

The East Central Neighborhood Plan



The East Central Neighborhood Partnership Center
A HUD/ COPC Grant

Urban and Regional Planning
Eastern Washington University

2004-2005
Final Draft

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Stakeholder Mission Statement:

The mission of the Stakeholder Team is to create a visionary neighborhood plan that represents the needs and desires that evolve from the East Central neighborhood citizenry, businesses, and other institutions through a series of open community forums for the betterment of the neighborhood and its residents while also addressing city and regional goals.

Stakeholders

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Recorder: Mary Anne Stuckart
Project Director: Dr. Dick Winchell
Planner: John Fisher

Members:
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Stephen Warner Sue LaRue
Toni Butler Benjamin Ross

City of Spokane Neighborhood Planning

Suzanne Croft

Neighborhood Council

Chair: Jerry Numbers
Vice-Chair: Mel Silva
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Treasurer: Andy Tom
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**East Central Neighborhood Partner-
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Planning Commission

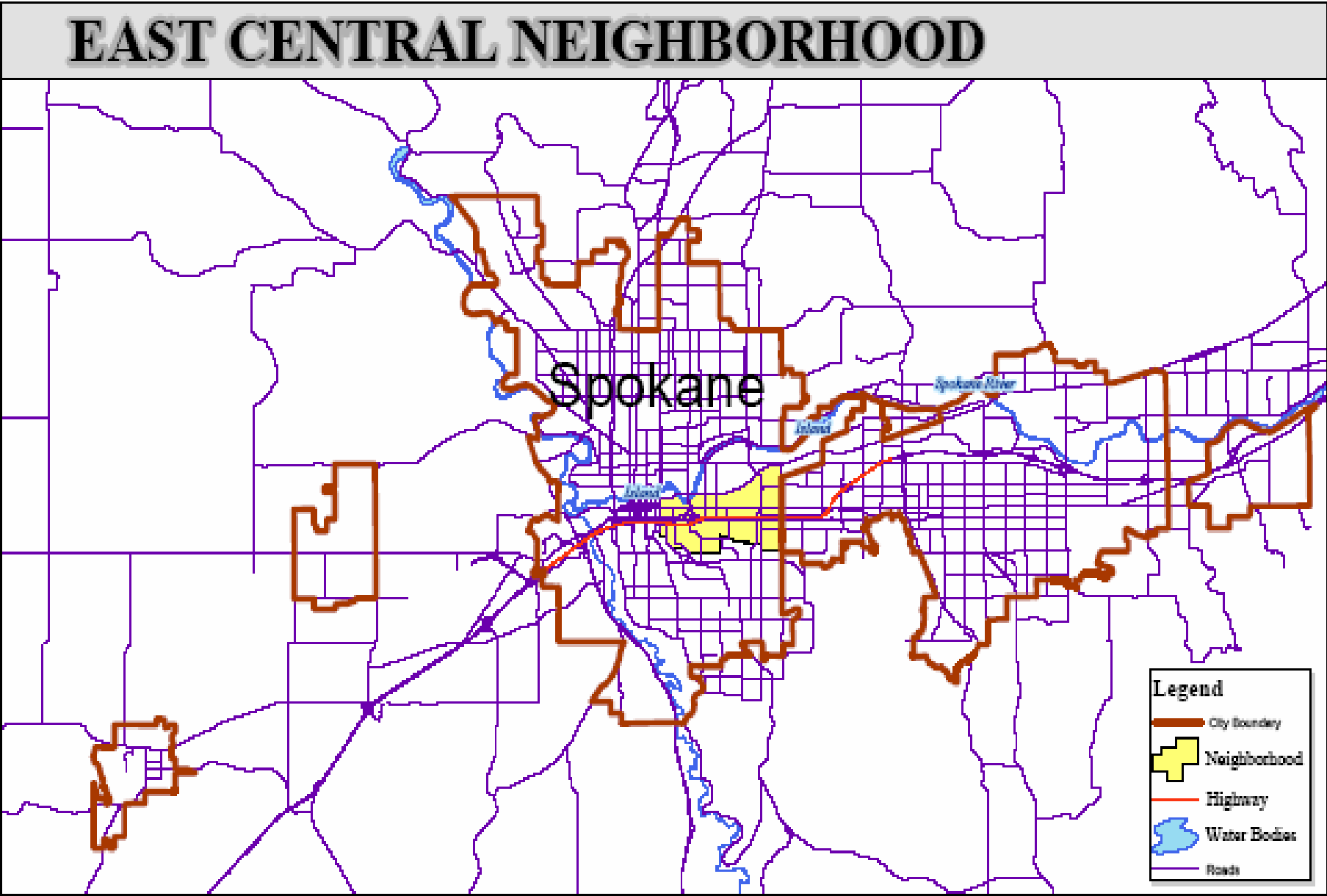
Anne Marie Axworthy, Member
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Joe Shogan
Mary Verner

Mayor

Jim West



Neighborhood Planning is recognized as a critical feature of metropolitan planning and community development. The past three decades have demonstrated the value of neighborhood planning as a focus for community and economic development. Recent HUD reports have found that economic revitalization and the well-being of businesses in low to moderate income neighborhoods is a key to stability and growth, while a focus at the neighborhood scale enables planning to be a more meaningful tool to support the desires, needs, wishes and interests of specific areas.

This Neighborhood Plan was developed by the East Central Neighborhood Stakeholder Team, with a HUD COPC grant to the neighborhood through the Community Colleges of Spokane and Eastern Washington University. The East Central Neighborhood Council/Steering Committee, along with other neighborhood organizations, requested the Community Colleges of Spokane and Eastern Washington University to apply for HUD COPC funding to develop the neighborhood plan. Following City of Spokane Neighborhood Planning and Centers and Corridors Planning Guidelines the Neighborhood Stakeholder Group was formed to guide the plan development. There have been extensive meetings of this group, regular reports to the East Central Neighborhood Council/Steering Committee, and a number

of major public meetings and forums to solicit input on the plan. This draft plan has been prepared by the EWU planning programs under the direction of Dr. Dick Winchell, and MURP student John Fisher, who drafted most of the report and coordinated all Stakeholder meetings and activities. Numerous faculty, staff, and students from EWU, CCS, and Washington State University contributed to this effort.

The City of Spokane provided extensive assistance and support in all aspects of this plan development, despite budget cuts. The City's Neighborhood Planning staff supported the plan development over several years, and Susanne Croft was assigned to support development of the neighborhood plan and centers and corridors plans, working closely with the Stakeholder Group at all of their meetings. Other city staff who supported this effort included Leroy Eadie, Steve Franks, Melissa Wittstruck, Joanne Wright, Louis Mueller, among others. Mr. Tom Reese of the City's Economic Development Office, along with Ms. Teresa Brum, City Historic Preservation, also contributed to the development of materials in this report.

This plan is in fact a plan developed, reviewed, discussed and supported by the Neighborhood Stakeholder Group, formed to represent all areas and interests within

the neighborhood. The Stakeholder Group has reviewed this document as a draft, and approved the plan by consensus. The plan will be submitted to the Neighborhood Council/Steering Committee for their review and approval.

The Stakeholder Group will then present the plan to the Planning Commission and the City Council to be approved and integrated into the City's Comprehensive Plan. Other critical City committees and commissions, including the Parks Commission, the Landmarks Commission, and the Transportation Planning Committee will receive presentations as part of its implementation. This plan represents the efforts of more than thirty Stakeholder residents, working over the past three years with the Community College of Spokane, Eastern Washington University, and Washington State University faculty, students and staff, along with over 300 citizens at public meetings, forums, and planning sessions. We are proud to present this plan as a guide for neighborhood community, economic and social revitalization over the next twenty years. The projects identified, selected, prioritized, and scheduled for implementation under this plan represent the interests and wishes of the Stakeholder Committee and the residents, business owners and operators, and concerned citizens of the East Central Neighborhood.

Dates of Citizen Involvement and Public Input for Each Neighborhood Plan Element

Elements	1/29/04	1/31/04	2/10/04	2/24/04	3/9/04	3/25/04	3/26/04	4/13/04	4/29/04	5/11/04	5/27/04	6/8/04	6/24/04	7/13/04	7/17/04	7/29/04	8/7/04	8/31/04	9/14/04	9/28/04	10/12/04	10/26/04	12/14/04
Environment																				X	X		X
Transportaiton			X	X				X	X		X	X									X		X
Walkable Streets			X					X	X			X	X								X		X
Capital Facilities/ Parks			X							X						X					X	X	X
Urban Design/ Historic Preservation					X																X		X
Economic Development			X					X	X	X		X				X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Housing			X	X										X							X		X
Land Use				X															X		X		X
Human Servics		X					X							X							X		X
Stakeholder Business	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X		X
Public Input				X											X		X					X	

This East Central Neighborhood Plan included 18 stakeholder meetings, regular presentations to the neighborhood council, and four neighborhood meetings for public involvement. These processes and the minutes from all stakeholder meetings are posted on the website:
<http://faculty.spokanefalls.edu/eascentralpc>

City kick-off and public Involvement in the Neighborhood plan

Perry Street Faire and Unity in the Community: Booths set up to solicit Public opinion and Comment on the plan.

All neighborhood public meeting for review

Approval of plan with final changes by

East Central Neighborhood Plan

Community Participation

To identify the issues and concerns of the neighborhood the Stakeholder Team wanted to involve as many residents as possible. The Stakeholder Team was created to represent the residents of the neighborhood and this team was open to all who wanted to join. All the meetings were advertised and the Stakeholders were encouraged to invite as many people as possible to the meetings. The Stakeholders had an initial public meeting on February 24 and larger public input opportunities at the South Perry Street Faire on July 18 and Unity in the Community on August 7. Final public involvement was held on October 26 for review of the plan and prioritization of actions/ alternatives. The drafts of the neighborhood plan were available for comment at public meetings throughout the fall of 2004. A matrix of our



Residents Sign in at the Kick-Off Meeting

citizen involvement is shown on the opposite page and summaries or all minutes are at:

<http://faculty.spokanefalls.edu/eastcentralpc>

The East Central Neighborhood planning process used a community development model. The three components of community development are the built environment, individuals within the neighborhood, and community, which includes social and economic interaction and exchange. Neighborhood planning occurs at the interface of these topics (See Figure 1).

The seven step planning process was also used in the creation of the neighborhood plan. This process insures decisions are based on the analysis of facts. The planning process involves seven steps:

1. Identify the problem
2. Set preliminary goals
3. Inventory data and conditions
4. Analyze data and conditions
5. Identify alternatives
6. Select alternatives or a combination of alternatives
7. Evaluate the implementation of alternatives

The Stakeholder Team went through one element at a time and allowed opportunity to discuss the issues and develop alternatives to the problems. This technique is part of the strategic planning process which is made up of three components; decision making, management, and team building. The stakeholder Team used a SWOT Analysis, which is a detailed process that is used by the residents to describe the community. Residents were asked to list five strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the neighborhood. This provided an opportunity for residents to discuss issues and focus on the positive aspects of the neighborhood as well as ways to improve the negative.

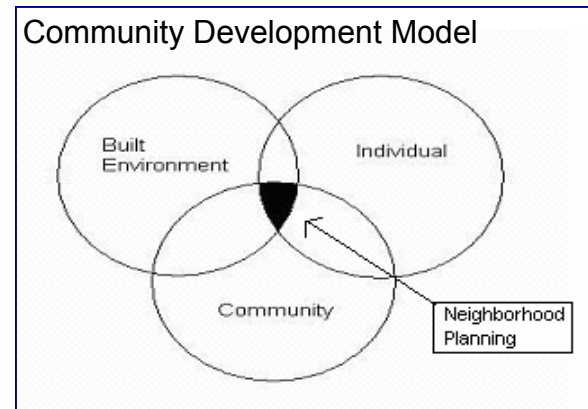


Figure 1

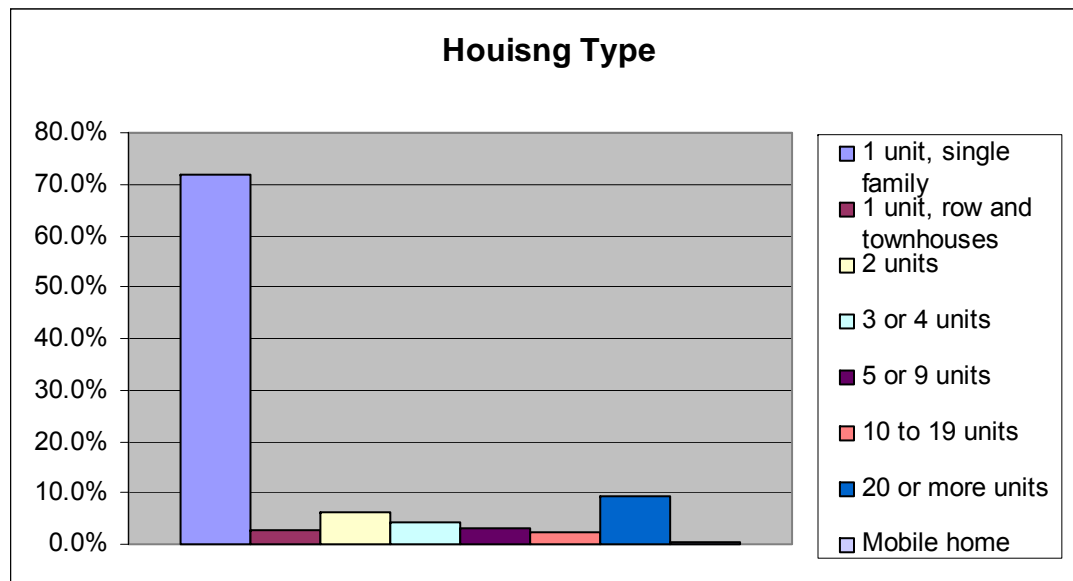
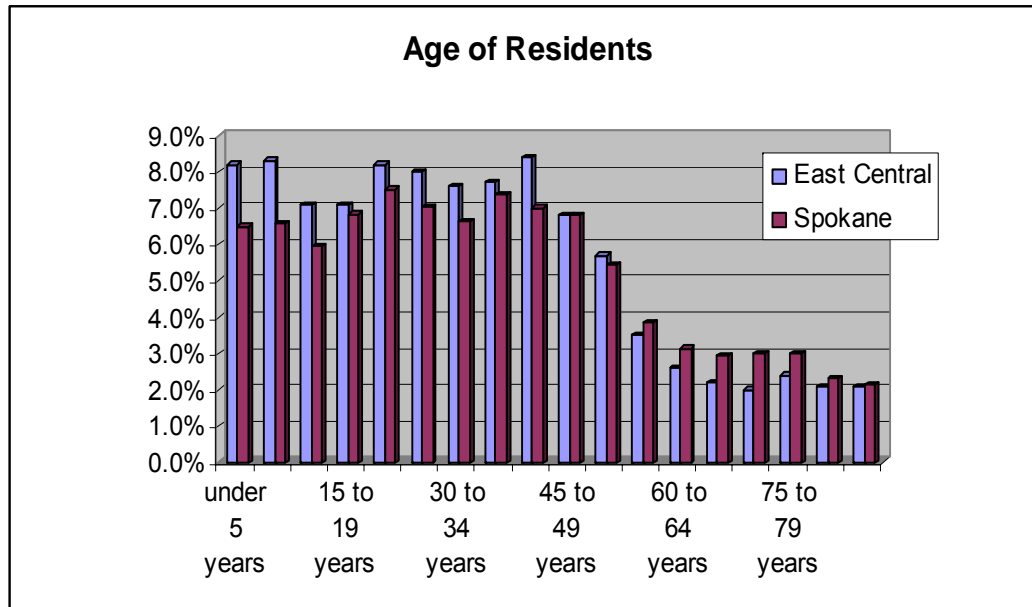
East Central Neighborhood Plan

Neighborhood Demographics

Population

There were 11,817 people living in the East Central neighborhood area during the 2000 Census. In East Central 79.4% of the population was white with the next largest race represented being Black or African-American with 6.0% of the population. East Central was more diverse than Spokane, which had 90.9% of residents white.

According to the 2000 Census East Central residents had a younger population than Spokane, with greater numbers in all areas below 45. The largest age group in the East Central neighborhood was between the ages of 40 to 44 while the largest age group for Spokane was between the ages of 20 to 24, but East Central had a younger population than that of Spokane.



Housing

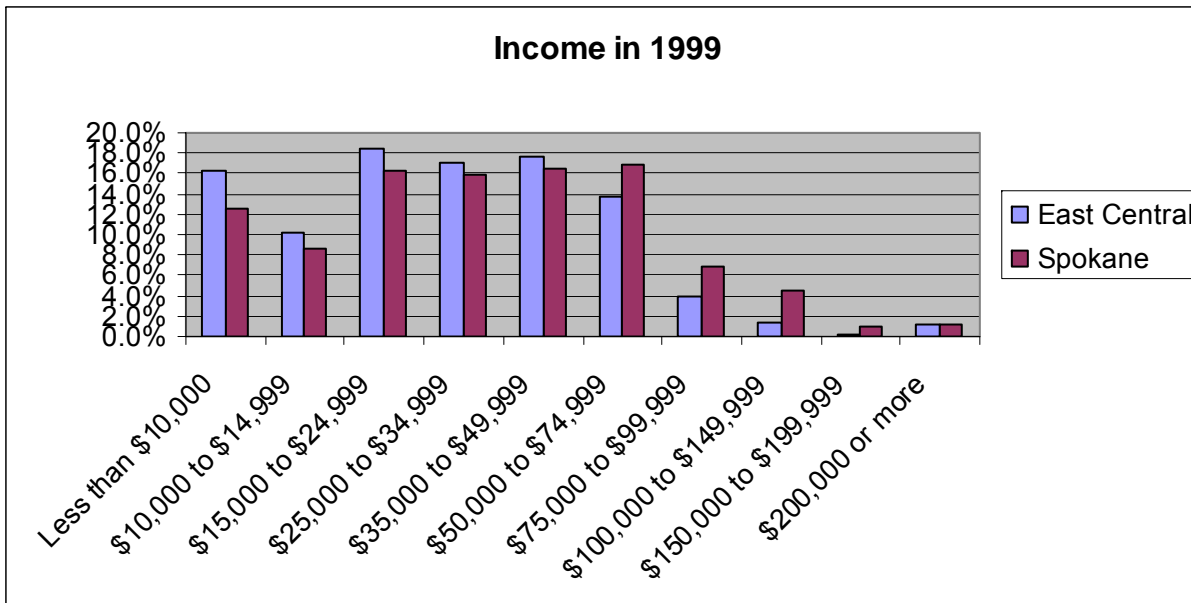
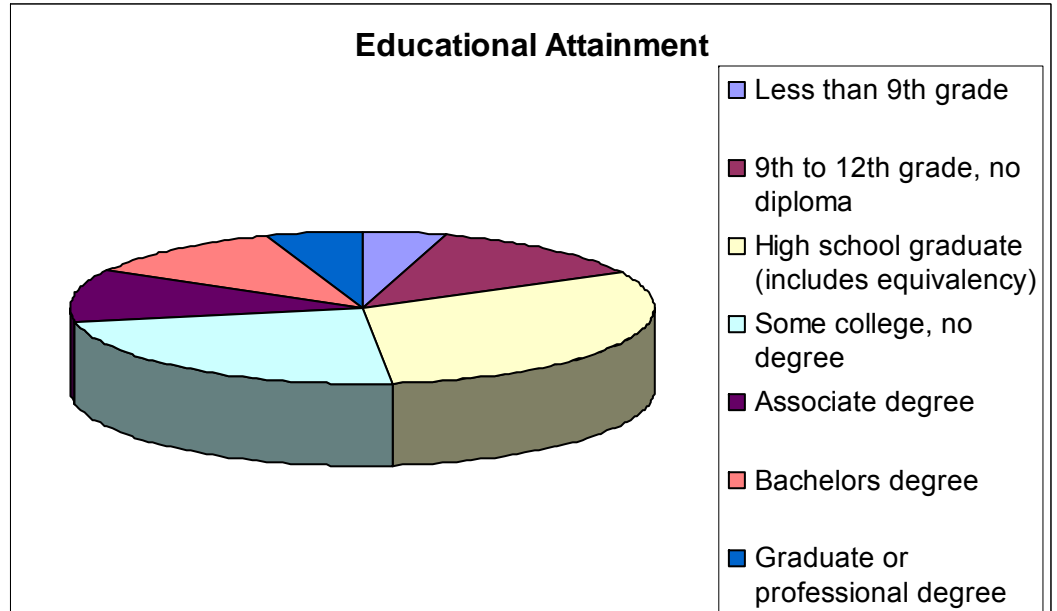
According to the 2000 Census, East Central had 4,910 housing units with a majority of them (71.9%) being single family, one-unit detached homes. Spokane had 11.5% of its housing units located in buildings with 20 or more units compared to 9.3% for East Central. The housing stock for the neighborhood was predominately single family structures. According to the 2000 census, the majority of the homes in the neighborhood (49.8%) were built before 1939 compared to 28.7% in Spokane indicating a strong historic sense of place. Only 8.0% of the housing stock was built after 1990.

East Central Neighborhood Plan

Neighborhood Demographics

Education

Of the residents in East Central that were 25 and over, 82.4% had a high school education or higher. This was lower than Spokane's rate of 88.4%. However, 11.1% of East Central residents had an Associates degree compared to Spokane which had 9.6%. In East Central, 12.9% had not attained a high school diploma compared to 8.6% of residents living in Spokane. In East Central, 16.9% of residents 25 and over had received a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to Spokane, which had 25.9% of residents with a Bachelor's degree or higher.



Income

In East Central there were 720 or 16.3% of households living on less than \$10,000 dollars a year compared to 12.5% of households in Spokane. Most households made between \$15,000 and \$74,999 with the majority making between \$35,000 and \$49,999. The median income for households in the neighborhood was \$28,580 compared to \$32,273 for Spokane. The mean income of those retired in the neighborhood was \$14,531 compared to \$15,238 in Spokane.

East Central Neighborhood Plan

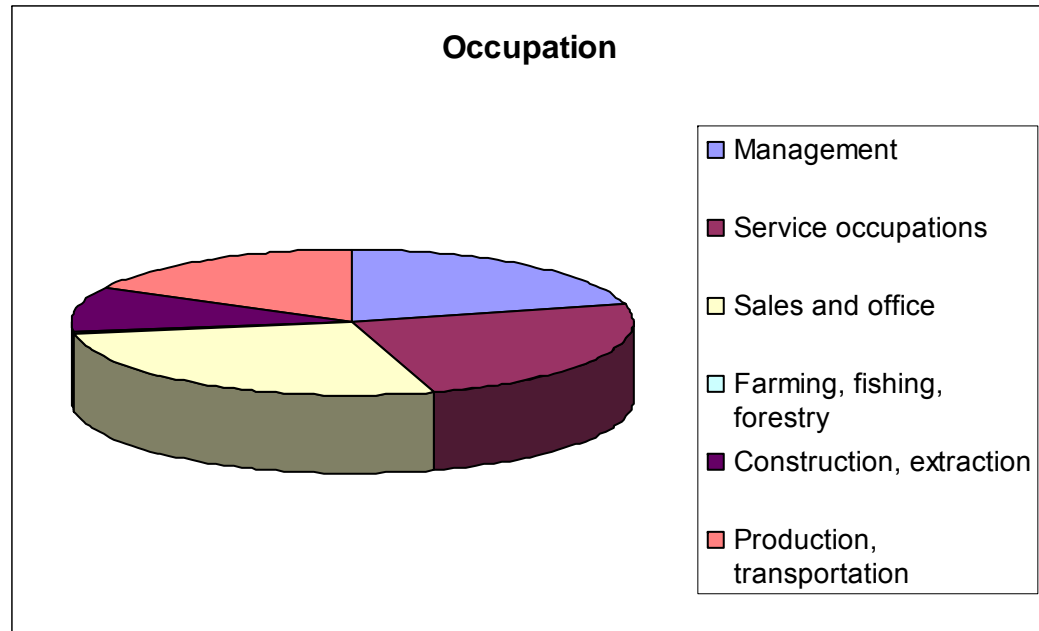
Neighborhood Businesses

Employment

According to the 2000 census 64.7% of those aged 16 and older were in the labor force and 640 or 7.3% were unemployed compared to 5.6% in Spokane. There were 4,425 Females aged 16 years and over living in East Central and 61.8% were in the labor force compared to 58.4% of females in Spokane.

Occupations

The majority of occupations in Spokane were in the management, professional and related occupations field. The largest occupation represented in East Central was sales and office occupations. Service occupations accounted for 23.9% of East Central residents jobs in the neighborhood compared to 18.4% in Spokane.



Distribution of East Central Industries
East Central Neighborhood 1999-2003

Rank	Industry	# of Employees		% Change	
		1999	2003	East Central	Spokane
1	Whse Trade, durable	1706	1556	-9%	-3%
2	Health Services	1157	929	-20%	12%
3	Business Services	1043	631	-40%	30%
4	Whse Trade, non durable	901	628	-30%	-9%
5	Misc Retail	643	538	-16%	8%
6	Motor Freight & Trans.	582	520	-11%	-2%
7	Insurance	499	498	0%	-70%
8	Eating & Drinking Estb.	427	436	2%	6%
Totals		6958	5736		

East Central Industries

There were 1,604 businesses in the East Central Neighborhood in 2003, which employed 5,736 workers according to city business license data. The largest employers in the East Central Neighborhood were in wholesale trade (durable and non-durable goods), reflecting the proximity to the freeways, railroads, and the downtown; followed by health services, business services, and miscellaneous retail trade. A major change from 1999 to 2003 was the decline in employment in business services within the neighborhood (-40%), a category which increased 30% for the entire city.

Overview

The following is a compilation and analysis of the data received from 139 businesses in the East central neighborhood. The data was solicited via a direct mail questionnaire mailed to approximately 1,400 neighborhood businesses and direct survey of targeted business districts within the neighborhood which produced a total of 139 surveys, a 9.3% response rate.

East Central businesses are generally small as measured by number of employees. Fifty-five percent of the businesses surveyed have less than six employees. Of the businesses that responded, most indicated that they want to expand and offer new products. A few (10%) say they plan to move. The fact that many indicate location as an incentive for moving to the neighborhood is a good sign.

Business age

East Central businesses were asked how long they had operated from their existing location. 51 (36.7%) of the surveyed businesses have been at their location between one and five years, and 19 (13.7%) were in the neighborhood over 25 years.

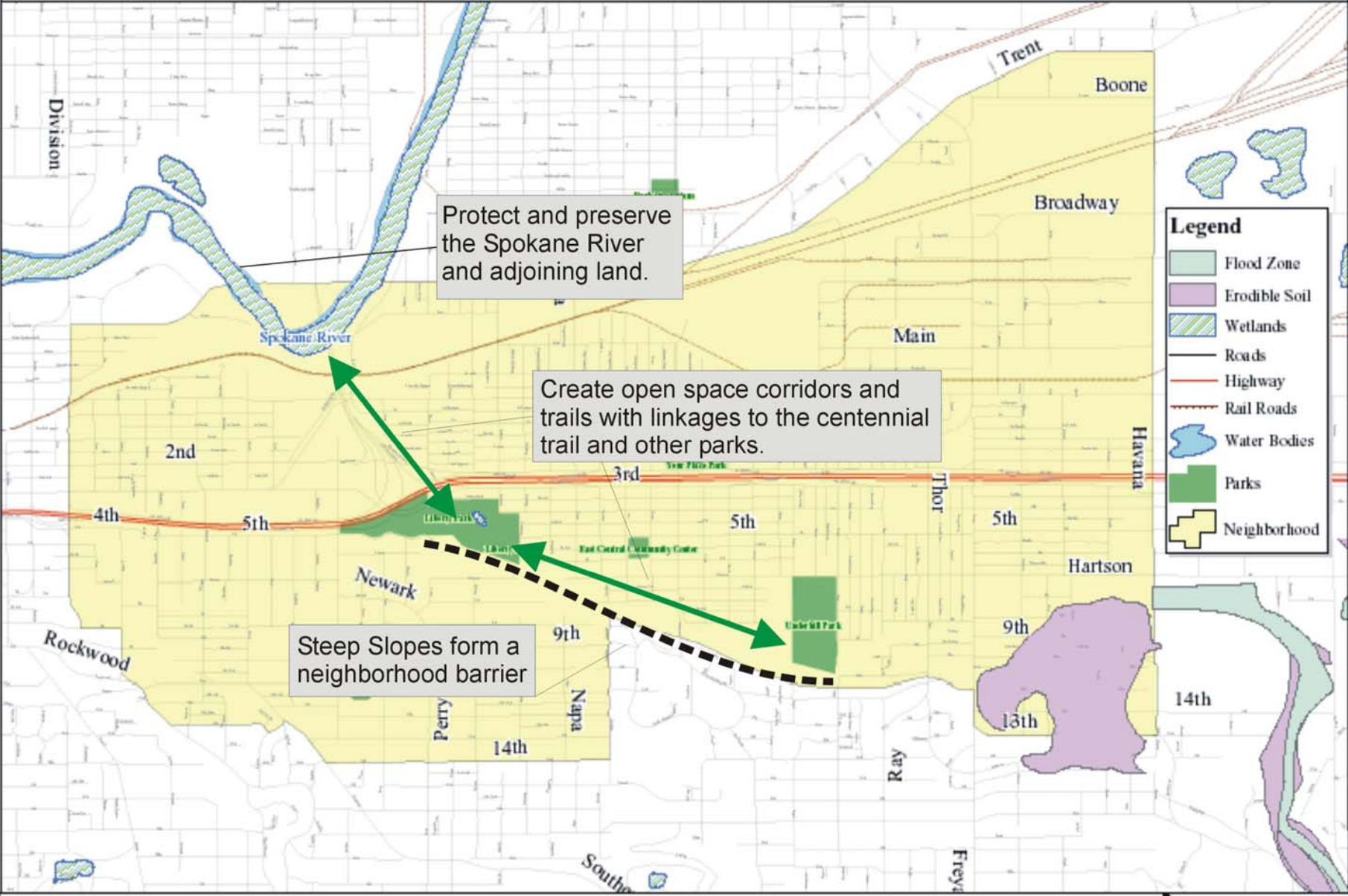
Employment Data

It is surprising that 81 East Central businesses (59%) reported they do not have employees from the neighborhood, while seven (5%) said that they hire entirely from the neighborhood. Additionally, 27 indicated that they hire less than 50% from the neighborhood. This indicates a strong potential to improve hiring of neighborhood residents if training programs for residents and awareness of residents searching for jobs were available to businesses.

Business Needs

One of the most important factors we were trying to identify with the business survey was training and business assistance needs. The survey revealed that the most prevalent training need is teamwork skills (32%), with communications skills a second (16%). Marketing topped the business assistance needs followed by a variety of planning needs.

EAST CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD



East Central Neighborhood Community Outreach Partnership Center Program (COPC)
Urban and Regional Planning Programs, Eastern Washington University, Winter, 2004





Environment

The environmental element of the East Central Neighborhood Plan is prepared as part of the implementation for the City's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2002, which includes frameworks for growth management and sustainable development. The East Central Neighborhood has embraced the concepts of smart growth and sustainable development within this plan.

This plan will utilize the Ahwahnee Principles established for sustainable communities in the City's Comprehensive Plan (See Implementation). By drawing upon the best from the past and present, we can first infill existing communities, and plan new communities that will more successfully serve the needs of those who live and work within them.

Sustainability has become recognized as an issue which internationally must be resolved through local action. As a result, the importance of local government and their bureaucracies to review, revise, and set policies across all aspects of community is essential to effective community building. In the East Central Neighborhood, despite urban densities, extensive industrial development, a major freeway including a proposed expansion, which are extremely detrimental to

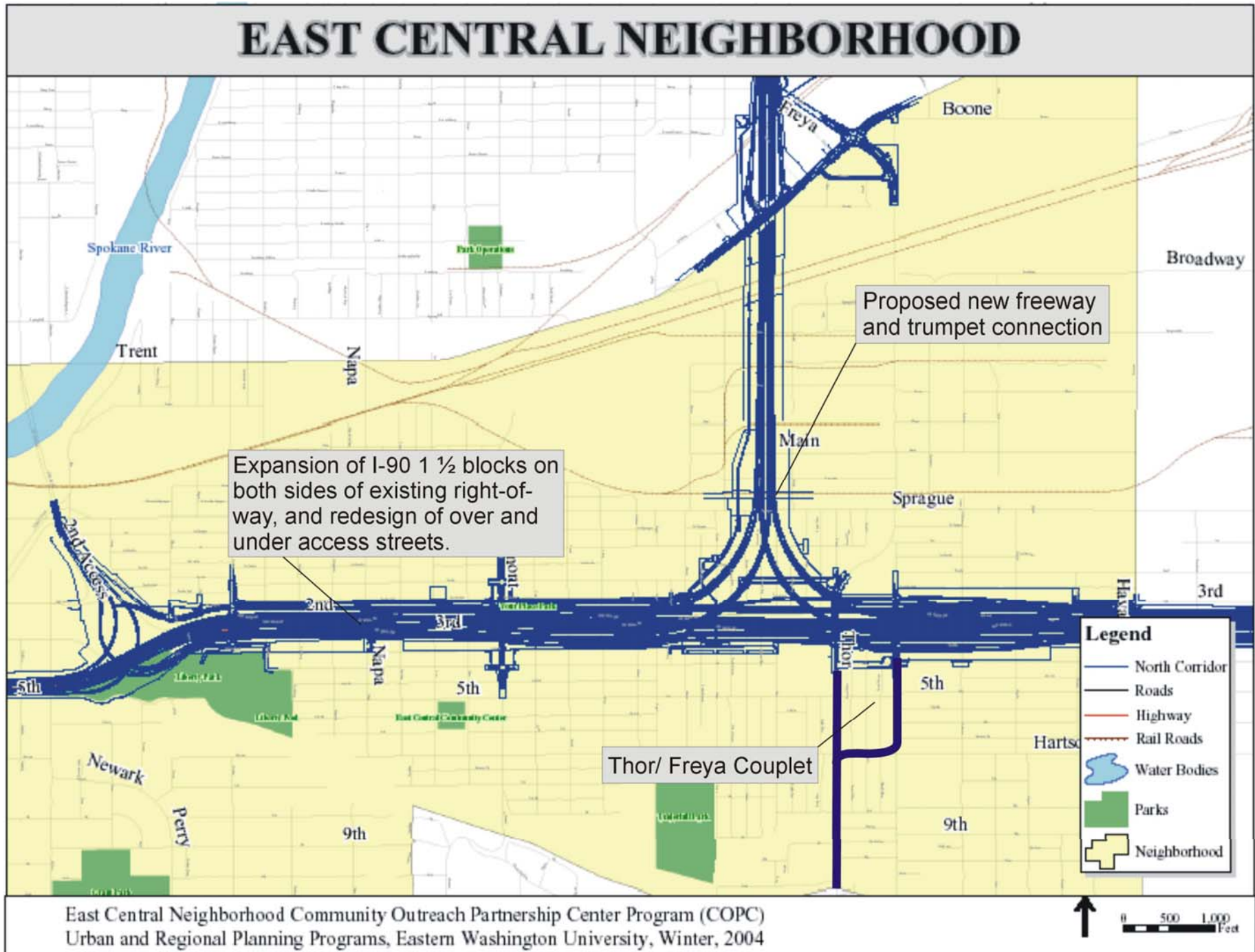
a sustainable community, there is still great potential. The neighborhood has an excellent park system. Its proximity to downtown and three existing business centers and corridors, the proposed light rail, and walkable streets planning, and traditions of self-sustaining historic neighborhoods contribute to this potential. Embracing the Ahwahnee Principles is a critical component of long-range planning for the neighborhood, and for the community.

If the North-Corridor Freeway Expansion happens there will be an increase in air and noise pollution. The Stakeholders have proposed that these and other negative impacts be mitigated with the addition of sound walls, the protection of sensitive areas along the river, and a cap over the freeway maximize public pathways and open space. Mitigation efforts with DOT should be encouraged as part of this plan and implementation.

The East Central Neighborhoods major environmental assets are the Spokane River and its regional Centennial Trail, along with a steeply sloped area which transects the neighborhood, and has been preserved by Liberty Park and Underhill Park, and the connecting Ben Burr Trail.

Action Items:

1. Seek to minimize and mitigate significant negative impacts from the North Corridor and I-90 Freeway Expansion to include a "freeway cap" to create an open space link to portions of the neighborhood divided by the freeway.
2. Protect and enhance the neighborhood's open spaces by the improvement of Liberty Park, Underhill Park, and Grant Park
3. Protect East Central's urban forests and natural habitat
4. Encourage sustainable development through the use of green building materials and design, community conservation and recycling.
5. Protect sensitive areas along river and maximize public pathways, open space, and access including connections between the Ben Burr Trail and the Centennial Trail.
6. Re-examine the proposed expansion of Phase II and Phase III of Riverside Avenue, which would create roadways along the south-side of the river and hinder pedestrian access and riverside development potential.





Transportation

North Corridor and I-90 Freeway Expansion

This transportation element has two parts, one which addresses the North-Corridor and I-90 Freeway Expansion impacts, and the other addresses immediate street improvement projects.

The Freeway impact is made much more disruptive and damaging to the neighborhood by its long-term implementation based on incremental state funding. Full scale property acquisition and construction is the last stage of project construction, possibly 6-8 years in the future. DOT could offer no formal estimate of completion.

Impacts of the North-Corridor Freeway expansion includes:

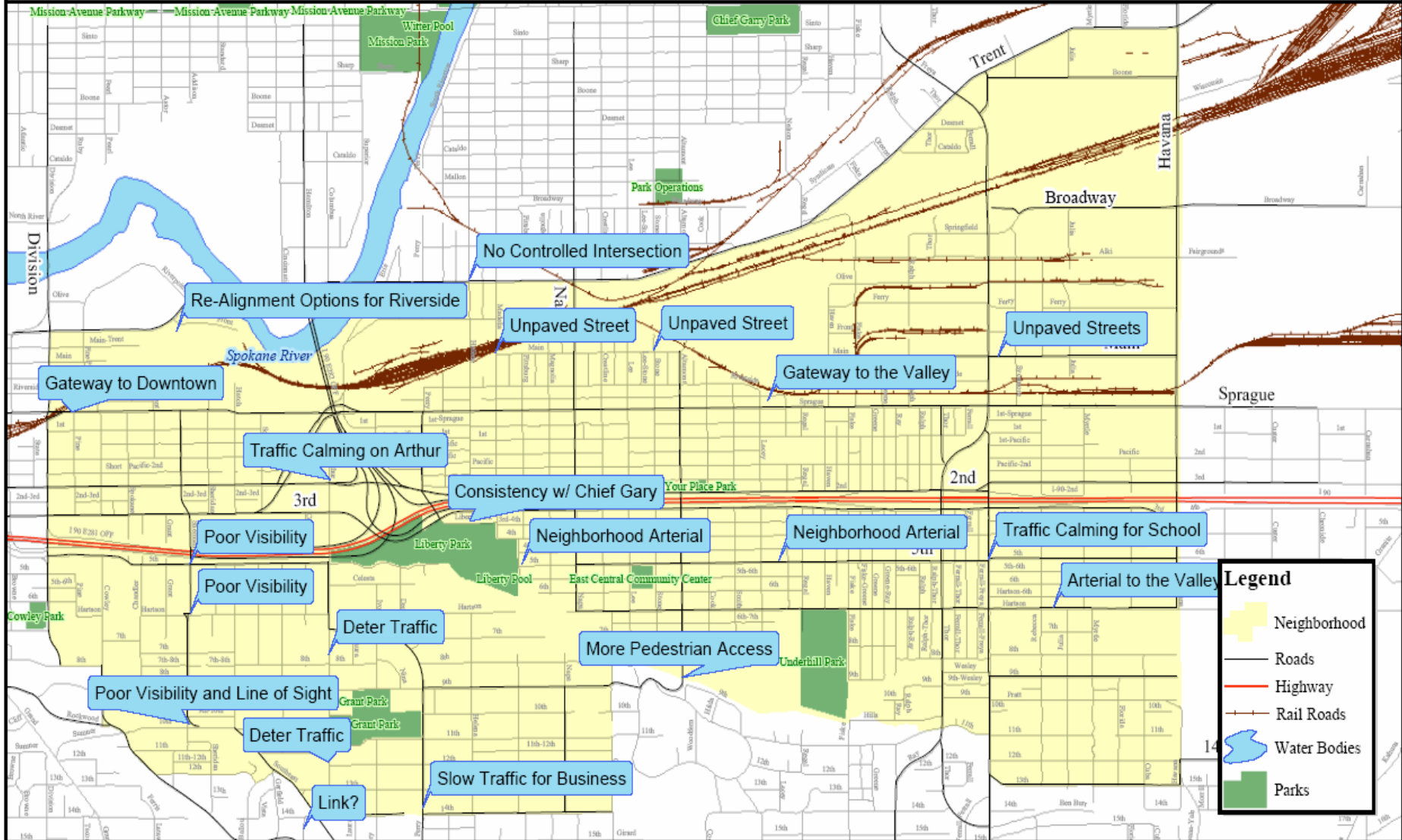
- Divides the neighborhood east to west.
- Expands I-90 freeway and access roads more than a block north and south of the existing I-90 freeway.
- Alters arterials and traffic patterns, notably around Thor/ Freya as an expanded couplet.
- The relocation and removal of 384 residential units and 80 businesses within the neighborhood.
- Increases traffic volume throughout the neighborhood and within the neighborhood at access points.

- Increases air pollution
- Disrupts neighborhood because of land acquisition and freeway construction.
- Further divides the neighborhood if no mitigation is provided.

Action Items:

1. Develop an Action Task force to represent the homeowners and businesses in the path of the North Corridor and I-90 Freeway Expansion to insure they are treated fairly and get due compensation for their property.
2. Establish an interim organization that would manage the properties affected by the North Corridor Freeway and I-90 Freeway Expansion until they are required to be torn down by WSDOT to eliminate neighborhood blight and deterioration prior to proposed construction.
3. Work with the 80 businesses that will be displaced to help them relocate in the neighborhood, along with the residents in housing units.

EAST CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD



East Central Neighborhood Community Outreach Partnership Center Program (COPC)
 Urban and Regional Planning Programs, Eastern Washington University, Winter, 2004





Transportation

Street and Traffic Improvements

The transportation element is intended to deal specifically with vehicular traffic flow in the neighborhood. The walkable streets element will deal with pedestrian access, transit, and trails. These two elements combined will give the East Central Neighborhood the ability to support mobility of both vehicles and pedestrians in a safe and cohesive environment.

Most of the local street issues established by the stakeholders involved poor visibility at intersections, better line of sight on corners and curves, increased signage for pedestrian access, traffic calming on main neighborhood arterials, slower traffic for business activity, decreased traffic volume around elementary schools, bridging the railroads, and creating consistency with the main arterials of the neighborhood.

The North Corridor and I-90 Freeway Expansion is currently negatively impacting the entire area with the prospect of the expansion. With this in consideration the residents have requested improvements to many of their existing streets as well as design suggestions for the North Corridor and couplet so as to lessen their impacts on the neighborhood. It is the

wishes of the residents to keep traffic out of residential areas, as well as be provided with adequate public transportation and convenient vehicular access into and out of the neighborhood.

5th Avenue, the main west arterial, and Hartson Avenue the east arterial do not link, so traffic from the east ends up down Hartson instead of continuing down 5th Avenue. The Stakeholders recognized this as an issue and would like to see traffic calming and deterrents on Hartson Avenue to encourage traffic to move down 5th Avenue.

With the addition of the Thor/ Freya couplet it is also recommended that the design be reassessed to add control elements to permit pedestrian access from east to west in the neighborhood especially around the Sheridan Elementary School.

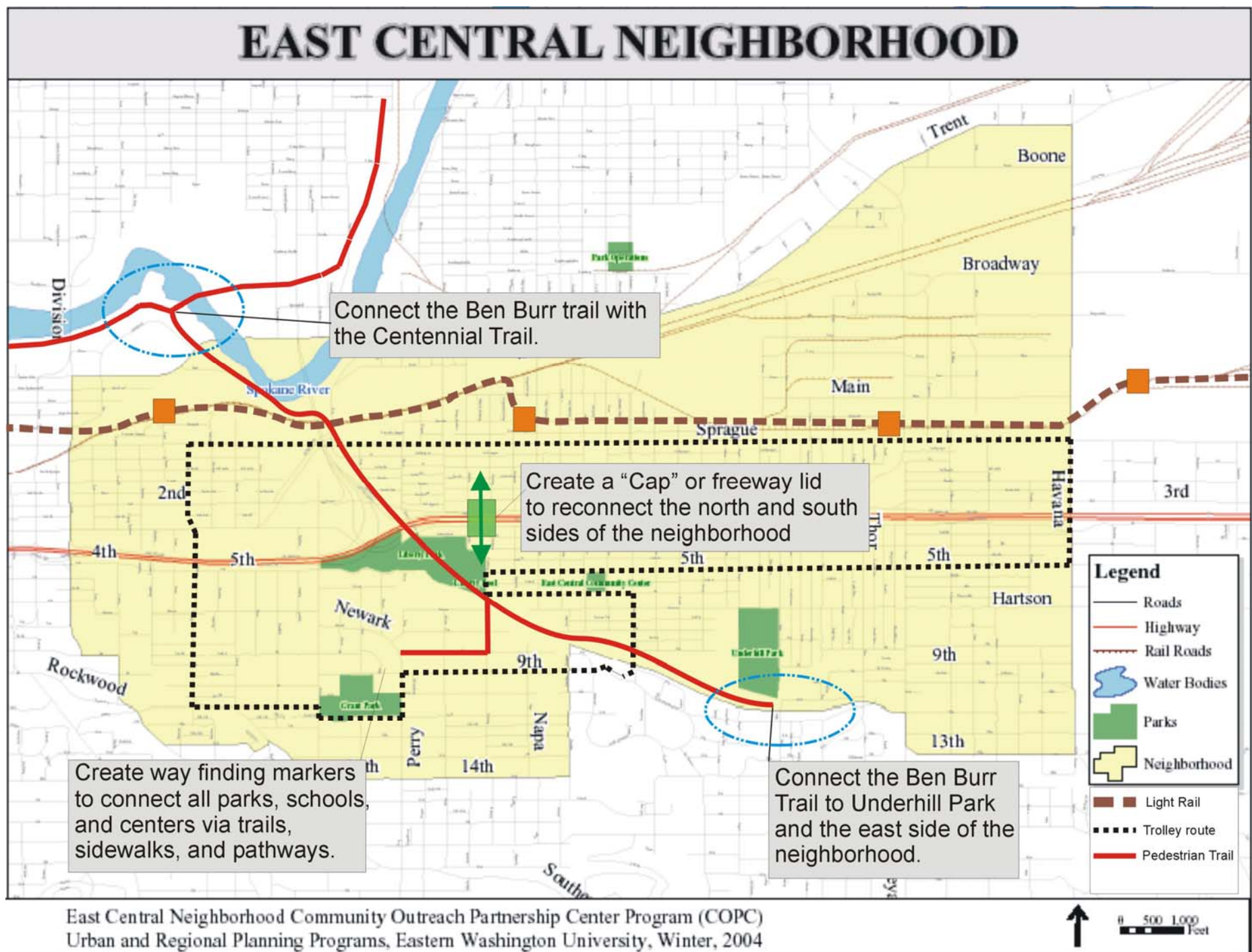
Action Items:

1. If the North Spokane Corridor expansion happens there should be a maximum effort to mitigate the negative effects.
2. Create a more pedestrian friendly design for the Thor/ Freya Couplet.
3. Develop traffic calming devices along Hartson Avenue to encourage traffic to use the west arterial, 5th Avenue, when traveling through the neighborhood.
4. If the I-90 expansion happens move the north arterial from Helena Street to Napa Street.
5. Increase the line of sight and visibility at intersections by the use of traffic signs and more prominent lines to distinguish turning lanes and pedestrian crosswalks.

Ongoing Neighborhood Projects:

1. Continue to support and expand the paving of streets and alleys in the neighborhood to reduce air pollution.

Walkable Streets





Walkable Streets

The Walkable Streets Element refers to non-vehicular access and the safety and connectivity of pedestrians and bike trails in the neighborhood. The East Central Neighborhood has many trails and parks for pedestrians to use. However, these trails have not been maintained and in many cases do not connect to destination points. In designing a neighborhood that is less auto dependant, the residents looked at alternative forms of transportation, such as buses, bicycles, and walking. The promotion of alternative forms of transportation reduces vehicles on the road and therefore makes the neighborhood more walkable. The residents also wanted to create a comprehensive trail system in the neighborhood that links all the sub-areas together and creates destination points for the Ben Burr Trail, and the Pittsburgh Trail connection.

The East Central Neighborhood has outstanding opportunities to link parks, trails, schools, commerce, centers, and the community center to create a more livable and walkable community. With the help of signage, distinguishable trail heads, improved landscaping, and upkeep of trails the East Central Neighborhood will become a more walkable neighborhood, which will improve the

quality of life for all residents. The Ben Burr Trail and marked pedestrian/ bicycle paths will provide a “green spine” of trails and access to connect all areas within the neighborhood. The plan proposes improvements to the Ben Burr Trail and expansion to connect to the Centennial Trail and to neighborhood Streets.

Transit

In order to have a more walkable community, transit needs to be a part of the transportation options in the neighborhood. The proposed light rail system for Spokane has a stop at Napa Street and the Thor/ Freya area. This will provide many opportunities for transit oriented design that encourages people to walk instead of drive. STA is encouraged to expand the services to the neighborhood so as to better serve and increase riders that use transit.. This plan proposes a bus/ trolley route that circles the neighborhood and provides access to services and shopping for all residents of the neighborhood.

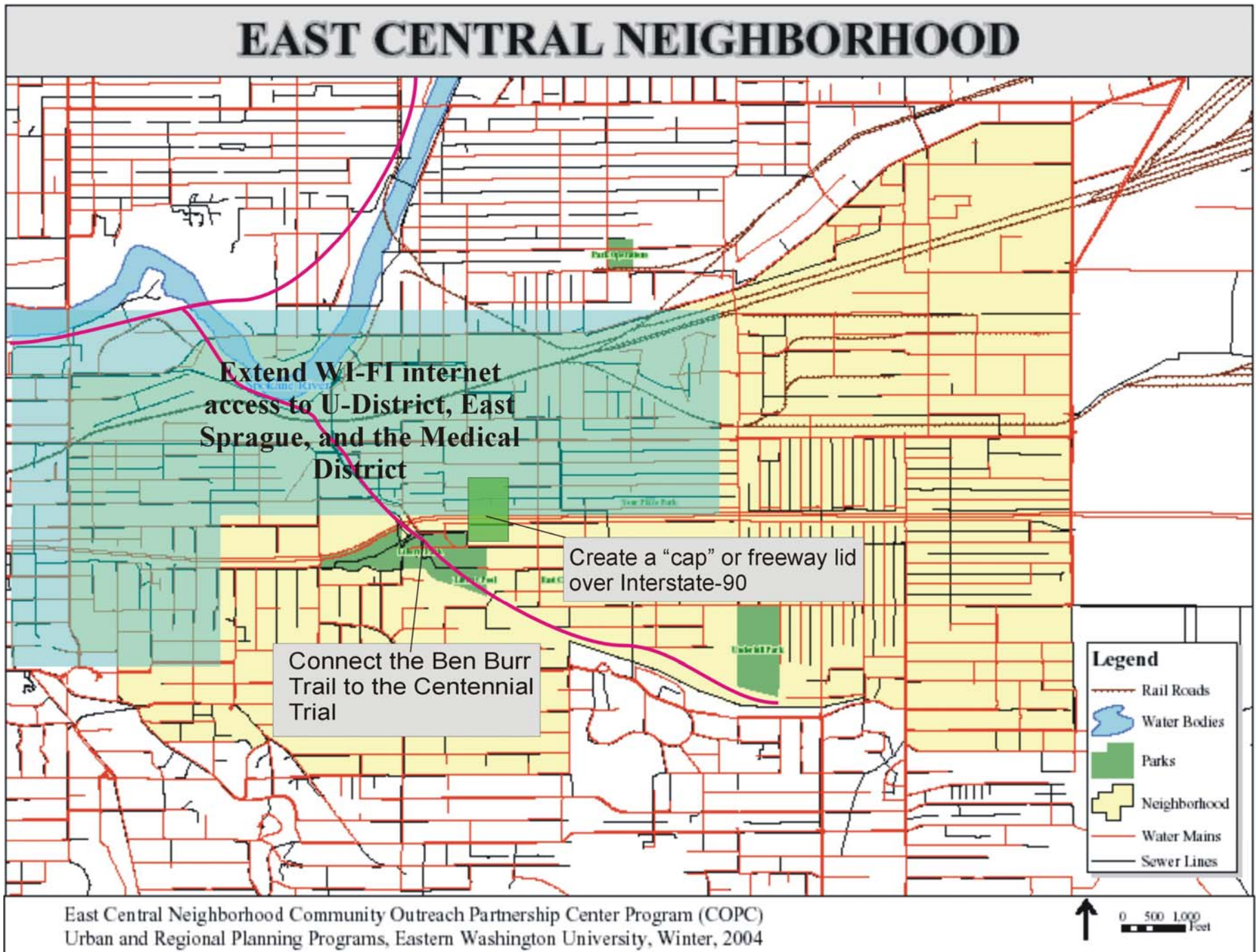
Action Items:

1. Link the Ben Burr Trail to the Centennial Trail and to Underhill Park.
2. Develop a trail system with maps and trail head markers for all trails, parks, and pedestrian corridors in the neighborhood.
3. Link the Sprague Avenue area with Liberty Park via a wide pedestrian bridge (1/2 block or more) or freeway “lid”.
4. Install pedestrian safety access and traffic calming devices around the Sheridan Elementary School across Thor and Freya Street.
5. Improve and maintain the Pittsburg Street stairway linking Liberty Park to the South Perry District.
6. Increase cross-community transit system.

Ongoing Neighborhood Projects:

1. Continue to support a pedestrian oriented University District, which includes a pedestrian bridge linking the Riverpoint WSU/EWU campus with Sprague Avenue.
2. Continue to encourage the enforcement of traffic and safety laws in the neighborhood.

Capital Facilities/Parks and Utilities





Capital Facilities/Parks and Utilities

The East Central Neighborhood is unique in that the neighborhood is served by three large parks and one mini park, which make up 54.39 acres of land. The three major parks include Liberty, Underhill, and Grant Park with a smaller pocket park called Your Place Park. They adequately serve the residents south of the freeway with the exception of the Sheridan sub-area. No major park is located north of I-90 in the neighborhood or the Sheridan sub-area.

The East Central Community Center is also located within the neighborhood boundaries. The community center serves residents in the neighborhood as well as people living outside the neighborhood. The services provided are essential to the well-being of the senior population as well as the youth and others in the neighborhood. The Stakeholders have repeatedly recognized the community center and library as assets to the neighborhood and have recommended continued funding and support.

The WI-FI wireless internet service that is available downtown Spokane is encouraged to expand into the new University District as well as the East Sprague area to promote economic growth, and

across the freeway to the south to improve access in medical offices and research facilities. This Spokane Wi-Fi system has been recognized nationally as an asset to Spokane and the East Central Neighborhood is a logical expansion area for this technology.

The capital facilities and parks of the neighborhood are essential to continued economic and social growth, but they are also threatened by a lack of maintenance. It is recommended by the Stakeholders that improvements in the three parks be made as well as expanding the services offered by the community center.

The neighborhood is well served by water, sewer and electrical utilities. Proposed surface runoff storage at the play-fair site should be developed to encourage related land use development of recreation fields or a mixed use development center.

Action Items:

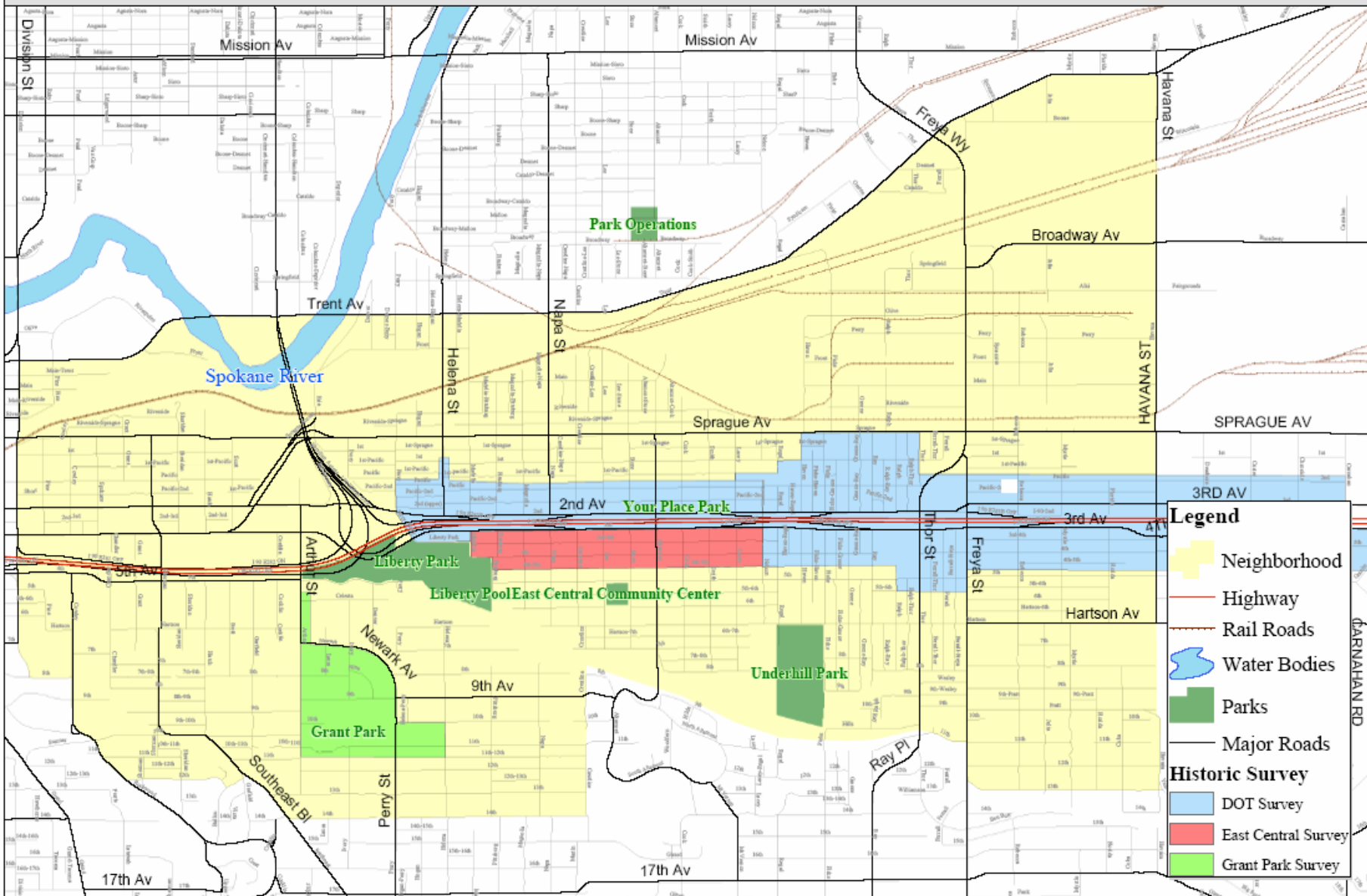
1. Create a new master plan for Liberty Park with Park Board, City, and Neighborhood review, to restore it to its historic style by using a landscape design competition.
2. Develop a "Friends of East Central Parks and Trails" to support and oversee improvements to all neighborhood parks and trails.
3. Implement improvement plans for each neighborhood park.
4. Preserve and enhance the services at the East Central Community Center.
5. Create a park in the Sheridan Elementary area.
6. Create a system of pocket/ exercise parks along the proposed North Spokane Corridor and bike trail.
7. Create a park/ open space landscape design for a freeway cap to encourage pedestrian access across the proposed I-90 Freeway Expansion.

Ongoing Neighborhood Projects:

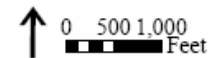
1. Continue to maintain the parks and trails within the neighborhood managed by the parks department and through clean up efforts and on-going funding for maintenance.

Urban Design/ Historic Preservation

EAST CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD



East Central Neighborhood Community Outreach Partnership Center Program (COPC)
 Urban and Regional Planning Programs, Eastern Washington University, Spring, 2005





Urban Design/ Historic Resources

One of the first street-car suburbs in Spokane to be developed was a large tract of land east of the city called East Central Spokane. Served by three street car lines and a regional electric train, numerous multiple-block subdivisions were platted within the extensive East Central area and were called “additions.”

According to an aerial perspective drawn in 1887, East Central Spokane was originally dotted with pine trees and covered with wild grasses and meadowland, and American Indians lived, fished, hunted, and traveled through the area on a regular basis. As reported in an April 20, 2000 article in the Spokesman-Review, Southeast Boulevard, which winds up the hill above Liberty Park to Twenty-ninth Avenue, was first an Indian trail that was made into a road by pioneers who later settled the area. Spokane historian Nancy Compau explained in the article that “immigrants were attracted to Spokane with promises of work and farmland, and traveled there on ‘immigrant trains.’ Scandinavians, Italians, Russians, African Americans, French, and Poles settled into the East Central neighborhood, one of the oldest parts of Spokane. It was a good place to build because it was flat and easily accessible.

During the history night held on May 20, 2003 the East Central residents discussed ways to preserve and enhance the historic significance of the East Central Neighborhood. These goals included:

- Establish and document a better understanding of the neighborhood history.
- Identify key historic resources and develop preservation and enhancement techniques.
- Develop a plan to preserve, protect and enhance historic resources.

In addition to the general neighborhood histories being done, historical architectural surveys have been completed for hundreds of individual buildings within the neighborhood by the City’s Historic Preservation Office, including structures found within the Grant Park area, Union Park Addition, Ellis Addition, and along the I-90 corridor. The Grant Park and Union Park/ Ellis Additions were done as general historic survey inventories, while the I-90 section was done to help evaluate impacts on historic properties in relation to the freeway expansion.

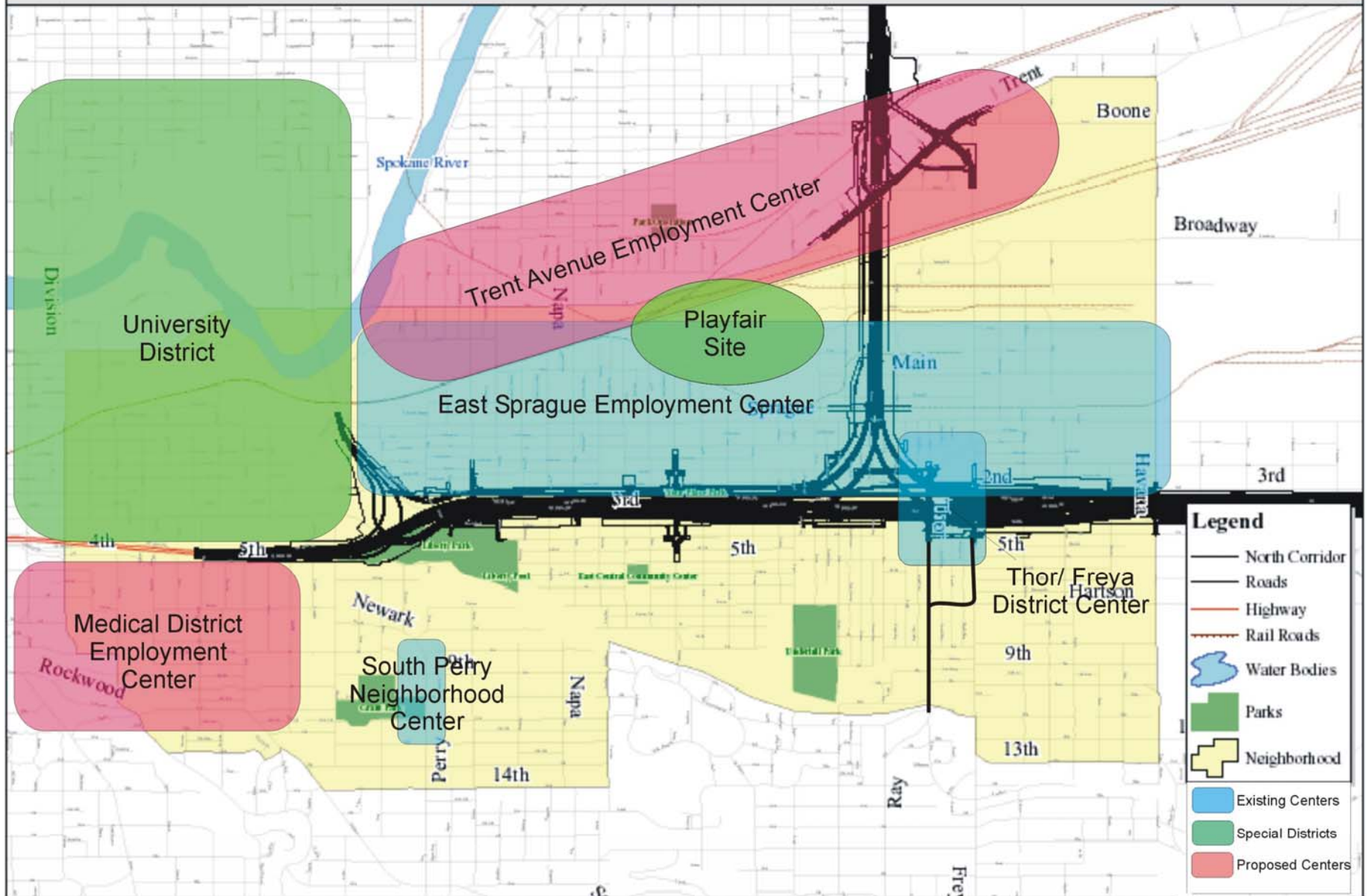
Action Items:

1. Pursue façade improvements and streetscaping in the designated and future centers and corridor to help foster business development.
2. Establish a permanent walking tour linking the different historic locations of parks, historic structures, and street car lines, and highlight different locations with signs and markers.
3. Establish design guidelines reflective of the neighborhood’s historic character while encouraging mixed use developments in centers.
4. Expand the historic surveys already done to include every area of the neighborhood.
5. Continue to use a portion of the East Side Public Library to house a display of the neighborhoods history.
6. Create a Main Street model for centers and corridors planning and development to include design review and preservation.

* A historic district does not imply that property owners are required to participate.

Economic Development

EAST CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD



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 Urban and Regional Planning Programs, Eastern Washington University, Winter, 2004





East Central Neighborhood Plan

Economic Development

The East Central Neighborhood has over 11,000 residents and almost 1,400 businesses. It actually includes a number of functional neighborhoods, business and employment centers within its boundaries. A critical issue of recent planning activities is to link economic development, including small business development support, with planning for maximum support. Too often planning has been focused on land use controls and regulation.

New studies at the national level have identified the significance of small business development within neighborhoods as a source of revitalization and renewal, as a way to create jobs and build the local neighborhood economy. Within the Spokane Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2001, this was recognized and emphasized. The plan identified and promoted “centers and corridors” to enhance business development within the city, especially through neighborhood centers to promote new growth in sustainable, self-sufficient neighborhoods.

Existing Centers and Corridors

Sprague/ Napa Employment Center: The existing planning stakeholder group carried out the *Main Street™* approach to revitalization under the East Spokane Business Association. Land Use changes are proposed in this plan.

Thor/ Freya Neighborhood Center: Because of the new Fred Meyers store and changes in the Thor/ Freya Couplet, this center should be changed from a neighborhood to district center, and a Stakeholder Group should be formed to plan and implement revitalization.

South Perry Neighborhood Center: Re-establish the stakeholder group to complete Phase II of revitalization plans following a *Main Street™* approach to revitalization.

Create New Centers and Districts

Medical District Employment Center: Designate the area south of the I-90 Freeway and west of Sherman Street a medical employment center.

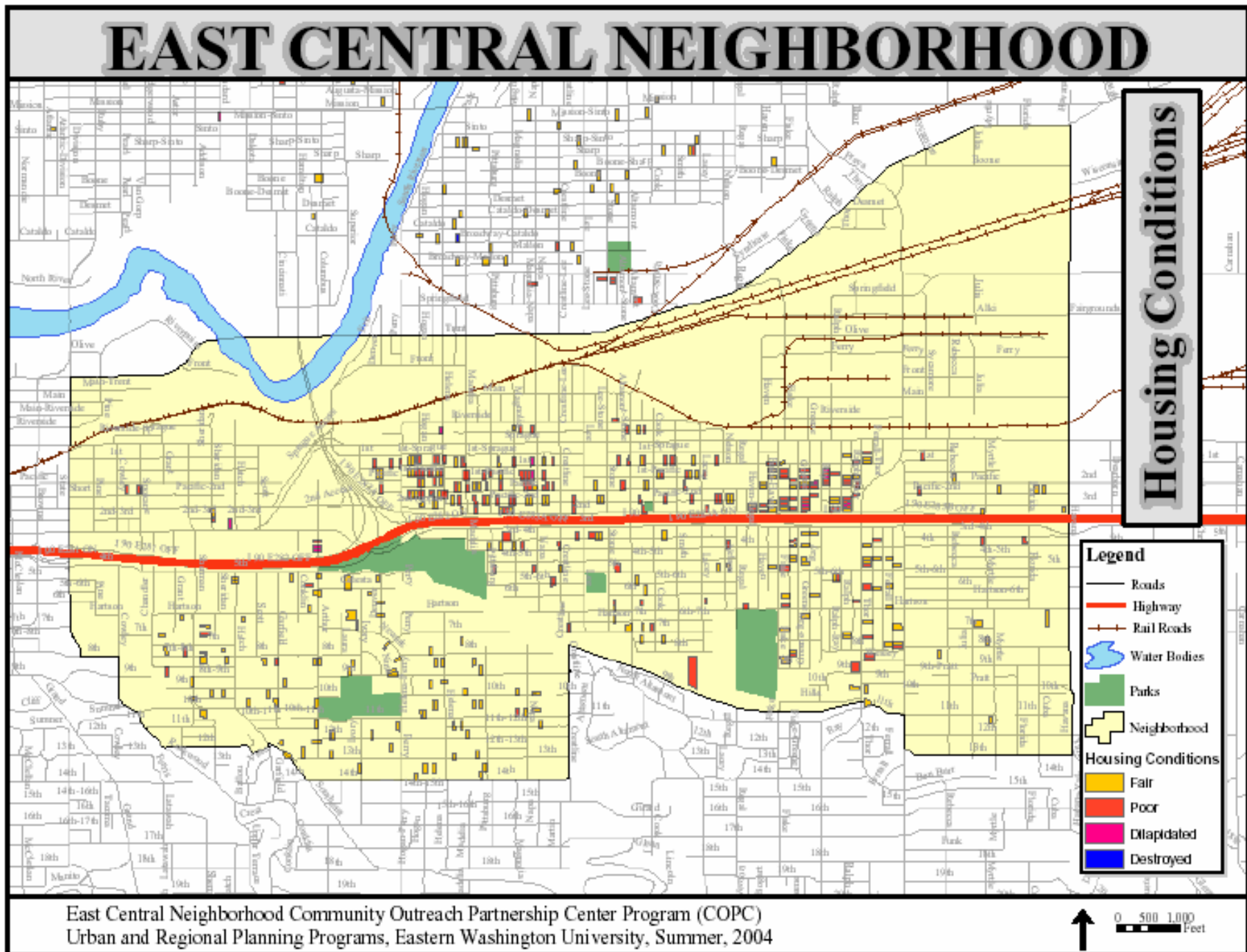
University District: The neighborhood will implement land use changes based on the University District Strategic Master Plan and support continued U-District development proposals.

Playfair Special District: This was the largest undeveloped land parcel in the city, recently acquired by the city for storm water retention. The neighborhood should be involved in planning the highest and best use of this land.

Trent Corridor Employment Center: Designate the area along Trent Avenue as an employment corridor.

Action Steps:

1. Promote development for small businesses through a business incubator.
2. Develop a marketing plan and *Main Street™* model program for each center to promote business and development in partnership with City Economic Development and Historic Preservation Offices.
3. Encourage neighborhood businesses to employ neighborhood residents
4. Provide basic skills and employment training, transportation, job linkages, and job readiness support for residents.
5. Create support for business plan development and other business resources by sponsoring workshops, mentoring, and consulting small business owners.
6. Encourage creation of a neighborhood development corporation as a 501 (c)3 organization to implement development opportunities.
7. Increase business ownership of property.





Housing

Housing is a critical issue within the neighborhood and the goal for housing is that all residential units should be safe, sound, and provide basic needs to residents, including access to transportation and basic services.

The East Central Neighborhood enjoys a high homeownership rate, but there is room for improvement, and increased homeownership of single-family homes was a priority for the neighborhood citizens. In the neighborhood 64% of the single-family homes are owner-occupied, lower than Spokane (73%). The residents of East Central would like to continue to increase homeownership to reach a goal of 70% owner-occupied single-family units.

As apartments and mixed-use development expands under this plan in centers, condominiums as well as rental units should be encouraged for new development. The housing situation in the East Central Neighborhood has been analyzed using 2000 Census data, a comprehensive single-family housing conditions survey done in 2002, and other surveys conducted by EWU Urban and Regional Planning students. The information was presented to the Stakeholder planning team and alternative strategies were discussed to address

the housing issues of the neighborhood. There are many housing agencies in the City of Spokane which represent assets to the neighborhood to partner through the creation of housing programs that will address the needs of the neighborhood. These housing organizations can be used to manage neighborhood properties affected by the freeway, create a housing trust fund, encourage the neighborhood to create land banks to preserve land for the neighborhood plan, and offer technical know-how to the neighborhood.

Action Steps:

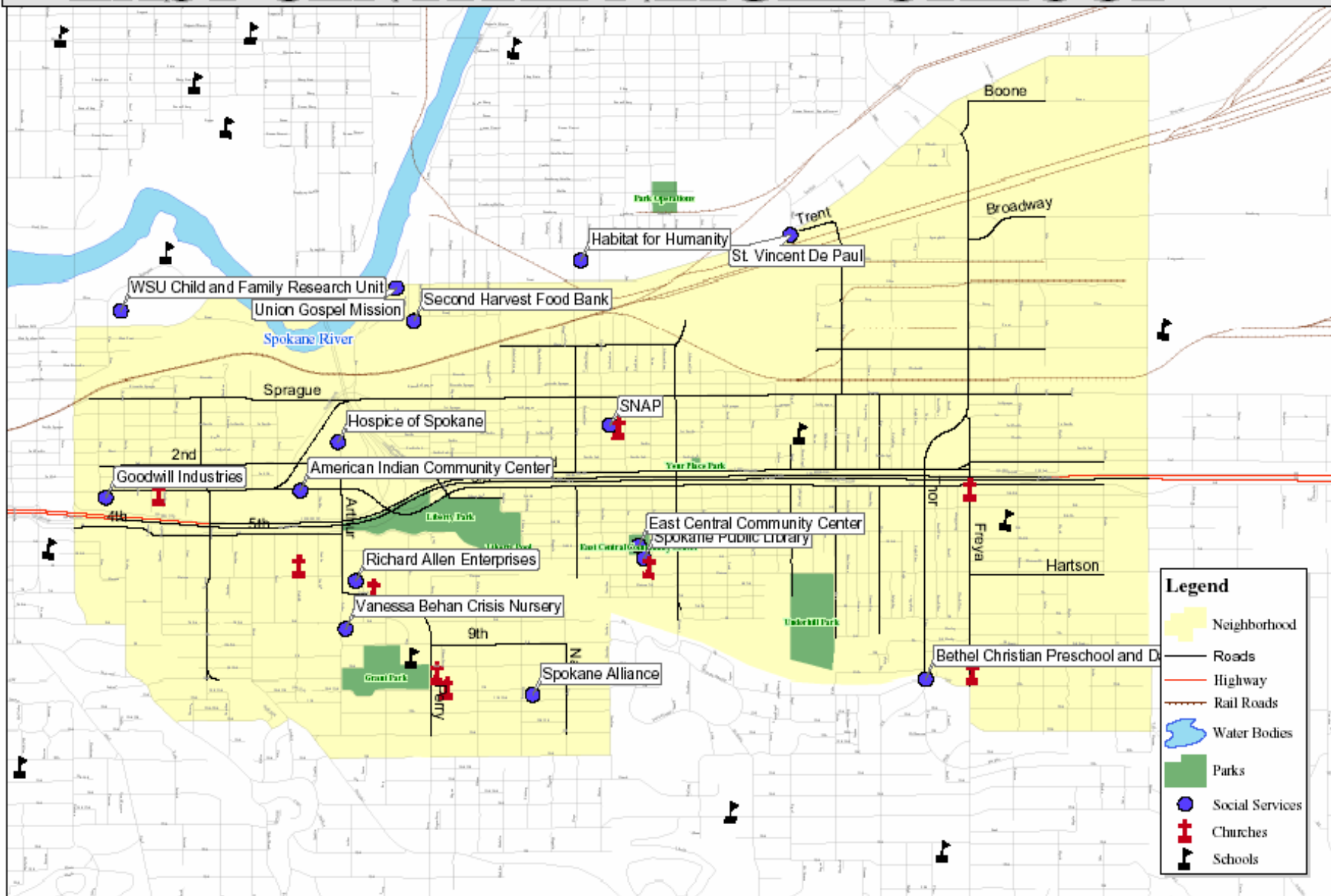
1. Establish an interim organization that would manage the properties affected by the North Corridor and I-90 Freeway Expansion until they are required to be torn down by WSDOT
2. Provide alternative housing opportunities within the neighborhood for those being relocated by the North Corridor and I-90 Freeway Expansion.
3. Designate the area between the railroad tracks and I-90 as a Redevelopment Zone to be developed in accordance with the U-District and Sprague/Napa Employment Center Plan.
4. Increase the homeownership rate by partnering with existing organizations and government entities.
5. Encourage mixed-use residential in centers including the land between the Thor/ Freya Couplet and in the University District.
6. Change Land Use for senior housing development across from the community center.

Ongoing Neighborhood Projects:

1. Support on-going senior housing partnership with the East Central Community Center to develop a subsidized senior housing complex across from the community center.

Social, Health, and Youth

EAST CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD



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Social, Health, and Youth

The East Central Neighborhood is home to over 90 social and human service agencies, which are fundamental to the health and social well being of the East Central Neighborhood residents along with 40 faith-based organizations. Services ranging from child care to senior activities and library services at the community center, to after school programs in faith based organizations can be found within the East Central Neighborhood. Residents of the East Central Neighborhood highly value the existing human services available in their neighborhood. The human service planning process for this plan has incorporated neighborhood residents' perceptions of the strengths and limitations of existing human services, and has generated possible solutions for overcoming the limitations and unmet needs that have been identified. By building an awareness of the strengths and limitations and using them as a reference point for service delivery, the East Central Neighborhood can move toward improving the system of agency communication, referrals, and overall services.

Information received during the Human Services Needs Assessment focus groups provided a foundation from which to organize priorities for neighborhood implementation. Issues and themes from the focus group discussions were organized into a summary list

of human service gaps/barriers and possible solutions across four service categories—basic needs, health services, social services, and employment-related services. The goal was to present these issues and themes to neighborhood stakeholders, residents, and social service providers and ask them to participate in prioritizing the human service needs identified in the community. The strong interest and feedback received indicates that the East Central neighborhood is invested in improving the quality of human services in the neighborhood. Through this process clear priorities and neighborhood resources emerged which can be used as a launching point for program development around enhanced human service delivery in the East Central neighborhood.

During the summer of 2004 the East Central Neighborhood Stakeholder Committee, residents, and service providers in the neighborhood were invited to respond to a summary list of human service gaps/barriers and possible solutions. This procedure provided a perspective in to issues the Neighborhood Stakeholder Committee, public residents, and service providers feel most strongly about. And, interestingly, across the different groups similar human service issues were identified as most important.

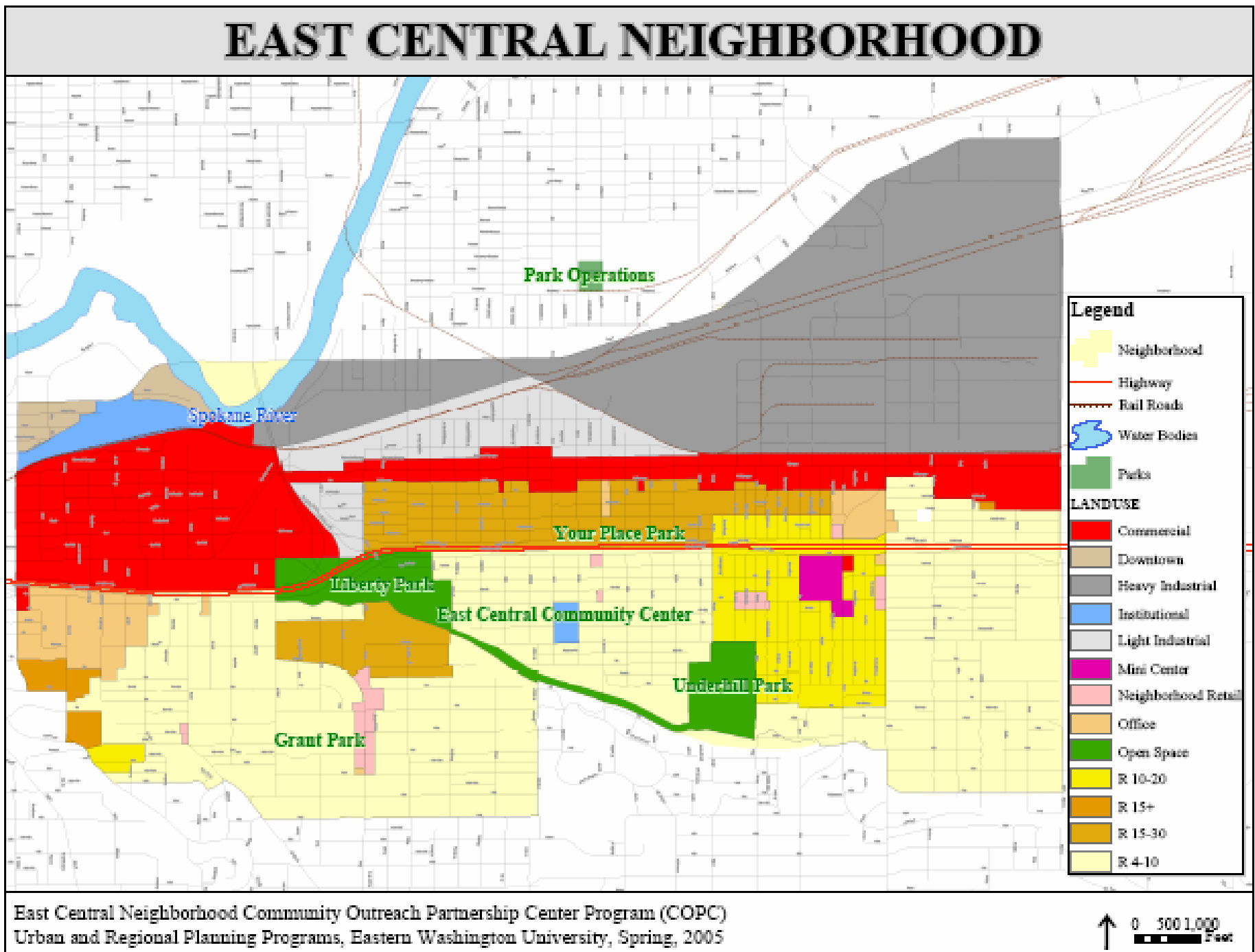
Action Steps:

1. Increase neighborhood awareness of existing services, e.g. develop a central service referral system.
2. Foster growth of coordinated systems to provide local access to affordable services for medical care, dental care, and mental health/ substance abuse care.
3. Enhance and expand continuum of services for neighborhood youth.
4. Foster partnerships between neighborhood stakeholders to provide job training and job placement for youth and adults.
5. Increase resident participation in neighborhood safety and security programs.
6. Facilitate the collaboration between social service agencies and churches to provide wrap around services.
7. Advocate for affordable public transportation for the neighborhood.

Ongoing Neighborhood Projects:

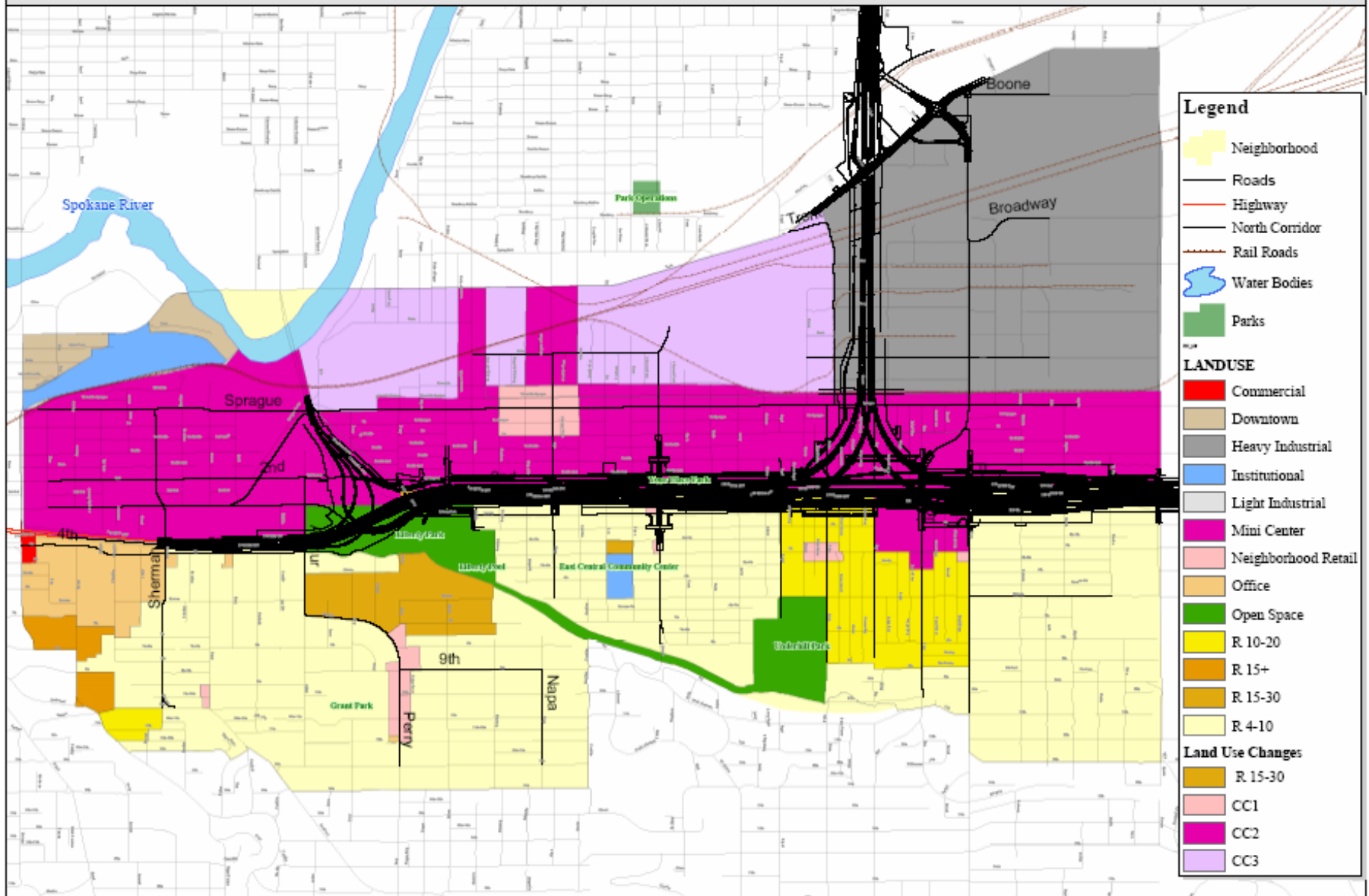
1. Maintain and expand funding of ECCC operations, COP shops, and neighborhood clean-up programs.

Existing Land Use

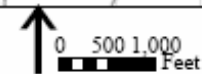


Proposed Land Use

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Land Use

Current Land Use

Currently the land use and zoning for the East Central neighborhood is Euclidean in nature, which means that zoning is based on spatially separated land use categories from single family homes to heavy industry (see Existing Land Use). The separation of land use categories was developed to avoid nuisances or negative impacts among uses. The existing land use for East Central includes heavy and light industry to the north, commercial and office along Sprague Avenue, and single-family homes south of I-90. Higher density residential is located between Sprague Avenue and I-90 as well as the area north of the South Perry District, the southwest portion of the neighborhood, and the area around Thor and Freya. Throughout the neighborhood there are commercial centers such as Fred Meyers and other areas around the Thor/ Freya District, and South Perry District, the Sprague/ Napa corridor, the University District, and the Health Employment Center, which can be identified by unique land uses.

Proposed Land Use Changes

As mandated by the City of Spokane as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan, no land use or zoning changes can be made

outside the designated Centers and Corridors. In the East Central neighborhood there are three existing centers; Thor/ Freya, Sprague/ Napa, and 9th and Perry. Thor/ Freya and 9th and Perry are currently designated neighborhood centers, while Sprague and Napa is an employment center.

This plan will propose expansion of the Sprague/ Napa employment center, the re-classification of the Thor/Freya Center to a District Center, the creation of two new centers, a Health Employment Center and a Trent Corridor Employment Center. The University District has developed a strategic master plan in conjunction with this plan and new land use changes are in final review to change the area north of the freeway to General Commercial.

The Centers and Corridors provide a unique opportunity to meet needed space and zoning to accommodate future growth. The five centers that are located in the neighborhood and the University District are distinct in character and require separate planning to promote the highest and best land use.

Sprague/ Napa Employment Center:

The Sprague/ Napa Employment Center created a Stakeholder Group, which has met weekly since June, 2004. This group developed their "Center" plan with the Neighborhood Stakeholder Group and created a land use plan that includes several land use changes and an expanded boundary for the center.

The land use changes expands the Sprague/ Napa employment center boundaries from Hamilton to Havana and from the I-90 freeway north to the railroad right of way. To encourage revitalization of the area within the employment center, mixed use is proposed for a portion of this area. Designations for Riverside to I-90, and the Hamilton Bridge to Havana will be CC-2, except for land between Riverside to First from Madelia to Crestline, which will be CC-1.

The area north of Riverside to Trent from Hamilton to Haven will be CC-3. This includes the old Playfair site that could be developed into a mixed use employment center or recreation facility. The area east of Haven will remain M-3 industrial with no change proposed.



Thor/ Freya Center:

The Thor/ Freya district attracts many shoppers and commuters from all over the city of Spokane. The current designation is a neighborhood center, but should be changed to a district center to better reflect the actual use of the area, where Fred Meyer is the major retailer with significant parking and a regional market.

The boundaries for the Thor/ Freya district were increased to take into account the land between the Thor/ Freya couplet. The proposed boundaries stretch from Ray to Freya and Sprague Avenue to Hartson Avenue. This would allow a higher density and mixed use development to occur between Thor and Freya, and the land use designation CC-2 is proposed for this expanded center area.

South Perry Neighborhood Center:

It is recommended that the stakeholder group be re-activated to study the feasibility of expanding the center's boundaries to encourage a mixed-use center and possible land use changes that would support commercial activities and mixed-use development. This group would also assess earlier Phase II plans for physical improvements to the area.

New Centers and Corridors, Special Projects and Districts

Health Employment Center:

The largest employment category in Spokane is health services, with a focus of health employment on the lower South Hill. This plan seeks to recognize this fact by the establishment of an employment center and subsequent development of more detailed land use plans to support health care employment to include a linkage to the University District through creation of a "center" Stakeholder group. This effort would also establish a clear boundary for this district to maintain single-family residential development east and south of this employment center within the neighborhood.

Trent Corridor Employment Center

Significant employment and changes from heavy industrial to office/industrial are underway along Trent east of the downtown. South of Trent is the East Central Neighborhood, while north is Chief Garry. This plan proposes the two neighborhoods meet to seek to establish an employment center designation for this area, particularly in consideration of the new Iron Bridge project and related development.

East Central Community Center

The East Central Community Center represents a neighborhood center for community services. The land immediately North of the Center has been designated for senior housing, and should have increased density as part of this human services activity center.

University District

The University District Strategic Plan has encouraged the creation of a University District with mixed-use development oriented toward expanding student, health related, and technology related activities surrounding the Riverpoint and Gonzaga University Campuses. Centers for development are proposed, especially around Sprague and Sherman with a pedestrian bridge/lid over the railroad, which is strongly supported by the neighborhood, along with changes to CC-3 and other incentives for mixed use development..

Playfair Site:

The Playfair site will create surface water storage at a regional level to protect water quality in the Spokane River. It is also a unique site for potential planning and development opportunities which should include neighborhood input and support community economic development.



The purpose of the Spokane Comprehensive Plan was to create a more compact city, with new development encouraged as infill linked to centers and corridors. Mixed-use development was encouraged to expand support of business by increasing concentrations of residential populations. The concept of mixed use development is seen as having great potential for revitalization and re-investment within existing centers, the University District and proposed centers within the neighborhood. The new mixed-use zoning categories recommended for land use changes in this plan are CC-1, CC-2, and CC-3 described below.

Zoning Descriptions

CC-1:

The Type 1 Center and Corridor Zone promotes the greatest pedestrian orientation of the center and corridor zones. To accomplish this, some limitations are placed on auto-oriented activities and some types and the allowable size of some uses are controlled.

CC-2:

The Type 2 Center and Corridor Zone promotes new development and redevelopment that is pedestrian-oriented while accommodating the automobile. Incentives

allowing a higher floor area ratio in exchange for the provision of greater public amenities as land is developed and redeveloped are encouraged in these areas. (11.19.1931)

CC-3:

The Type 3 Centers and Corridors Zone is applied in areas that have pre-existing zoning designations that allow different uses and have different development standards than those prescribed for the Type 1 and 2 Centers and Corridors. This overlay zone is intended to allow development within these areas to take advantage of the opportunities allowed in the Type 1 and 2 Centers and Corridors. Development within Type 3 Centers is either allowed to use the existing zoning regulations or may develop according to the standards for Type 1 or Type 2 Centers and Corridors.

Action Steps:

1. Sprague Napa Employment Center: From I-90 to the railroad and the Hamilton Bridge to Havana should be CC-2 except for Riverside to 1st and Madelia to Crestline which should be designated CC-1.
2. Thor/ Freya Center: Designate as a district, and change zoning designation to CC-2
3. University District: Change industrial zoning to CC-3, which would allow mixed-use residential and commercial.
4. Change zoning on the property immediately north of the East Central Community Center to support senior housing as part of the community services center.
5. South Perry: Explore the possibility of increased density and boundaries of the center through a South Perry Stakeholder Team.
6. Identify and preserve single-family areas of the neighborhood outside of the centers and special districts.

The East Central Neighborhood Plan represents extensive research, inventory and analysis of data and maps which were presented to the Stakeholder Group over a one year period. The Stakeholder Group assessed this data during their meetings, expanded problems, issues, and concerns, and then developed alternative actions or strategies for action to be incorporated into the plan. Land Use alternatives include work completed by the Sprague/Napa Employment Center Stakeholder Group, and the strategic planning process led by the City Economic Development Office for the University District. Alternatives and Strategic Actions were developed under each element, and prioritized for implementation and action. Many of these strategies and actions impact issues beyond neighborhood planning, and will need support and participation of citizens, interest groups, other departments and programs within the City government, and other agencies to be implemented.

The first part of the implementation section will include an overview of the objectives of this neighborhood in terms of comprehensive approaches to planning (the Ahwahnee Principles) for a sustainable neighborhood; a matrix of assessment of business and economic development strategies for comprehensive neighborhood economic revitalization; and a matrix assessment of human, social, and educational services to address community needs. The second

section of this implementation section will include a listing of all action/strategies identified within the plan, and identification of strategic resources, responsible agencies, and key actions to implement each item (separate document).

Implementation of the Plan:

Ahwahnee Principles

These principles should guide all actions and strategies of the East Central Neighborhood Plan to create a sustainable and liveable neighborhood.

Implementation of the Plan: Economic Revitalization Strategies Matrix

Major areas of action for economic development and support for the business economy were identified in the economic development element, and can be assessed through the Economic Revitalization Strategies Matrix. The intention is that the neighborhood, through work with supporting organizations, develop strategies and activities in all areas for maximum efforts at revitalization and support for businesses.

Implementation of the Plan: Human and Social Services Matrix

The plan identified more than 90 human service organizations and almost 40 faith-based community organizations committed to offer services and programs for neighborhood residents, mostly within the neighborhood. Representatives from

these organizations have met at least quarterly over the past two years to identify critical un-met needs within the community. This effort was completed by the WSU Child and Family Research Unit, which partnered with this planning effort to engage the community in understanding community needs, and to be able to identify existing services, identify un-met needs, and create supportive programs and activities to create positive change and support for neighborhood residents. The Human and Social Services Matrix identifies existing programs and services according to basic needs within the community, and this matrix was used in part to establish priorities and strategies from this group to implement the plan.

Strategies and Activities Implementation

The Neighborhood Plan has identified over 90 strategies and actions which should be taken under each of the elements within the comprehensive neighborhood plan. These will be listed by element and discussed in terms of priorities and strategies which will lead to action and implementation of each action in the remaining section of this plan. These detailed work programs can be used by the neighborhood to assign work and take actions to implement the plan, and will be developed as a separate implementation document.

The East Central Neighborhood Plan represents significant community work, led by the Stakeholder Committee, which met at least twice a month for the past year. Other groups, including human service providers and faith-based organizations, and business associations/stakeholder groups, also met regularly to develop details contained within this plan. This document clearly represents the interests and desires of the neighborhood, and has met the Stakeholder goals to create a visionary document to guide the neighborhood into the future.

The East Central Neighborhood's most immediate challenge is the negative impacts from the proposed North Corridor Freeway expansion. As identified in this plan, the neighborhood will need to take aggressive action, especially related to re-connecting the neighborhood through design of a lid or cap over the freeway instead of simply a pedestrian bridge that will see little use. The neighborhood will also need to continue work to mitigate negative impacts on the neighborhood, especially related to homes and businesses proposed for relocation, so residents and businesses can relocate within the neighborhood, hopefully into the new mixed-use centers; and so there is not a loss of community and value of homes and property within the neighborhood due to selected acquisition and demolition of housing and businesses.

The greatest asset within the neighborhood are its people, its businesses, its beautiful parks and open space systems, and the strong neighborhoods of single-family residential areas and related programs including community and service centers, schools and business centers. Major improvements are proposed for the parks system to improve all parks, including design and implementation of a new master plan for Liberty Park, expansion and improvements of the Ben Burr Trail, and linkage of all residential and community facilities to parks through marked sidewalks and trails. This includes creation of a walkable neighborhood, and support for proposed light rail and a trolley system to expand transit to all parts of the neighborhood.

Revitalization within the neighborhood has great potential to serve the more than 1,400 businesses within the neighborhood. Success of the South Perry Neighborhood Center as a demonstration project should be continued, while efforts for revitalization of the Sprague/Napa Employment Center, the Thor Freya Center, creation of two new centers—The Health Employment Center and the Trent Corridor Employment Center, and new developments around the University District and Playfair hold great potential, but will need neighborhood planning and leadership.

This plan, using elements to identify the many critical areas of need and change, represents a blueprint for the future, and a work plan which has identified activities, programs, initiatives, and land use changes to create the neighborhood of the future, a sustainable neighborhood within the greater Spokane city. Implementation of the program will be dependent upon the hard work of the neighborhood in partnership with the City of Spokane, and many other departments, programs, and businesses. The approval of this plan is an important step toward achieving those visions.

Ahwahnee Principles

Fundamental Principles

1. All planning should be in the form of complete and integrated communities containing housing, shops, work places, schools, parks, and civic facilities essential to the daily life of the residents.
2. Community size should be designed so that housing, jobs, daily needs, and other activities are within easy walking distance of each other.
3. As many activities as possible should be located within easy walking distance of transit stops.
4. A community should contain a diversity of housing types to enable citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries.
5. Businesses within the community should provide a range of job types for the community's residents.
6. The location and character of the community should be consistent with a larger transit network.
7. The community should have a center focus that combines commercial, civic, cultural, and recreational uses.
8. The community should contain an ample supply of specialized open space in the form of squares, greens, and parks

whose frequent use is encouraged through placement and design.

9. Public spaces should be designed to encourage the attention and presence of people at all hours of the day and night.

10. Each community or cluster of communities should have a well-defined edge, such as agricultural greenbelts or wildlife corridors, permanently protected from development.

11. Streets, pedestrian paths, and bike paths should contribute to a system of fully connected and interesting routes to all destinations. Their design should encourage pedestrian and bicycle use by being small and spatially defined by buildings, trees, and lighting; and by discouraging high speed traffic.

12. Wherever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of the community should be preserved with superior examples contained within parks or greenbelts.

13. The community design should help conserve resources and minimize waste.

14. Communities should provide for the efficient use of water through the use of natural drainage, drought tolerant landscaping, and recycling.

15. The street orientation, the placement of buildings, and the use of shading should contribute to the energy efficiency of the community.

Regional Principles

1. The regional land use planning structure should be integrated within a larger transportation network built around transit rather than freeways.

2. Regions should be bounded by and provide a continuous system of greenbelt/wildlife corridors to be determined by natural conditions.

3. Regional institutions and services (government, stadiums, museums, etc.) should be located in the urban core.

4. Materials and methods of construction should be specific to the region, exhibiting continuity of history and culture and compatibility with the climate to encourage the development of local character and community identity.

Implementation Strategy

1. The [comprehensive] plan should be updated to incorporate the above principles.

2. Rather than allowing developer-initiated, piecemeal development, local governments should take charge of the planning process. [Comprehensive] plans should designate where new growth, infill or redevelopment will be allowed to occur.

3. Prior to any development, a specific plan should be prepared based on these planning principles. With the adoption of specific plans, complying projects could proceed with minimal delay.

4. Plans should be developed through an open process and participants in the process should be provided visual models of all planning proposals.