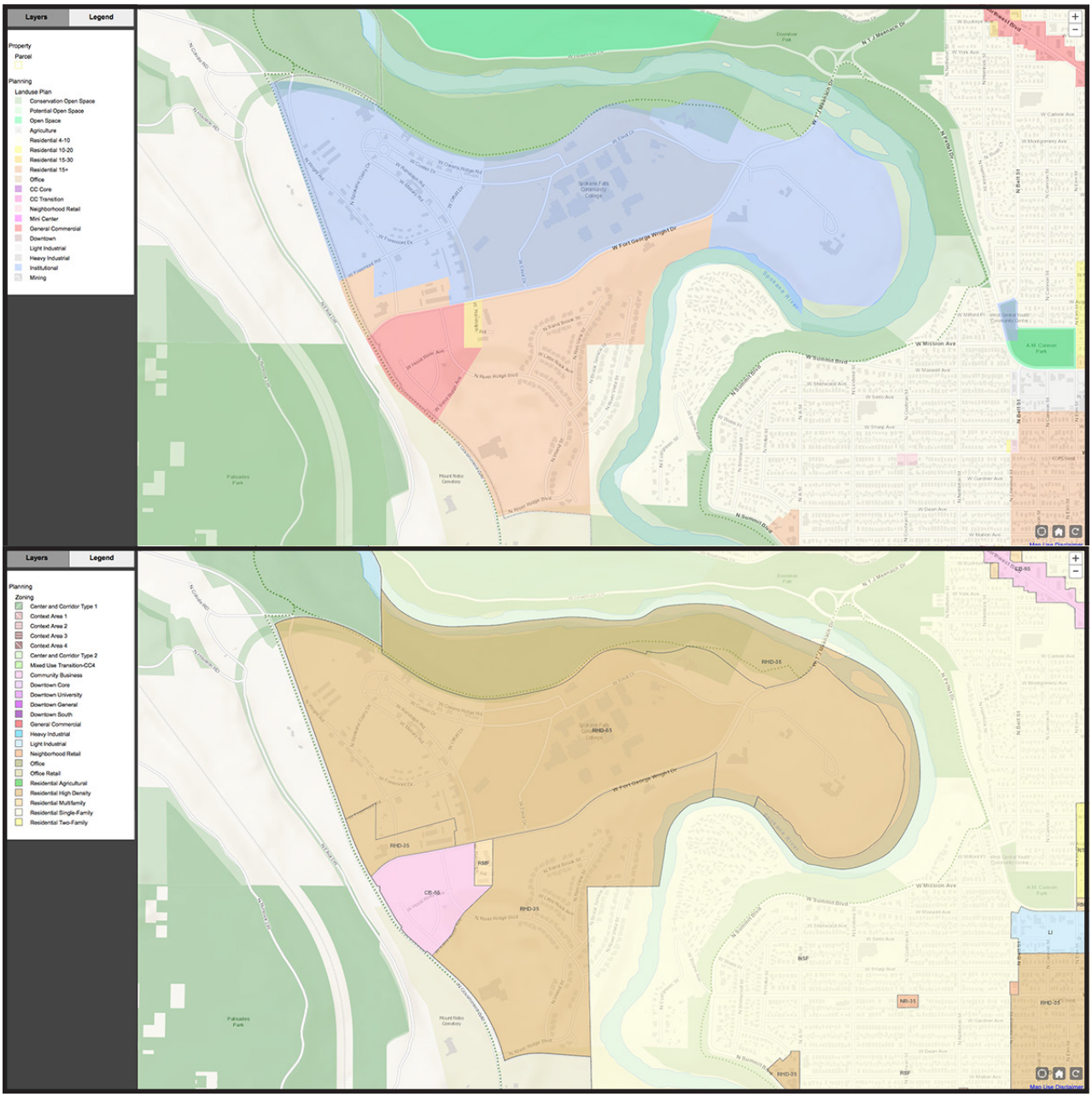


Figure 1.06 – *City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan (Land Use) and Municipal Code (zoning) designations in the study area. The commercial area outlined in the land use map matches that on the zoning map. (Image: City of Spokane)*

Figure 1.07 – *Student housing in the study area includes former barracks like this historic remnant of Ft. George Wright. (Image: Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

Comprehensive Plan

The current City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map identifies nearly all areas north of FGW (within the study area) as "Institutional." Areas south of FGW are identified as "Residential 15+." An area near the intersection of Government Way and FGW - supporting original River Run PUD plans - is shown as "General Commercial." The Land Use Map also identifies the latter area as a "Neighborhood Center," indicating a desire for:

- *Development featuring greater intensity than the surrounding neighborhood;*
- *Businesses and services primarily catering to neighborhood residents; and*
- *Features that encourage walking, social interaction, and neighborhood activities (LU 3.2, N 2.1).*

The Comprehensive Plan also recommends landscaping for streets serving Neighborhood Centers, improving aesthetics and helping to separate sidewalks from the curb for pedestrian safety. For transit routes, the Comprehensive Plan recommends bus pullout bays be installed (Chapter 4, pg. 52), and provision of bicycle lockers, racks, and / or storage at transit stations (Action 2.1).

Spokane Zoning Map

The majority of the study area is designated RHD-55 or RHD-35 (Residential High Density) on the Zoning Map. The same area shown as General Commercial on the Land Use Map (abutting the intersection of Government Way and FGW) is zoned CB-55 (Community Business). Building height limits associated these zones are as follows:

- *RHD-35 = 35 ft.;*
- *RHD-55 = 55 ft.; and*
- *CB-55 = 55 ft.*

The Zoning Map also identifies the above CB-55 area as a "CC3" (Centers and Corridors Type 3) overlay area, allowing it to use existing zoning regulations or develop according to standards for "Type 1" or "Type 2" centers. Center and Corridor zones are designated to implement Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, specifically Policy LU 3.2, calling for the creation of a "… cohesive development pattern with a mix of uses, higher density housing, buildings oriented to the street, screened

parking areas behind buildings, alternative modes of transportation with a safe pedestrian environment, quality design, smaller blocks and relatively narrow streets with on-street parking" (Spokane Municipal Code Section 17C.122.010).

Built Environment

Numerous land uses and entities have been established within the study area, including SFCC, the River Run PUD, Catholic Charities, SNAP and the Centennial Trail as described in previous sections. The following list includes additional details for these and other uses in the study area:

- SFCC - This institution serves 8,356 students, approximately 66 percent of whom are enrolled full-time, with 66 percent of the total attending in preparation for transfer to a four-year college. The Institute for Extended Learning, an affiliated unit of the Community Colleges of Spokane system, serves approximately 4,279 students just south of the SFCC campus (see Figure 1.01). SFCC's 2012 Master Plan estimates a combined total head count of 24,101, with about 76 percent of students spending portions of each weekday on campus. SFCC exists on 113 acres, and does not currently provide on-campus housing.
- Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute (MFWI) - This extension of the Japanese Mukogawa Women's University is located on 72 acres adjacent to SFCC and utilizes many of the historic structures built for Fort George Wright. According to MFWI, about 400 international students participate in spring and fall sessions, with about 50 attending summer sessions. The majority of students live on campus and rely heavily on transit.
- River Run PUD - This development was originally established on 154 acres south of FGW and features mostly single-family homes priced (according to their website)

Figure 1.08 – *Major topographic features divide the study area into at least three relatively flat areas - shown here as "A", including Mukogawa and SFCC; "B", including most of River Run; and "C", including the Copper River at Holy Names property and the SNAP headquarters. The Spokane River is close to all areas, though slopes and vegetation limit visual access. (Image: Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

from the low $300,000's to over $1 million. Typical rent rates for apartments at River Run range between $570 and $1,395.

- Life Center Foursquare Church (Life Center) - This facility exists on 29 acres fronting Government Way (formerly part of the River Run PUD) and draws approximately 4,000 people every Sunday for services. The church includes a 78,000 square-foot sanctuary with surface parking for 1,000 vehicles.

Other smaller institutional uses identified in the study area include:

- Spokane Montessori School - located along W. Fremont Road, north of FGW;
- Busy Bodies Early Learning Center - located at the intersection of W. Fremont Road and W. Military Road;
- Spokane Windsong School - located along W. Fremont Road, north of FGW;
- Holy Names Music Center - located near the southern limits of the Mukogawa campus along W. Custer Drive;
- Enterprising Capital Partners - located in the River Run PUD, along W. River Ridge Boulevard;
- Unitarian Universalist Church - located at the northeast corner of Government Way and FGW;
- College Terrace Apartments - located along FGW, just north of the intersection of FGW and River Ridge Boulevard;
- Randolph Arms Apartments - located along Randolph Road near W. Fremont Road; and
- Fort Wright Apartments - located along the southern edge of FGW, near the intersection of FGW and W. River Ridge Boulevard.

Significant housing growth is expected for the study area. In addition to new units at the Catholic Charities site, final phase growth at River Run, and potential housing on the SNAP campus, SFCC plans indicate support for increased rental housing for students and staff to live on or near campus. These suggest conditions are primed for the type of land uses and walkability conditions now missing but envisioned by the City's "Neighborhood Center" designation. While a Neighborhood Center has been designated in the study area with a Centers and Corridors overlay established, a significant proportion of vacant land in the overlay has been developed as multi-family residential with no services or retail uses. Only one

Figure 1.09 – *Current conditions favor through-traffic, featuring four travel lanes (no turn lane), little landscaping, no bicycle lanes, sidewalks that abut the curb to the north, and extensive gaps where sidewalks do not exist on the south. Speeding along the corridor is a persistent issue, and just one crosswalk exists along the 1.2-mile stretch within the study area. (Image: Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

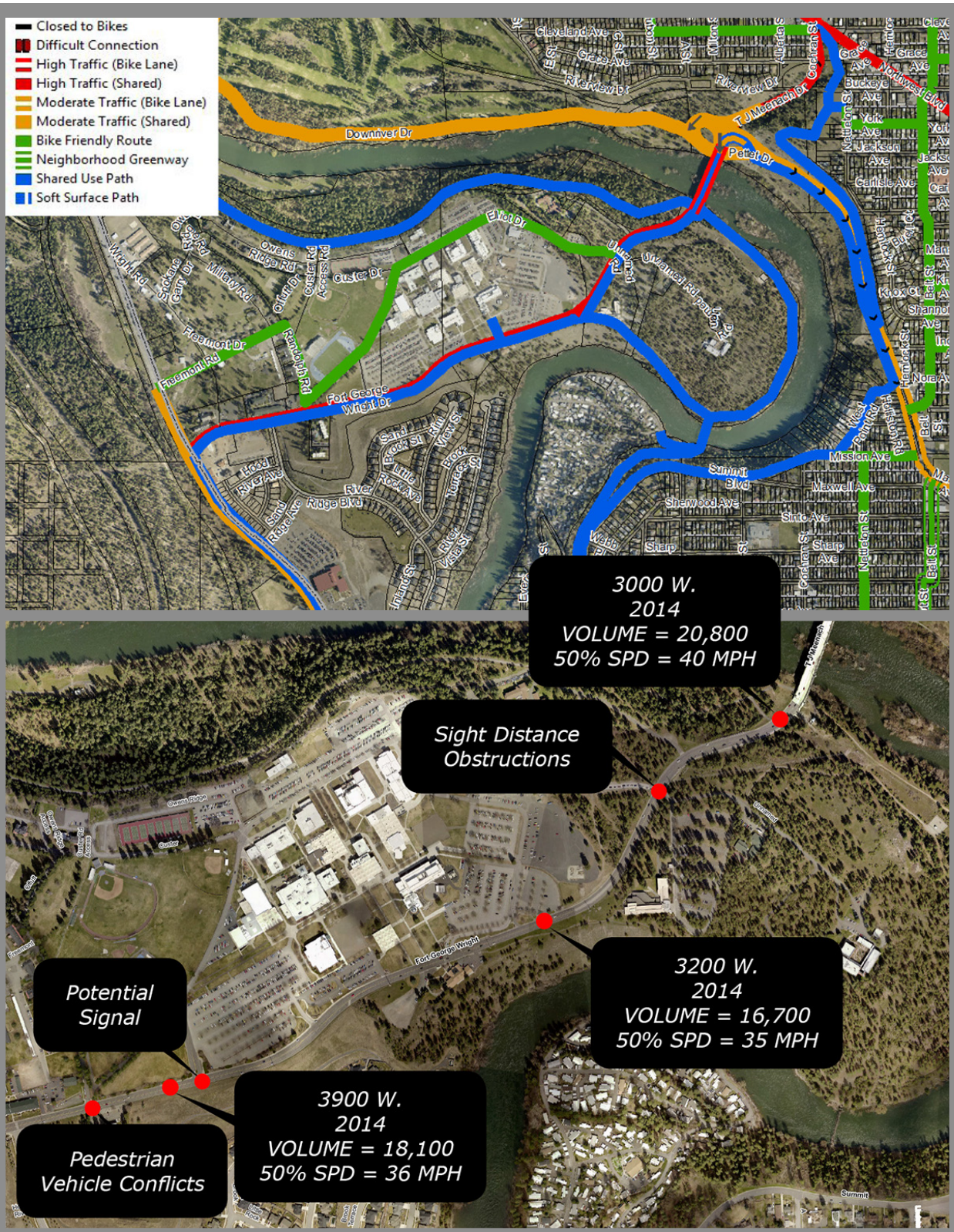


Figure 1.10– *City of Spokane bicycle network proposals (top) and traffic condition notes (below) (Image: Fehr & Peers)*

parcel currently remains in the designated overlay that could be developed for service and / or retail use.

Topography

The entire study area is located within the Spokane-Rathdrum aquifer recharge zone. City maps show 100 and 500-year flood zones tightly confined along the river. Erodible soils layers involve larger areas along North Elliot Drive west of Government Way, north of Elliot between the SFCC campus and the river, and within the River Run development between North Rim View and North Brook Terrace Streets.

Topographic constraints are evident south of FGW, where there is a ridge and a steep slope away from the road down to the River Run development site. Similarly, steep up-slopes commence within 100 to 400 feet westward from Government Way, limiting development opportunities at or near the intersection of Government Way and FGW.

The natural topography of the land at the River Run site originally sloped gently towards the Spokane River to the east, though mining operations created significantly steeper slopes abutting FGW. The site underwent re-grading before housing development commenced, including considerable fill materials from building demolition elsewhere. Though the study area is essentially a peninsula surrounded by the Spokane River, steep slopes and pine forests along the shoreline and covering the Catholic Charities site tend to limit shoreline views.

Transportation Conditions

Vehicular

Ft. George Wright Boulevard, which bisects the study area, is classified by the City as a "Principal Arterial." Average daily traffic (ADT) counts along FGW range between 16,700 to 18,100 vehicles. It features two travel lanes in either direction with no center turn lane. A May 2014 speed study indicates speeds often range from 37 to 41 miles per hour, despite the posted 35 mph speed limit. Both FGW and Government Way - which frames the western edge of the study area - have horizontal and vertical curvatures resulting in poor sightlines for higher speeds, which decreases motorized and non-motorized public safety.

There is generally no congestion or delays along the FGW corridor, excepting those associated with turning movements onto or from the roadway, or related to bus loading. Issues at the intersection of FGW and West Elliot Drive are especially acute, where many SFCC students experience long delays exiting the campus area. The intersection is non-signalized, and its location along a curve and near the foot of a hillside makes FGW access - particularly left-hand turns into eastbound lanes - difficult and hazardous. A 2010 study commissioned by SFCC offered a range of short-term improvements while noting the eventual need for a traffic signal, a measure also supported by SFCC's Master Plan. Further development, most notably at the Catholic Charities property directly south of this intersection, will amplify these issues.

Other vehicle-related issues noted during this process include motorists avoiding the Government Way / FGW intersection by cutting through the River Run PUD, and general safety concerns at other non-signalized entry points given double-lane, curvature and prevailing speed conditions.

Pedestrian

Infrastructure supporting walking in the study area is, in many ways, lacking. Notable issues include:

- *No sidewalks exist along the southern edge of FGW, excepting the recently-developed block between Government Way and W. River Ridge Boulevard and frontage abutting SFCC's Lodge Building 9;*
- *There is no sidewalk installed along the north edge of FGW between the T.J. Meenach Bridge and W. Elliot Drive;*

- *Sidewalks along the north edge of FGW directly abut the curb without a shoulder or other buffer, forcing pedestrians to walk in close proximity to travel lanes;*
- *Many roads in the area lack sidewalks on both sides, including Elliot Drive / W. Elliot Drive, Custer Drive and Government Way (excepting areas fronting River Run PUD);*
- *Just one crosswalk exists along FGW to aid crossings at Mitchell Drive. It relies on low-visibility transverse markings (surface paint) and is marked on only one side of the intersection (western side). It has been noted that vehicles have, at times, not complied with the crosswalk at this location. Safety issues and general need indicate strong demand exists for additional marked crosswalks and / or additional treatments along FGW including at W. River Ridge Boulevard, Randolph Road, and W. Elliot Drive. Future development along the southern edge of FGW will likely create demand for additional crossings; and*
- *Many pathways leading from SFCC buildings terminate in parking lots, reducing the number of viable access points to FGW from campus.*

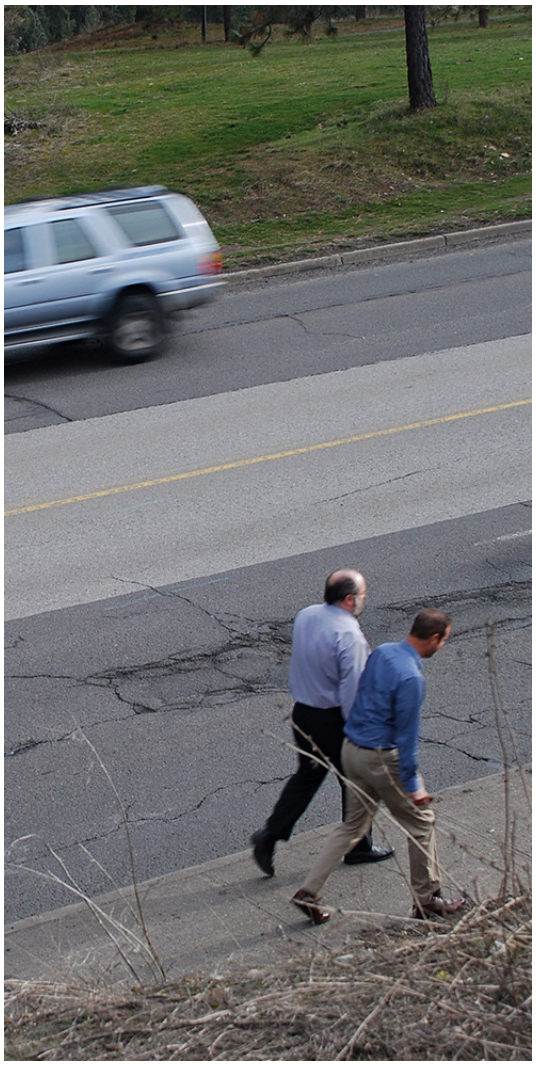


Figure 1.11 – *Narrow sidewalks that abut traffic lanes and large areas with no sidewalks at all hinder walkability in the study area. (Image: Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

Bicycle

Existing facilities in the study area provide poor functionality for bicyclists. FGW - the only means of access to and from the study area - is a four-lane roadway with few accommodations for cyclists. A narrow bike lane exists along the north edge of FGW from Elliot Drive to the Meenach Bridge, but no bicycle facilities are provided that cross the bridge. No other shared or dedicated lanes currently exist along FGW. Government Way includes relatively wide shoulders on each side for cycling, and areas fronting the River Run PUD include a separated non-motorized trail.

As noted earlier, the Centennial Trail passes through the study area from the west landing of the T.J. Meenach Bridge northward along the Spokane River shoreline. A gap in the trail from the Meenach landing to Summit Boulevard at Boone Street (near Kendall Yards) is being addressed through construction of a new segment along Pettet Drive.

The City's draft Bicycle Master Plan Update proposes:

- *Completion of a shared use path along FGW and along Government Way south of the FGW intersection;*
- *Creation of a "Bike Friendly Route" along the full length of Elliot Drive, and along Randolph and Freemont roads,*

providing an alternate east-west route from T.J. Meenach to Government Way; and

- *Extension of a shared-use path along the Spokane River shoreline through the Catholic Charities property, with a future trail bridge crossing the river on the alignment now occupied by an abandoned utility bridge, leading uphill to Summit Boulevard.*

It is important to note that the Draft Bicycle Master Plan Update is currently under development and is not yet approved by the City.

Transit

SFCC is served by two Spokane Transit Authority (STA) bus lines - routes 20 and 33. Route 20 enters the study area from the direction of Government Way and becomes Route 33 within the study area. Route 33 enters the study area from across the T.J. Meenach Bridge to the east and provides access to downtown and Northtown Mall before terminating at the Spokane Community College.

The most heavily-used transit stop in the area is at the intersection of FGW and Mitchell Drive (Route 20). This stop has 398 average daily boardings eastbound and 277 average daily boardings westbound. A bus stop at FGW and Randolph Road sees heavy use by Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute students.

Pedestrian access to bus stops along Fort George Wright Drive is generally difficult. As noted earlier, marked crosswalks are either nonexistent or inadequate at stop locations. Vehicle speeds and sightline characteristics compound hazards. Access to eastbound STA routes by Mukogawa students requires crossing FGW where no crosswalk exists - creating significant dangers for these international students. The crosswalk accessing the bus stop at Mitchell Drive and FGW is signalized, but reports indicate pedestrians do, at times, neglect to use the signal feature.

As development along FGW continues, traffic counts will likely increase, and opportunities for off-street loading of busses should be explored. The SFCC Master Plan envisions a transit hub providing pull outs on both sides of the campus' main entry near Mitchell Drive.

2 Station & Corridor Plan

Introduction

This corridor and station area plan was created with substantial community input, reflecting the desire for a wide range of transformative improvements. While it began with an investigation locating STA-related needs and exploring the idea of "neighborhood center" uses and features somewhere in the area, it quickly expanded to include recommendations for a corridor re-design, features advancing SFCC's master plan, improved conditions for the build-out for River Run PUD, and features advancing non-motorized mobility.

This chapter lists the goals and objectives of the plan, and summarizes existing City policies that shaped recommendations. Finally, this chapter provides a plan diagram and accompanying table describing recommendations.

This plan is intended as a springboard and guide to development of the FGW station and corridor area. Ideas have been developed at a conceptual level, with research completed regarding basic costs and functionality. Landowners, agencies, neighborhood leaders and others have been engaged and consulted concerning this plan, and on a conceptual level, all support its implementation. Realizing this plan will require additional analysis with

changes and refinements in response to any new findings. Funding must still be secured for implementation of the plan from a variety of known and as-yet unknown sources, both public and private. As with the development of this plan, the transit station itself may catalyze a large array of improvements long-sought by residents and area partners. Many players will be required to implement this plan, and perhaps most critically, a creative approach to leadership will be required - helping coordinate work and investments, and keeping the plan on-track over time.

Plan Objectives

As described in Chapters 1 and 4, development of this plan was initiated for two primary reasons:

1) Because the designated "neighborhood center" in the study area was built without related features, the West Hills Neighborhood dedicated planning funds to evaluate the feasibility of, and make recommendations regarding design and location of, such features in the vicinity of SFCC; and

2) To aid STA regarding the design, location and preliminary costs of a new transit stop serving SFCC.

Accordingly, plan objectives were led by established City policies regarding neighborhood planning.

Objectives of this plan were also guided by neighborhood input, including participation by SFCC, MFGWI, representatives from the River Run PUD and others. As described in Chapter 4, participants felt the Station & Corridor Plan should recommend improvements that:

- Create a more walkable / bicycle-friendly district;
- Promote increased safety and / or a sense of safety in the area;
- Convey a sense of being in a unique, vital district;
- Support smooth traffic flow;
- Enhance connectivity between uses in the study area;
- Support transit use and transit user needs;

Figure 2.01 – *Topography and natural vegetation generally block views of the Spokane River, but this plan calls for sidewalks and development of multiple public view opportunities that do not currently exist along FGW. (Image, Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

- Support the addition of neighborhood-scale commercial uses; and
- Promote social interaction, helping create a great place to meet friends and neighbors.

Three differing plan scenarios were developed and reviewed by participants using the above criteria as guidelines. This input led to the development of a fourth, hybrid scheme forming the basis of this plan.

Plan Diagram

Figure 2.05 expresses the bulk of this plan's physical recommendations, locating each spatially and providing concept-level design of features and various uses. Building uses and specific footprints, for instance, are illustrated in ways that serve this plan's goals, but may also be revised in ways that match - or perhaps exceed - these goals. This plan and diagram (Figure 2.05) has been reviewed and refined by participants from the general public, neighborhood residents and leadership, the City of Spokane, SFCC, STA and others, but implementation may require additional detailed revisions. At least one set of actions related to this plan but assumed already underway are not noted on the diagram - namely, traffic "calming" measures being taken by the River Run neighborhood seeking to reduce and slow cut-through traffic on River Ridge Boulevard.

This plan recommends creation of the following:

- An off-street loading area for STA's transit stop. This helps improve passenger, pedestrian and traffic safety; reduces traffic delays; and moves transit services closer to the center of the SFCC campus.
- Creation of a two-way, mini "main street" along the return leg of the transit loop. This provides opportunities for mixed-use and neighborhood-center use patterns; provides needed student and neighborhood services; creates a walkable focal point for SFCC and the West Hills Neighborhood; calms traffic along FGW; and compliments proposed development completing River Run PUD along FGW.
- Installation of pedestrian-activated signals along FGW. These, to be located at Randolph Road and (present) Mitchell Drive crossings, improve pedestrian and transit user crossing safety; and help calm traffic along FGW.

Figure 2.02 – *Guided by public input, safety concerns and service needs, this plan seeks an improved balance between vehicular and non-motorized uses, desired land use patterns and an increased sense of "place" and neighborhood identity. (Image, Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

- Provision of full traffic signals along FGW. These, to be located at a new intersection at the return leg of the transit loop and FGW ("College Avenue" on the Plan Diagram) and at the intersection of Elliot Drive and FGW east of the SFCC campus, will help calm and smooth traffic flow along the corridor; improve transit egress from the on-campus station; and improve traffic flow and egress safety (especially at Elliot Drive and FGW, where future Copper River at Holy Names housing will compound existing issues).

In addition, this plan recommends the creation of a three-lane roadway profile along FGW (see Figure 2.03 A). This offers multiple benefits serving plan objectives, including:

- Providing space for a center turn lane where it would be beneficial, aiding traffic turning movements and improving safety (reduced need to cross multiple lanes for left-hand turns, improved visibility of oncoming traffic in identifying suitable gaps);
- Providing space for median landscaping where it would be beneficial, improving district aesthetics, pedestrian comfort (shade), pedestrian safety (potential crossing islands), and calming of traffic;
- Reducing the number of potential conflict points at intersections by limiting the amount of cross traffic to one lane in each direction;
- Reducing the potential of sideswipe conflicts associated with weaving traffic typical of four-lane configurations;
- Calming traffic, reducing overall vehicle speeds while ensuring a more consistent travel time along the corridor;
- Providing space for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. As shown in Section BB on the Plan Diagram, the three-lane configuration proposed by this plan includes sidewalks along both sides of FGW with street trees and lighting plus dedicated bicycle lanes on each side of FGW;
- Improving walkability and conditions for non-motorized travel, related to new sidewalks and bike lanes - the latter also serving commuter cycling and access to the Centennial Trail; and
- Improving safety for motorists. The Highway Safety Manual estimates that three-lane configurations can reduce crash rates by up to 30 percent, while additional studies have estimated crash reduction rates of between 19 and 47 percent.

A second option envisions a two-lane eastbound / one-lane westbound roadway profile, shown in Figure 2.03 B. This option was evaluated during the traffic analysis phase, and may offer functional benefits for automotive traffic (see "Traffic Analysis" section below). Space for the additional traffic lane removes the bike lanes shown in option A in favor of a shared-use path along the southern right-of-way (ROW).

Both figures (2.03 A and B) are provided for illustration purposes only, depicting approximate configurations using 12' travel lanes (A) and 11' lanes (B) within an assumed 80-foot ROW. Both sections also depict center turn lanes with landscaped medians "ghosted" in to indicate this as an alternating condition.

The Plan Diagram is accompanied by a set of notes and specific recommendations, contained in Table 2.01. This table lists responsible parties most likely to lead and / or collaborate with others on implementation. In many cases, coordination of design features with others noted on the diagram may offer significant benefits, creating greater value for effort and investment. The axial layout of SFCC's master plan, for instance, offers opportunity to shape and enhance the design of STA's transit stop, the proposed traffic circle, the development of the final phase of River Run along FGW, and concepts that may emerge with the "opportunity site" identified by diagram keynote 12.

Figure 2.03 – *Two options for FGW were examined for this plan: A preferred three-lane configuration ("A") and a four-lane version ("B"). Both sections depict center turn lanes, with landscaped medians "ghosted" in to indicate alternating conditions. Reconfiguring FGW is seen as a critical step in achieving many key objectives, including a more gracious, welcoming environment for pedestrians and cyclists, smoother traffic flow, and improved safety for all. (Image, Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

Traffic Analysis

A preliminary traffic analysis was prepared for this plan that considered both existing and in-process development along FGW, as served by a three-lane "road diet" design (Alternative A) as well as a four-lane alternative (Alternative B). This analysis was performed using SimTraffic™ software by specialists at the Seattle offices of Fehr & Peers, Inc. (F&P). Baseline data was generated using

Figure 2.04 – *The adoption of this plan is just the beginning, with implementation requiring close coordination among multiple agencies, user groups and community leaders. (Image, Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

on-site traffic counts and incorporated City of Spokane modeling criteria.

Trip generation assumptions used for modeling included:

- Acceptance of projected counts from developer of Copper River at Holy Names housing (former Sisters of the Holy Names property);
- Background annual volume growth rates of 0.75 percent for eastbound traffic and 1.80 percent for westbound traffic;
- Trip generation estimates using Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) recommendations for up to 250 new apartments, 100 senior units, 50 townhomes, and 115,000 square feet of commercial;
- Trips generated by envisioned development were removed from background volume traffic counts, as these were already assumed in background volume estimates;
- Trip reduction counts incorporating ITE Main Street internalization rates (from 716 PM peak trips to 580 trips); and
- Divided PM peak hour trips by ins and outs with a 50-50 split.

Trip distribution assumptions used for modeling included:

- An even split between inbound and outbound trips;
- Applied distribution splits assumed in the Copper River at Holy Names assessement (egress trips 60% EB and 40% WB); and
- Trips were balanced, by increasing volumes, to take the most conservative approach.

Design features used for modeling included:

- Alternative A - Transition to three-lane profile approximately 500 feet east of existing Mitchell Drive intersection, continuing west just past River Ridge Boulevard. (per the Plan Diagram);
- Alternative B - Transition to unbalanced four-lane profile approximately 500 feet east of existing Mitchell Drive intersection, continuing west with two eastbound lanes, one two-way left turn lane and one westbound lane;
- Modified intersections/signal configurations as follows:
  - *Pedestrian-activated signal at FGW / Randolph Road;*

Table 2.01 – *Notes, Plan Diagram*

Keynote No.	Comments	Resp. Parties*	Reference
1 - STA Transit stop (covered)	▪ With pullout, three (3) 40' bus capacity ▪ Shelter per STA design, coordinated w/SFCC re: specific location, landscaping, signage, lighting, etc.	STA, SFCC	Appx. A
2 - Bus-only route (one-way)	▪ Establish w/curbing, bollards, surface treatments and / or signage ▪ One-way route limits as shown, allowing lot access	STA, SFCC	Appx. A
3 - Landscaped parking	▪ Recommend lot-wide landscaping ▪ Recommend landscaping to screen lot from street ▪ Consider sidewalk buffering, improved lighting along FGW ▪ Consider impervious surface reduction strategies	SFCC, COS	Section BB
4 -Future building	▪ Develop conceptual layout, coordinate with SFCC master plan ▪ Include site concept in lot design, configuration	SFCC	
5 - Traffic circle	▪ Specific design by SFCC ▪ Design allowing 60' articulated bus (maximum) \ ▪ Coordinate w/item 15	SFCC, STA, COS	Appx. A
6 - Future parking	▪ Coordinate w/SFCC master plan ▪ Coordinate w/building footprint shown, "College Avenue" building needs / amenities ▪ Recommend landscaping to screen lot from street ▪ Consider sidewalk buffering, improved lighting along FGW ▪ Consider impervious surface reduction strategies ▪ Consider design providing alternative uses, such as farmers market	SFCC	Section BB
7 - Pedestrian-activated signal crossing + bus stop	▪ Coordinate sidewalk design at southern edge FGW, ensuring ease of access to crossing from River Ridge Boulevard, future development along FGW ▪ Coordinate stop location, design w/MFGWI ▪ Consider "gateway" features ▪ Consider surface material / treatment of crossing	COS, STA, MFGWI, RR	Appx. A
8 - Access road	▪ Con for main vehicular / service access ▪ Consider below FGW-grade garages, parking configuration (using slope) ▪ Recommend 20' minimum landscaped gap between buildings, (approximately as shown) providing view opportunities ▪ Review FGW access (vehicular) ▪ Consider limited between-building parking	COS, RR	
9 - Sidewalk with multiple view opportunities	▪ Establish w/landscaping, lighting buffer as shown ▪ Recommend 20' minimum landscaped gap between buildings, (approximately as shown) providing view opportunities ▪ Extend from River Ridge Boulevard to T.J. Meenach Bridge	COS, RR, SFCC, CC	Section BB
10 - Signalized intersection	▪ Facilitate "College Avenue" development, transit ▪ Consider district branding features, ample landscaping ▪ Use building placement, design to heighten sense of arrival, district vitality	COS, STA, SFCC, RR	Appx. A
11 - Potential mini-park, view opportunities	▪ Coordinate w/item 12 ▪ Consider incorporation of vehicular pass-through ▪ Coordinate w/campus axial views, opportunities (item 15) ▪ Coordinate w/RR trail, shoreline trail opportunities	RR, SFCC	
12 - Opportunity site (current parking)	▪ Coordinate w/SFCC master plan ▪ Consider low to mid-rise multi-purpose building; outdoor dining, view opportunities ▪ Coordinate w/item 11	SFCC, RR	
13 - Pedestrian-activated signal crossing	▪ Replaces current traffic signal ▪ Consider "gateway" features ▪ Consider surface material / treatment of crossing	SFCC, COS, STA	Appx. A
14 - Campus green (current parking)	▪ Per SFCC master plan ▪ Creates "front yard" student activity area ▪ Consider design providing alternative uses, such as farmers market		
15 - View / circulation axis (campus master plan)	▪ Per SFCC master plan ▪ Coordinate w/item 1, 5, 11, 12, 14		

***Abbreviations:** STA = Spokane Transit Authority; SFCC = Spokane Falls Community College (or Community Colleges of Spokane, as my apply); COS = City of Spokane; MFGWI = Mukogawa Fort George Wright Institute; RR - River Run PUD*

- *Full signal at FGW / New "Main Street" (approximately where current Elliot Drive accesses FGW);*
- *Conversion of full signal to pedestrian signal at FGW / Mitchell Drive, with removal of vehicle access;*
- *Assumed signal at FGW / Elliott Drive on eastern edge of campus based on proposed Copper River at Holy Names development; and*
- *Access road for development on south-side of FGW, with entrances at Randolph intersection and west of Mitchel Drive (per Plan Diagram);*

- A full signal at FGW / River Ridge Boulevard was tested as an alternative to the pedestrian signal at Randolph Road. This signal generated large delays and the option was not further pursued; and
- FGW / River Ridge Boulevard was assumed as a 3/4 access intersection, denying left turns out of River Ridge Boulevard in favor of a more direct route of W. Sand Ridge Avenue to Government Way.

Results

Traffic operations results were generated for the following scenarios:

1) **No change** / existing conditions;
2) **Existing + Alternative A** (existing volumes with three-lane profile and proposed land uses);
3) **Existing + Alternative B** (existing volumes with four-lane unbalanced profile and proposed land uses);
4) **Background** (future background volumes with existing four-lane and only Copper River development);
5) **Background + Alternative A** (three-lane profile, envisioned and Copper River land uses plus future background traffic); and
6) **Background + Alternative B** (four-lane unbalanced profile, envisioned and Copper River land uses plus future background traffic).

Highlights of the modeling results include:

- In the **Background + Alternative** (A or B) scenarios, all eastbound and westbound movements on FGW operated at LOS D or better;
- In comparing the **Background** to **Background + Alternative A** scenarios, envisioned uses and the three-lane profile increased vehiclular travel times by 45 seconds and 25 seconds in the eastbound and westbound directions respectively;
- In comparing the **Background** to **Background + Alternative B** scenarios, envisioned uses and the unbalanced four-lane profile increased vehicular travel times by seven seconds and nine seconds in the eastbound and westbound directions respectively;
- On average, **Alternative A** added approximately 15 to 40 seconds of vehicular travel time throughout the corridor compared to **Alternative B** *(10 to 30 percent); and*
- Further refinement of signal timing, intersection configurations and the distribution of project traffic volumes may improve real-world corridor travel times and overall operations for motorized vehicles.

Modeling did not characterize improvements to non-motorized travel over existing conditions. A copy of above-referenced modeling results may be obtained from STA.

Safety Benefits of Three-lane Profiles

A "road diet", or the reconfiguration of a traditional four-lane arterial (4L) to a three-lane profile (3L) can provide a number of safety benefits. The Highway Safety Manual estimates that a road diet can reduce the crash rate by up to 30 percent while additional studies have estimated

a crash reduction rate of between 19 and 47 percent. Safety improvements are based on the following:

- 3Ls reduce the number of potential conflict points at intersections by limiting the amount of cross traffic to one lane in each direction;
- 3Ls reduce the potential for left-turn crashes by providing a dedicated turning lane that improves visibility of oncoming traffic and in identifying suitable gaps;
- 3Ls reduce the potential sideswipe conflicts of weaving traffic that occur with 4L roadways;
- 3L can reduce overall vehicle speeds while promoting more consistent travel times through a corridor;
- 3Ls can improve non-motorized safety by reducing the crossing distance at intersections and by reducing overall traffic speeds; and
- The additional right-of-way available by reducing the number of travel lanes allows more space for safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

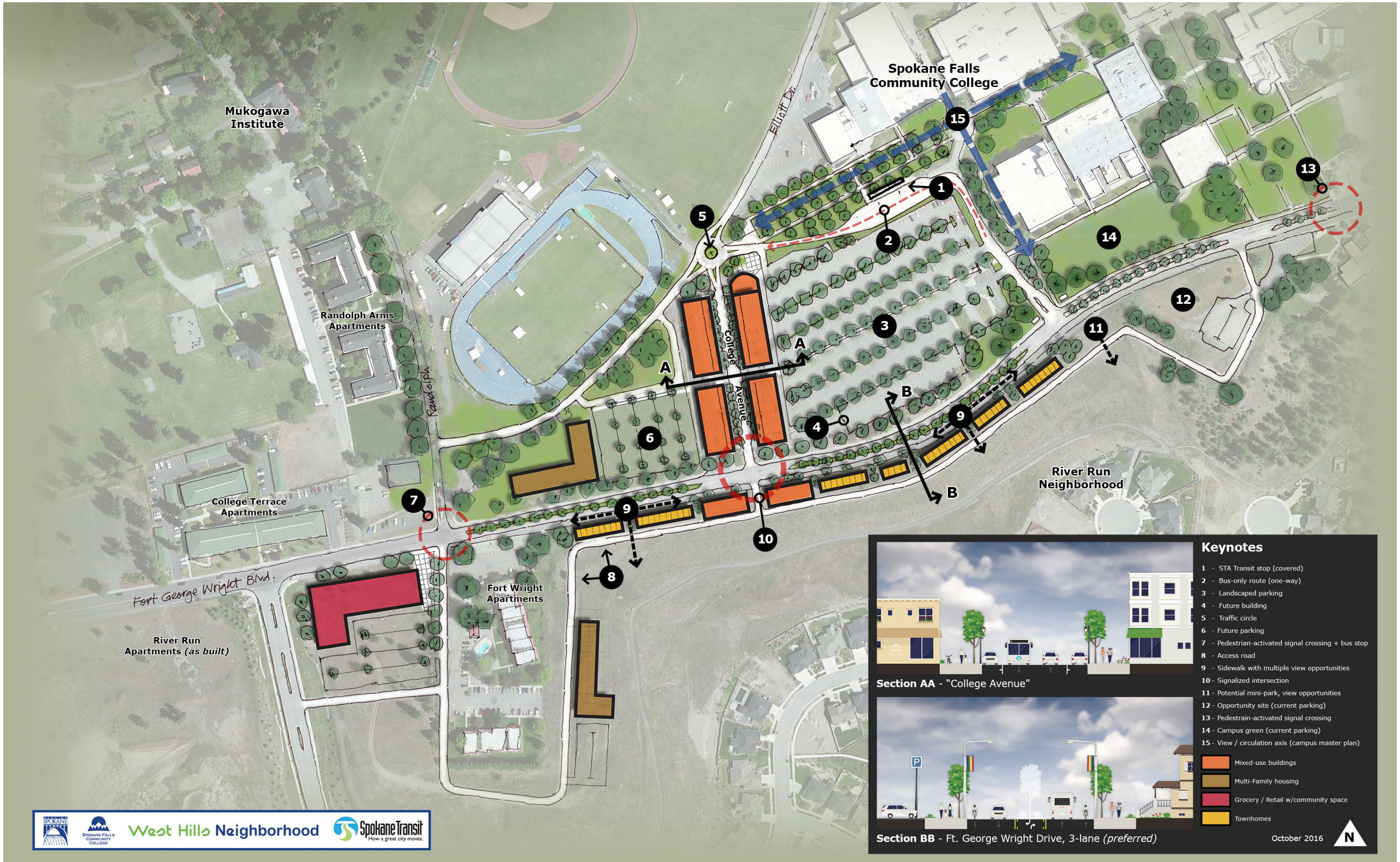


Figure 2.05 – *This plan diagram illustrates many of the recommendations for this station and corridor plan. (Image, Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

3 Implementation

Introduction

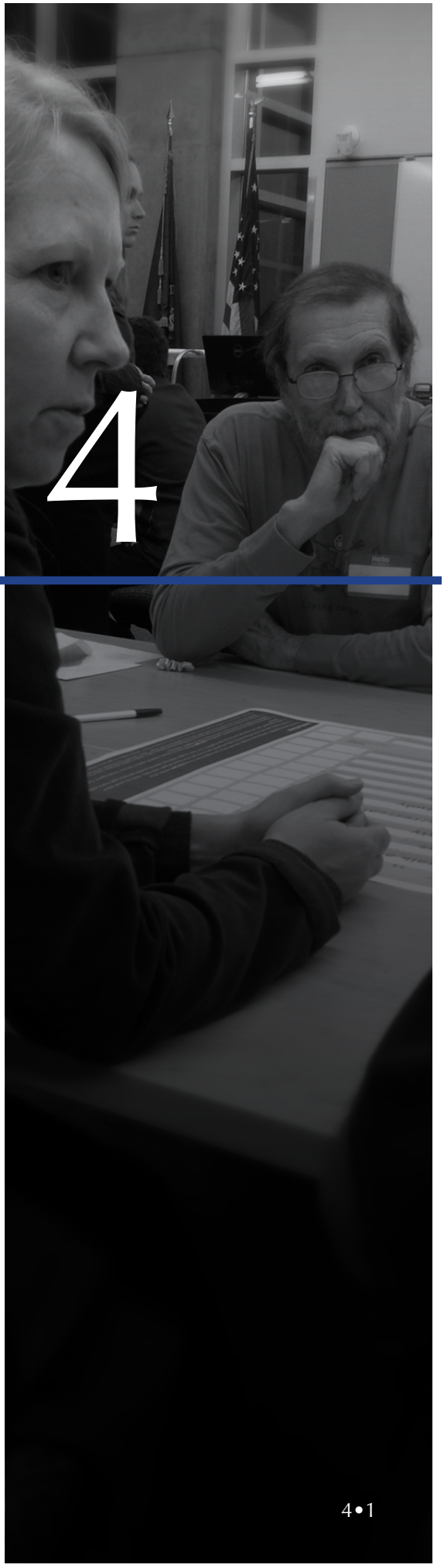
This chapter presents an implementation table developed to aid STA, the City and other critical partners in realizing the vision expressed in this plan. It was developed to provide direction on all critical elements - while at the same time remaining "broad brush" in terms of timing, responsibility and design to allow for the shifts and changes in opportunity that emerge over time.

This information is presented as Table 3.01 on following pages. Individual tasks are organized by topic, including "Land Use," "Streets," "Transit" and "Administrative." Listings are briefly described, and identifiy likely participants and a rough timeframe simply identified as "Short," "Medium" or "Ongoing." Notes are also provided to help clarify intended roles, scope of task and other important considerations. The table should be understood as an outline - for instance, implementation efforts will include processes overseen by the Plan Commission, though the participant list applies this work to the "City" column. Similarly, ongoing support and advocacy by the West Hills Neighborhood is assumed as coupled with many "City" or "Other" actions.

Table 3.01 – *Implementation*

Task	Description	Timing	STA	COS	SFCC	Other[1]	Notes
Land Use							
1. Development Design	Ensure development design in study area (River Run, along proposed "College Avenue" and along FGW corridor) conform to FGWSCP objectives	Ongoing	■	■	■	■	*City to work actively with RR and SFCC, promoting and shaping development to take advantage of FGW redesign*
Streets							
1a. FGW design	Conduct appropriate studies to guide transformation of FGW to preferred configuration, develop design, budget estimates	Short	■	■	■	■	*City to lead studies directing design; support from other partners as necessary*
1b. FGW funding	Seek funding for FGW reconfiguration, sidewalks, landscaping	Short	■	■	■	■	*City to lead, include integration into six-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP); support from other partners as necessary*
1c. FGW construction	Final design and construction of reconfigured FGW	Medium	■	■	■	■	*City to lead; support from other partners as necessary*
2a. Traffic signalization A	Design, funding and installation of traffic signal (as appropriate) at Elliot Drive and FGW near east edge of SFCC campus	Short		■	■	■	*City lead on design, funding and installation; support from other partners as necessary*
2b. Traffic signalization B	Design, funding and installation of traffic signal (as appropriate) at proposed "College Avenue" and FGW	Medium	■	■	■		*STA lead on funding; City lead on design and installation; support from other partners as necessary*
3a. Pedestrian signalization A	Design, funding and installation of pedestrian-activated signal at Randolph Road and FGW	Medium		■	■	■	*City lead on design, funding and installation; support from other partners as necessary*
3b. Pedestrian signalization B	Removal of existing traffic signalization; design, funding and installation of pedestrian-activated signal at Mitchell Drive and FGW	Medium	■	■	■	■	*City lead on design, funding and installation; support from other partners as necessary*
Transit							
1a. SFCC transit station design	Design of transit station, access drives and required signalization, conforming to FGWSCP	Short	■	■	■		*STA lead; support from SFCC, other partners as necessary*
1b. SFCC transit station funding	Seek funding for transit station, access drives and required signalization	Short	■		■		*STA lead; SFCC support including letters, testimony, grant support, potential property match*
1c. SFCC transit station construction	Construction of transit station, access drives and required signalization	Medium	■	■	■		*STA lead; support from SFCC, other partners as necessary*
2. Transit stops	Design, funding and installation of shelters at existing stops at Randolph Road and FGW	Medium	■			■	*STA lead; support from other partners as necessary*
Administrative							
1. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	Outline responsibilities, roles and initial actions among key implementing partners	Short	■	■	■	■	*Include groundwork on conceptual approaches to funding, development opportunities, project coordination*
2. Project coordination	Identify and support a project "champion," monitoring and leading coordination of efforts, overall implementation.	Ongoing					*Lead, participants TBD*
3a. Planning support	As may be necessary, facilitate modifications to Comprehensive Plan and / or zoning code to allow mixed-use center conforming to FGWSCP	Short	■	■	■	■	*City (Planning & Development) lead, support from other partners as necessary*
3b. Planning support	Incorporate concepts of FGWSCP into SFCC master plan	Medium			■		*At time of next update*

Abbreviations: *STA = Spokane Transit Authority; SFCC = Spokane Falls Community College (or Community Colleges of Spokane, as my apply); COS = City of Spokane; MFGWI = Mukogawa Fort George Wright Institute; RR - River Run PUD; CC = Catholic Charities; FGWSCP = Fort George Wright Station & Corridor Plan*
1 = Indicates that partners other than those named will be responsible for, or will participate in implementing the item. These may include RR, MFGWI, unidentified developers, or others as appropriate



4 Approach

Introduction

This station and corridor plan was developed using a planning process tailored to maximize diverse partnerships - contractual ones between STA, the City of Spokane and the West Hills Neighborhood, but also those with potential partners such as SFCC, local landowners, the Mukogawa Institute and others. Bringing together multiple players, each with varying levels of interest in transit station planning but all with keen interest in the future of the study area created a remarkable synergy, leading to the development of and support for recommendations that reach well beyond a simple transit station.

The process began by establishing a solid understanding of current conditions and trends, developing benchmark goals for the project, working through various alternatives, identifying a preferred direction, and finally creating a framework to execute specific actions to carry the plan forward. For purposes of this document, the process is organized into three sections:

1) Assessment;
2) Design; and
3) Reporting & Implementation.

The assessment phase focused on compiling relevant information regarding the neighborhood, especially plan-related conditions unique to the study area. This

included review of STA's plans, the River Run PUD, Spokane's Comprehensive Plan and Municipal Code, the SFCC master plan, plans for the former Sisters of the Holy Names property, and others. A review of land uses in the area and of the transportation system was another important part of this phase. Stakeholders were identified and interviewed to gain first-hand knowledge regarding the various challenges in the district, and to emphasize the opportunities that collaboration among all parties might bring.

The design phase involved extensive public outreach and engagement of participants to create plan designs and alternatives. This effort included a visioning / kick-off meeting followed by a "storefront studio" workshop series that showcased objectives then invited participants to help create, refine and ultimately choose among a set of design alternatives for the transit station and corridor.

The reporting and implementation phase involved presenting findings to a wide range of stakeholder groups and agency representatives - confirming the preferred scenario in terms of design, character and function. This phase helped consultants and agency partners affirm support and make necessary refinements to the plan in preparation for official adoption of the plan as well as helping agency partners work together to begin implementation.

The following pages detail this process.

Assessment

As identified in the scope of work, this component included an assessment of the entire study area to help gain insight into needs and opportunities. Three memoranda were prepared:

1) A land use review, covering area history, existing development patterns, City policy, transit conditions, landowner plans and related considerations. This document also worked to evaluate suitability for a mixed use "neighborhood center" as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan and by the West Hills Neighborhood;

2) A document describing findings from stakeholder interviews conducted to help inventory existing conditions and to begin to guide the goals for the plan; and

3) A memo covering existing transportation conditions in the study area and describing known plans and studies related to the transportation system.

The contents of these three documents have been expressed in related sections of this plan.

Stakeholder Interviews

Identified with input from STA, the City and the neighborhood, a total of 12 individuals representing SFCC, the West Hills Neighborhood, City Council, SNAP, River Run, developers for Catholic Charities and the Mukogawa Institute were interviewed. Interviews were generally held at the offices or premises of interviewees between January 6 and March 2, 2016.

Interviews were conducted informally, allowing respondents to express their thoughts on project issues most important to them. All interviewees were briefed on the scope of this corridor plan, including project sponsors and all pre-identified objectives. Interviewers worked to ensure discussions covered basic questions related to project needs, the possibility of a "neighborhood center" as identified in the Comprehensive Plan, existing and envisioned transit needs and traffic patterns.

Stakeholders generally recognized similar conditions. In regards to transportation, it was recognized that development within and near the study area is driving increased traffic along FGW and Government way; that traffic speeds along those two streets often exceed posted limits; that existing land uses have little connectivity - forcing users onto those streets; and that existing conditions warrant at least one additional traffic signal at the eastern intersection of FGW and Elliot Drive. Most agreed that changes needed to be made along FGW to make it more hospitable to pedestrians and cyclists. Landowners described plans or expressed a desire for significant additional housing in the study area, creating additional traffic loads and demand for transit and other services. Most agreed transit service is generally acceptable in terms of scheduling, but lacks amenities such as covered shelters, lighting, approach crossings and sidewalks. Most noted a strong need for local services typical of neighborhood centers, such as coffee shops, convenience stores, restaurants and personal care services - but also noted that topographical constraints and existing land use patterns limit the range of where such features might be placed within the study area.

Figure 4.01 – *Development of this plan included extensive outreach and opportunities for public involvement, including a multi-day "storefront studio" held in an area church. (Image: Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

Design

Kickoff Meeting

On the evening of January 12 2016 a kick-off meeting was held at SFCC in the Falls Gateway Building. This meeting was attended by approximately 30 people and saw City staff and consultants present the plan's background, scope, and schedule as well as initial findings regarding existing policies and area plans. The meeting included an exercise that asked attendees to consider ten planning topics related to the study area, and then working in small groups:

- Rate how well each topic seems to be addressed and / or performs today;
- Indicate how well they'd like to see those topics perform in the future;
- Compare each current and hoped-for future state to identify the "gaps" between conditions, providing numeric representations of how acute each topic might be, helping set goals for the plan; and
- Consider how they'd prioritize or "weight" their choices, assigning numbers representing a conceptual budget of time, energy, and money to each planning topic.

Each of the small groups then presented their findings to the audience, prompting discussion and helping establish consensus regarding plan objectives.

Exercise Results

Feature "gaps" - things participants noted as being most deficient or representing issues in the study area included:

- *Poor conditions for pedestrian and cyclists;*
- *Land use patterns that don't promote or facilitate social interaction;*
- *The lack of an overall sense of safety; and*
- *Poor availability of goods and services in the study area.*

Participants also identified gaps regarding the area's "district" feel, the relative inefficiency of traffic flow, and how disconnected each of the area's major features seem from one another.

Figure 4.02 – *The project kick-off meeting attracted a wide array of participants and agency representatives, each helping establish objectives for this plan. (Image: Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

Participants felt smaller gaps existed regarding:

- *The needs of bus riders;*
- *Access to natural beauty and recreation; and*
- *How well the area accommodates live / work / study lifestyles.*

Some groups identified other categories needing plan attention including the desire to improve access to the Centennial Trail and to improve wildlife crossings and habitat.

Regarding allocation of resources, participants recognized that many of the topics are interrelated - anticipating that investment in one area might likely promote positive transformation in another. Groups also noted that some topics, while perhaps critical, are or will likely to be addressed with little resource outlay, such as improvements driven by the private sector as guided by City policy. With this in mind, participants prioritized investments among the following areas:

- *The pedestrian and bicycling environment;*
- *Things to improve public safety; and*
- *Features to help establish and solidify a unique "district feel" for the area.*

Participants also expressed support for investing in the area's connectivity; addressing traffic flow; and improving the bus riding experience.

The groups thought fewer budget resources needed to be dedicated to:

- *Framing the area's natural beauty and recreational assets;*
- *Improving social interaction;*
- *Improving the live / work / study atmosphere in the area; and*
- *Provision of goods and services.*

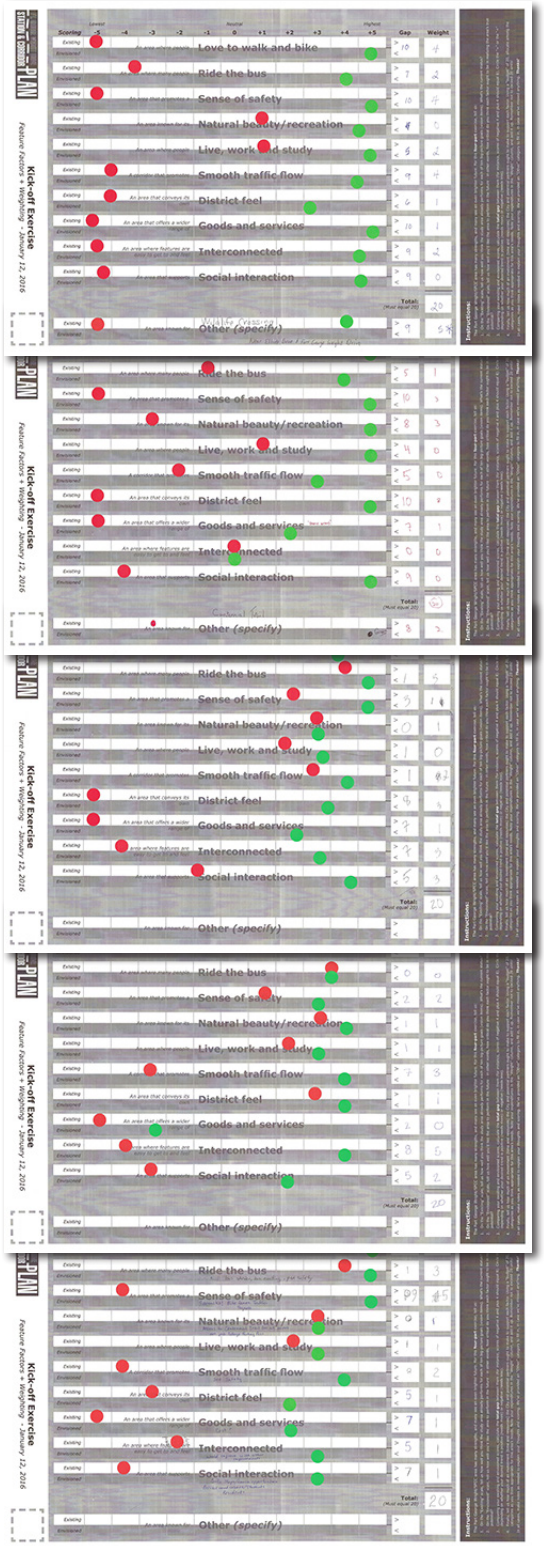


Figure 4.03 – *Worksheets from the kick-off meeting helped illustrate "gaps" between qualities seen today (red dots) versus how groups envisioned them in the future (green dots). (Image: Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

Storefront Studio

On March 8, 9 and 10, the consultant team held a set of day-long meetings and workshops open to the public. This series, called a "storefront studio" by organizers, was held in the Unitarian Universalist Church on FGW. Members of the design team, City staff and STA were present each day, giving residents the chance to drop in and learn about the

plan and its key objectives, complete informal questionnaires, and help shape the first draft of the station and corridor plan. Day one centered on open house style activities, with displays, question and answer sessions, and meetings with area representatives. Consultants also toured the site and began work conceptualizing ways plan objectives might be addressed. Day two included all activities from day one, plus exhibits of evolving strategies. A public workshop was held that evening, allowing attendees to review and refine first-generation concepts. Day three provided time for community members to drop by and review strategies and results, add comments or ask questions of the design team. A meeting of key participants in the preferred alternative also took place, helping all parties confirm support for the plan's concepts.

The following describes each of the three plan scenarios developed for the storefront studio:

Scenario One: "Transit In-Line"

This scenario would focus transit services and land use energies along FGW, enhancing existing stops on each side of the corridor. This configuration would support more traditional development patterns - supporting a mini "main street" with low-scale buildings fronting the FGW near Randolph Road. This scenario proposed narrowing FGW to three lanes with a center turn lane, likely beginning near Randolph Road and ending near SFCC's Lodge Building 9 or closer to the intersection of Elliot Drive and FGW.

Advantages of this concept were seen to include:

- *Little to no change to travel time via bus;*
- *Transit stops retained at existing activity nodes; and*
- *Lower investment costs.*

Disadvantages were noted to include:

- *No reduction in walk-time or proximity to SFCC or Mukogawa (MFWI) campuses;*
- *Few improvements to the character of the waiting environment along FGW; and*
- *Fewer opportunities to place stops near new development along FGW.*

Implementation of this scenario was shown to include:

- *Basic safety improvements including adding new signals;*
- *Enhancing transit facilities with bus pull outs, new shelters, signs etc.;*
- *Removing parking and adding green space to enhance the campus' "front door";*
- *Creation of a linear neighborhood center; and*
- *Calming of traffic within the center through street reconfiguration.*

Scenario Two: "Transit Place"

This scenario would pull busses off of FGW near the western edge of SFCC, providing a central drop-off / pick-up location on the SFCC campus and away from FGW travel lanes. This loop would be large enough to provide for development opportunities along a return leg perpendicular to FGW, creating a small "main street" environment for cafés, bookstores, and other types of commercial activities to serve students and neighborhood residents.

Advantages of this concept include:

- *Reduced walk time from the station to SFCC and MFWI campuses;*
- *Enhanced safety for transit riders (reducing the need for students to cross FGW);*
- *Creation of a new node of activity, benefitting SFCC and the West Hills Neighborhood; and*
- *Opportunities for transit signal priority, smoothing bus entry back into FGW traffic flow.*

Disadvantages were noted to include:

- *An (estimated) one to two-minute travel time delay for busses;*
- *Access to center activities would require many users to cross FGW from the south; and*
- *Costs of development, including the loop road, signalization and street reconfiguration.*

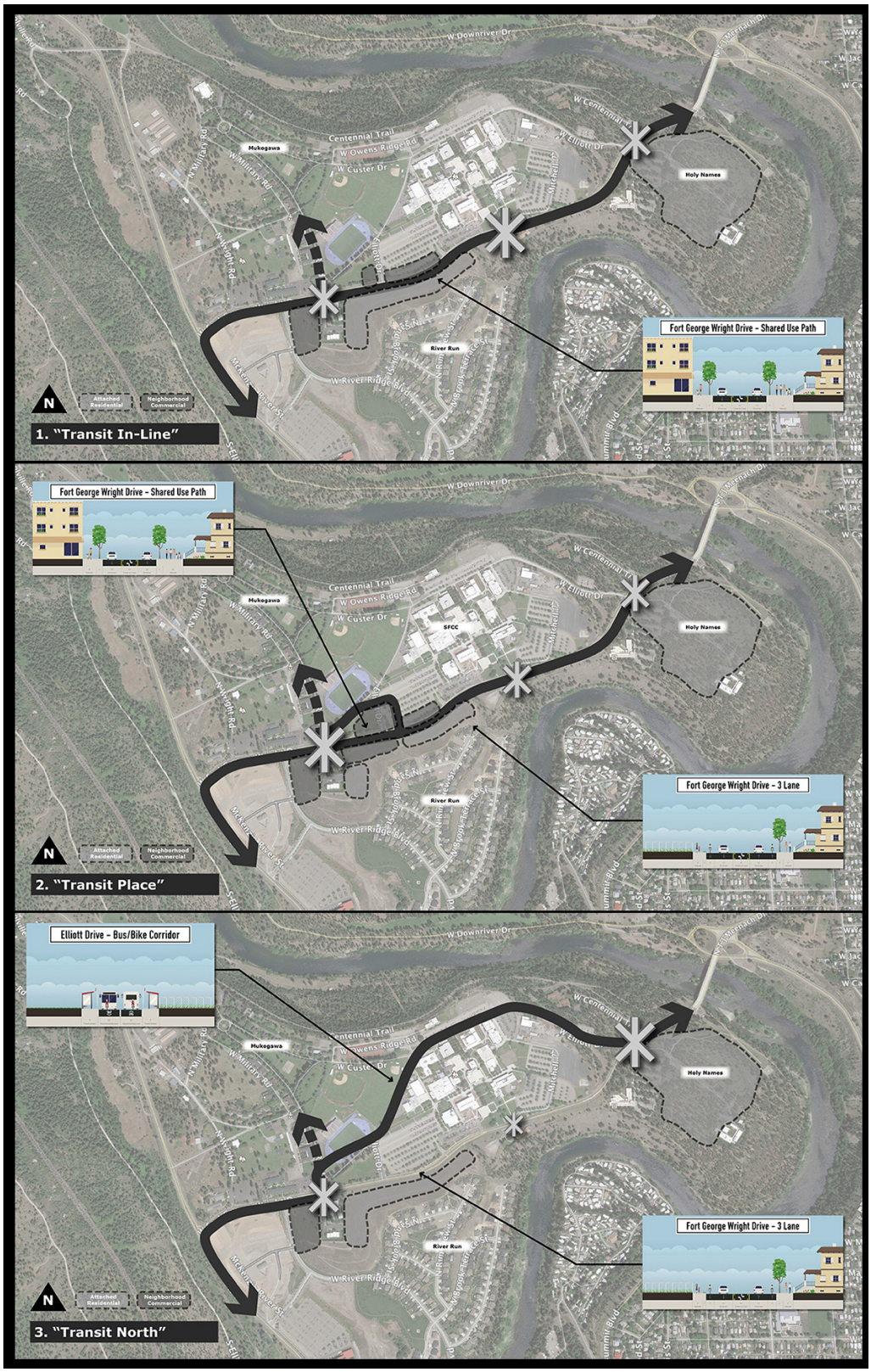


Figure 4.04 – *Three alternate schemes were proposed and reviewed by participants, each addressing plan objectives in different ways. (Image: Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

Figure 4.05 – *Three alternate schemes were proposed and reviewed by participants, each addressing plan objectives in different ways. (Image: Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

Implementation of this scenario was shown to include:

- *All steps from scenario one;*
- *Creation of a new off-street transit facility and loop road;*
- *Reconfiguration of affected portions of Elliot and Randolph Roads;*
- *Development of buildings supporting mixed use / neighborhood center activities; and*
- *Installation of a traffic signal at the new main street and FGW.*

Scenario Three: "Transit North"

In this scenario, transit would be routed to the north of the SFCC campus along Elliot Drive, pulling bus traffic off of FGW between Elliott and Randolph. This option would move transit riders away from the SFCC campus' front edge, activating the north side of campus with students, visitors, faculty, and staff who ride the bus. One motive for this scenario involved enhancing the SFCC campus' connection to the river and to the Centennial Trail, creating a much stronger relationship between SFCC and its natural setting / recreational opportunities.

This alternative presented an opportunity for a safer, quieter transit waiting environment, the potential to re-orient parking away from the north edge of campus to allow for better trail and river access, and removed conflicts between vehicles and buses along FGW in front of the SFCC campus. Disadvantages of this scenario included up to two to four minutes in added travel time and approximately 25 percent additional travel distance from current routing; reducing access to transit for any future development along the southern edge of FGW; and the potential need for additional resources due to the extended travel time.

This scenario's implementation steps, like the previous two, involved installing basic safety improvements through two new signals at Elliot Drive / FGW and Randolph Road / FGW intersections. Elliot Drive would be re-designed to be mainly transit, and a new transit facility would be created at the north edge of the SFCC campus, where a second "front door" to campus would also be created. A small neighborhood center at Randolph at FGW would be encouraged with housing on the south side of FGW east of Randolph.

Results

From comments and discussions regarding scenarios 1, 2 and 3 came a new, fourth scenario called “Main Street." This scenario was created by studio participants, landowners and agency staff, and guided by City staff and consultants. This concept, presented in Chapter 2, proposes pulling transit from FGW into the SFCC campus, creating a bus route serving a new off-street station located on the west side of campus. This concept includes retail / mixed-use development opportunities around the new station, new traffic and pedestrian signals at Elliot and Randolph, and central campus green space in place of existing parking. The scenario also involves reconfiguration of FGW to a three lane section (two through-lanes and a center turn lane) as well as providing a shared-use path on each side of FGW, pedestrian crossings at Randolph Road and Mitchell Drive, and two new signals.

Rollout Meeting

On May 17, a “Plan Recommendation Meeting” was held at the SFCC Student Union Building. This meeting presented the preferred concept developed in the Storefront Studio to community members, who were again invited to review and refine it. A presentation at the beginning of the meeting described the evolution of the various concepts, the resulting preferred scenario, and other features and revisions associated with it.

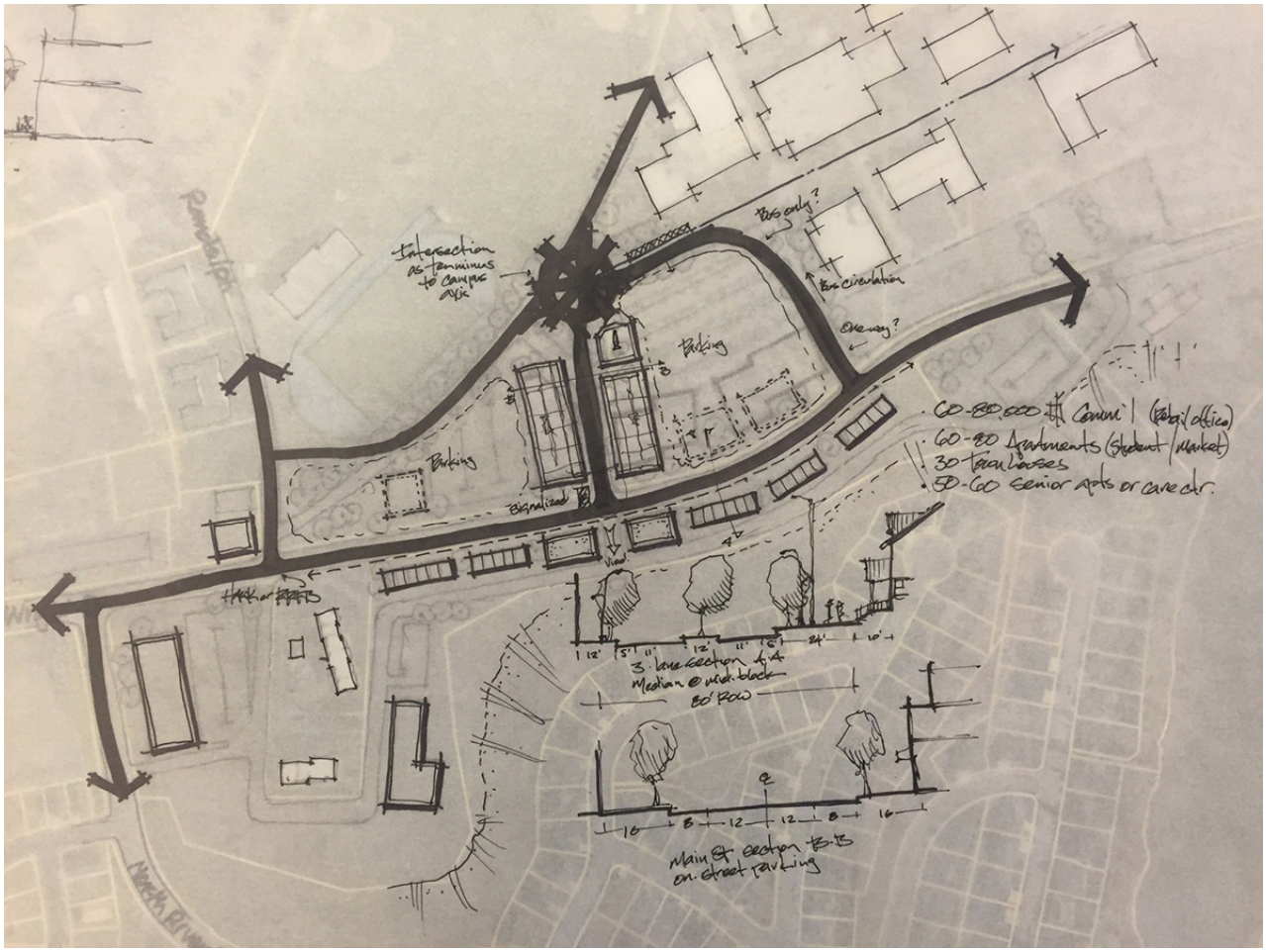


Figure 4.06 – *An early sketch of this plan's preferred alternative, developed at the conclusion of the storefront studio. (Image: Studio Cascade, Inc.)*

Results

Community members and stakeholders offered various concerns and ideas for improvement regarding the preferred scenario. Among these, two main topics emerged for the plan to address:

1) **Pedestrian safety** - Participants expressed a desire for protected crossings at many intersections in the study area, including at Elliot Drive (east) and River Ridge Boulevard, and safe pedestrian access from the SFCC "Lodge" building to the nearest STA transit stop; and

2) **Provision of services** - Participants welcomed new neighborhood-scale commercial development, especially restaurants and gas stations,. but wondered who would lead development.

Concerns were raised regarding the following:

- *Proper management of increased density;*
- *Concerns about traffic were expressed by a few, particularly regarding bus circulation at River Ridge Boulevard and Elliot Drive; and*
- *Potential cut-through traffic on River Ridge Boulevard due to slower traffic speeds on FGW.*

Concerns about parking were expressed by some participants while others felt that parking would resolve itself. Other mentions included:

- *A desire for a farmer's market;*
- *Improved trail connections in the study area;*
- *Maintaining access to views;*
- *The creation of public spaces; and*
- *Inclusion of pedestrian-scaled lighting.*

Reporting & Implementation

In addition to the public outreach and meeting schedule covered in prior sections, STA representatives, City Staff and members of the consulting team made presentations on process and findings to the following groups:

Plan Commission

December 9, 2015 – City planning staff made a presentation to the Plan Commission (PC) regarding citywide neighborhood planning and the West Hills Neighborhood decision to partner with STA on the FGW Station & Corridor Plan. An outline of the plan's scope and objectives was also presented. No input was provided by the PC at that time.

May 9, 2016 – STA and City planning staff made a presentation to the PC regarding the plan's outreach efforts and input to-date, including results captured in the draft plan diagram.

Neighborhood

March 23, 2016 – Following the multi-day storefront studio, STA and City planning staff met with representatives from the West Hills Neighborhood and the River Run PUD to present draft findings, gather input and answer related questions. A majority of those attending offered positive feedback and support for the plan's overall direction.

April 12, 2016 – STA and City planning staff presented the draft plan and plan diagram at the regular West Hills council meeting. Questions were raised regarding views to the south along FGW with completion of River Run PUD housing; regarding the road diet as related to traffic generated by area churches; regarding the need for diverse service offerings in the future build-out of the mixed-use center; on the need for ample lighting along the corridor; regarding a possible bicycle underpass at Elliot (east),

addressing the prospect of bicycles needing to stop mid-hill at the proposed signal location.

Community Colleges of Spokane

April 19, 2016 - STA, City, and consultant planning representatives presented the plan's recommendations to the Community Colleges of Spokane Board of Trustees. The presentation outlined the objectives, process and preferred strategies for the FGW corridor, identifying specifically the implications and opportunities for Spokane Falls Community College. The Board offered enthusiastic support for the plan's envisioned outcomes, including the gradual transformation of the area into the type of district envisioned in the plan.

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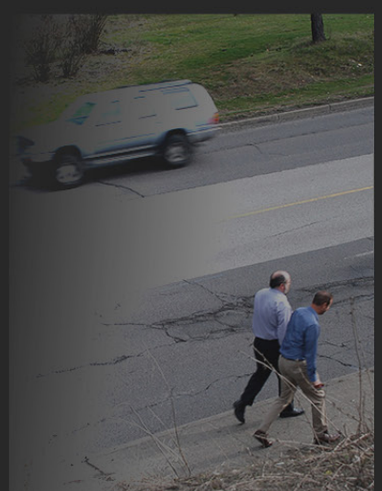
Plan development and leadership partners:

City of Spokane

Spokane Falls Community College

West Hills Neighborhood

Spokane Transit
How a great city moves.



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