

City of Spokane Neighborhood Planning Overview

Update January 2020

In 2007, the City Council allocated \$550,000 for another opportunity to initiate neighborhood planning. The funds were divided 26 ways with each neighborhood receiving approximately \$21,150. Neighborhood planning provides an opportunity for citizens to take a proactive role in the planning process and shape the neighborhoods where they live, work, own property, or own or manage a business. Neighborhood residents have used this opportunity to address local issues and concerns that affect them, their families, and their neighbors.

Benefits of neighborhood planning include:

- Sense of Community
- Sense of Identity
- Sense of Security
- Enhanced Link to the Comprehensive Plan
- More Responsive to Local Problems
- Increase Commitment to Neighborhood
- Building Neighborhood Leadership
- Provide Equitable Distribution of Public Goods

The process is a partnership with the City. Staff provides assistance to neighborhood and consultant process moves forward; assistance with outreach and engagement; project communication; and internal, plan Commission and City Council review.

Plan Outcomes

1. Neighborhood Action Plan or Vision Plan – plan that provides community vision of neighborhood or part of neighborhood
2. Project Plan – specific type of plan focusing on one topic, such as connectivity, parks, capital facilities, etc.
3. Report or Study – engineering or design work for project
 - a. Construction is not permitted with these funds

Community Engagement

The Comprehensive Plan Chapter 11 Neighborhoods (Section N 8)¹ calls for neighborhood planning to be representative, collaborative, and all-inclusive through a process that ensures a sense of identity and belonging, maintains the integrity of neighborhoods, implements the comprehensive plan, and empowers neighborhoods in their decision-making.

The goal of neighborhood planning is for diverse interests to come together and develop a shared vision for their neighborhood and to:

- Represent the views of all the stakeholders that make up a neighborhood
- Identify neighborhood strengths and assets
- Identify neighborhood needs and concerns
- Establish goals for improving the neighborhood
- Recommend specific recommendations to reach those goals.

¹ <https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/shaping Spokane/comprehensive-plan/chapter-11-neighborhoods.pdf>

The City, neighborhood councils, and consultant must work together to ensure the process done through cooperation and contributions of all interested parties, including institutions, organizations, and individuals of all ages, whether resident, property owner, business owner, or employee. Sufficient resources will be used in the process to allow accessible, full and fair participation by citizens, making special efforts to accommodate participation by everyone.

Stakeholder Team

Your neighborhood must form a stakeholder team to represent the neighborhood in the planning process. The process should provide an opportunity for all citizens to express views, concerns, values, and priorities.

Neighborhood representation must be as broad and diverse as possible. While there may be interested and active people in a neighborhood council, the representation should go beyond this group. Neighborhood demographics should be considered and reflected in the team's composition. Broad representation is not determined solely on numbers; the primary goal is to be inclusive. Several factors, taken together, define inclusiveness: numbers, diversity across incomes, occupations, location, interests, homeowner/renter, culture, race and ethnicity. Optimally, team membership should be limited to 15-20 people. Several factors, taken together, define inclusiveness: numbers, diversity across incomes, occupations, location, interests, race and ethnicity.

The primary goal is to be inclusive and representative, including:

- Residents – Owners and Tenants
- Business Owners and Organizations
- Employees of Local Businesses
- Schools and Students
- Major Institutions
- Land Owners
- Developers
- Community Organizations
- Religious Institutions
- Financial Institutions
- Government Representatives – Transit, City, County, Regional
- Race, ethnicity, gender, age, income, culture

Stakeholder Manager

To help facilitate community engagement, a stakeholder manager should be appointed on behalf of the neighborhood council. Duties for the stakeholder manager include team chair, liaison to City staff, and planning process coordination.

Memorandum of Understanding

The neighborhood council must vote on the use of neighborhood planning funds and provide minutes of the vote to Neighborhood and Planning Services. Once the neighborhood council has demonstrated its readiness to plan and has developed a stakeholder team, the City and the neighborhood council will sign a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines the agreement to plan and abide by the process.

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More information about Neighborhood Planning: <https://my.spokanecity.org/business/planning/neighborhood/>