

PlanSpokane 2046
City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update 2026-2046

STAFF REPORT PREPARED FOR SPOKANE PLAN COMMISSION HEARING, NOVEMBER 9, 2026

PLANNING SERVICES, CITY OF SPOKANE

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Summary

This staff report supports the City of Spokane's 2026 Periodic Update to its Comprehensive Plan (PlanSpokane 2046) and forwards a draft Comprehensive Plan for consideration by the Spokane Plan Commission at their scheduled November 9, 2026, public hearing. The Plan Commission will forward a recommendation to City Council who is the final decision maker in this matter.

The periodic update is required under the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW 36.70A.130. In conformance with RCW 36.70A.130, the City of Spokane has reviewed and revised the City's Comprehensive Plan for the 2026-2046 planning horizon. The update ensures that the City's Comprehensive Plan remains consistent with state law, incorporates new legislative requirements, and reflects the community's vision for growth over the next 20 years. This periodic update includes additional considerations for housing for all income levels and incorporates a climate element. The Shorelines Chapter was not reviewed as part of PlanSpokane 2046 and instead will be updated in 2031 in conformance with RCW 90.58.080.

This action repeals the Shaping Spokane Comprehensive Plan, as initially adopted in 2017 the city's last periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan and replaces it with the PlanSpokane 2046 Comprehensive Plan.

The process for drafting the PlanSpokane 2046 Periodic Update included frequent collaboration with regional partners and abutting jurisdictions, including regular meetings and consultation over several years. Population projections were adopted regionally for this planning period by the Spokane County Board of County Commissioners on June 18, 2024, BOCC Resolution 2024-0348. Housing projections were adopted regionally by the Spokane County Board of County Commissioners in 2025, BOCC Resolution 2025-0033. Additionally, Spokane County's Countywide Planning Policies were reviewed and PlanSpokane 2046 is in conformance with these policies.

In February 2025, the City issued a Determination of Significance (DS) which initiated an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assist with decision making. The result is a Programmatic Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) issued October 26, 2026. The City's last EIS review of the Comprehensive Plan was completed in January 2001, for the planning horizon 2000-2020, as part of the original city adoption of a Growth Management Act (GMA) compliant Comprehensive Plan (aka Spokane Horizons planning process).

On May 18, 2026, Spokane City Council adopted a Preferred Alternative Growth Map, RES 2026-0035, which directed staff and Plan Commission to use the "preferred alternative" to develop a Future Land Use Map (FLUM).

Updates to the Comprehensive Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement have been made in response to public comments that were received and community engagement events including community workshops in spring and fall 2025, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement public comment period from December 18, 2025, to March 5, 2026, and the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map public comment period from August 7, 2026, to October 2, 2026. This staff report is drafted for the November 9, 2026, Spokane Plan Commission hearing. The Plan Commission and City Council may make amendments to the proposal if they are within the range of what was studied in the EIS process.

Action Requested

In conformance with RCW 36.70A.130, the City of Spokane has reviewed and revised the City's Comprehensive Plan for the 2026-2046 planning horizon. The Spokane Plan Commission is asked to review this staff report and supporting materials, the draft Comprehensive Plan, and the Final Environmental Impact Statement while considering community input both from public engagement and written public comment. After that review and consideration, the Plan Commission shall forward to City Council their recommendation on this periodic update to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Anticipated Future Actions

- As part of the periodic update work the City is also required to update its Critical Areas Ordinance. This work is not yet completed and is anticipated in the first half of 2027. This work, in addition to the BUILDSpokane Development Code Update below, will complete the City's full duties under GMA for the periodic update. Both updates will include separate processes and further recommendations from the Spokane Plan Commission.
- BUILDSpokane, a revision to the City's Development Code, is underway and is anticipated to be completed in the first half of 2027. This work will finalize any additional code requirements of the periodic update, including "STEP Housing" mandated code changes. "STEP Housing" is the WA State Commerce term for shelters, transitional housing, emergency housing, and permanent supportive housing.
- The City's compliance with HB 1491(2025), the Transit-Oriented Development bill, is anticipated in 2027. WA Commerce is currently developing guidance and WAC Rules to assist in this work.
- An additional item not under consideration at this time but analyzed in the FEIS is changing the City's Municipal Code around "SEPA Categorical Exemptions". These exemption levels establish, at a project level, which types of projects undertake review under the State Environmental Policy Act. This is likely to be considered by Plan Commission and City Council in 2027, but there is no date certain for this action and such consideration would require a separate review process.
- The Shorelines Chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan and the City's Shoreline Master Program are not updated as part of this work. These items will be addressed on their unique statutory schedule as outlined in RCW 90.58.080.

Scope of Work

The periodic update of the Comprehensive Plan consists of these primary components:

- **Environmental Review** of this proposal was completed on October 26, 2026, with the Notice of Availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Key dates of this review are discussed later in this document.
- **Comprehensive Plan Chapter Updates (also known as Chapter Review):**
  Existing plan elements have been reviewed and updated to reflect current regulations, policy direction, and best practices. This includes simplifying language, removing redundancies, integrating new state-required topics, and incorporating community feedback into relevant chapters.
- **Addition of Climate Change and Resilience Element** in conformance with RCW 36.70A.70(9). The City of Spokane has chosen to integrate this element into the entire plan. A matrix of

policies and their location is included as an appendix to PlanSpokane 2046 to assist in location of all policies supporting this element. This is the only entirely new element added to the City's Comprehensive Plan during this periodic update. More details of this work are later in this report.

- **Growth Strategy and Land Use Planning**:
  The City evaluated alternative growth patterns to determine how future development should be distributed. The Growth Strategy is outlined in Chapter 3: Growth Strategy (formerly the Land Use Chapter). These components have undergone environmental review through the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process and ongoing public engagement.
- **WA State Mandated Housing Element Changes:**
  The City has identified sufficient land and policies to accommodate housing for households of all income levels as required by RCW 36.70A.070(2) (also referred to as HB 1220 (2021) requirements).

Background

The City of Spokane has undertaken a periodic update to its Comprehensive Plan, as required by the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). Periodic updates are mandated on a ten-year cycle to ensure that local Comprehensive Plans remain consistent with state law, reflect legislative changes, and respond to evolving community needs. The City of Spokane's last Comprehensive Plan update was completed in 2017.

Since that time, state law has introduced new planning requirements, particularly related to climate change and housing. Recent legislation also requires jurisdictions to plan for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled, as well as to accommodate housing needs across a full range of income levels. Additionally, the 2026 periodic update will establish a policy framework to guide growth and development in Spokane over the next 20 years, through 2046. This framework includes revising existing plan elements, integrating new state-mandated topics, and identifying a growth strategy to accommodate projected population and employment increases.

The Washington State Department of Commerce provides guidance for periodic updates through the "Checklist for Fully-Planning Cities," which outlines required policy and regulatory changes. The City has used this checklist to confirm compliance with updated state requirements as part of the adoption process. Updates to development regulations will be addressed separately through the City's development code update, known as the "BUILDSpokane" initiative.

The City of Spokane initiated a "Notice of Intent to Adopt" with WA Commerce on September 1, 2026, which began a 60-day agency review period. The City of Spokane also submitted Notice of Intent to Adopt and an agency checklist to Spokane Regional Transportation Council on September 1, 2026, initiating a 60-day agency review period of the Transportation Element. Both review periods close on October 31, 2026.

Project Overview: PlanSpokane 2046

PlanSpokane 2046 is the City's 2026 Periodic Update to its Comprehensive Plan and will establish a long-range policy framework to guide growth, development, and investment over the next 20 years. The

update ensures compliance with state law while advancing the community's vision for a more resilient, connected, and livable Spokane.

Project Goals

The PlanSpokane 2046 update has been guided by the following goals:

- **Meet State Legislative Requirements:**
  Ensure compliance with the Growth Management Act (GMA) and recent legislative updates, including new requirements related to housing and climate planning.
- **Accommodate Growth:**
  Plan for projected population and employment growth by providing sufficient land capacity for housing, jobs, and services across the city.
- **Promote Housing Affordability and Choice:**
  Support a range of housing types and densities to meet the needs of residents at all income levels, consistent with updated state housing requirements.
- **Integrate Climate and Resiliency:**
  Incorporate strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, lower vehicle miles traveled, and improve the City's resilience to climate impacts, consistent with new state climate element requirements.
- **Improve Plan Usability:**
  Streamline the Comprehensive Plan by simplifying language, reducing redundancy, and making the document more accessible and user-friendly.
- **Reflect Community Vision:**
  Incorporate input from public engagement efforts to ensure that the updated plan aligns with community priorities and identifies gaps in existing policies.
- **Protect Critical Areas by updating critical area regulations:**
  Updates to the City's existing Critical Area Ordinances will be reviewed by Plan Commission and are anticipated to be completed in 2027.

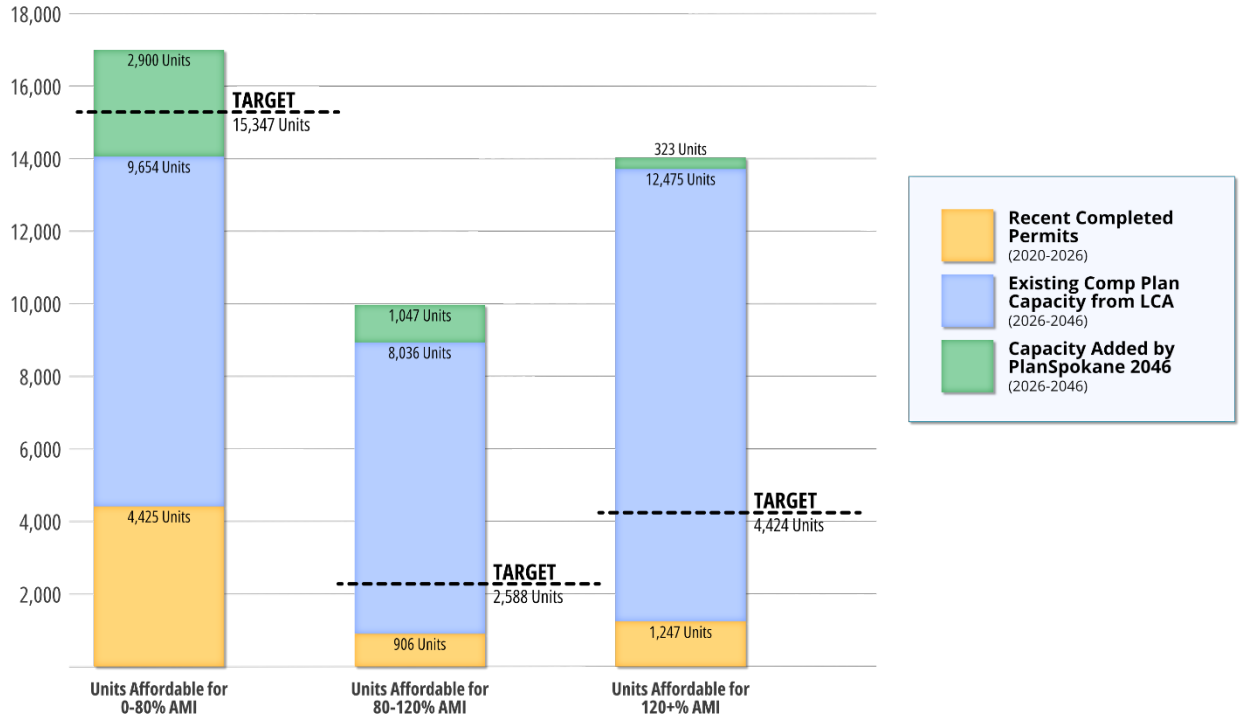
Growth Forecast and Allocation

Population Allocation

Population allocation (or, share given to cities), urbanized county areas, and rural areas were adopted on June 18, 2024, by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), Spokane County Resolution 2024-0348. Through this regional effort, the City of Spokane has been allocated a projected population to plan for, with an addition of 23,357 people by 2046. Spokane County is planning for a total increase of 100,065 people by 2046 (inclusive of the city's allocation). This reflects the Office of Financial Management (OFM) medium forecast. This forecast will be revisited for conformance during the 2031 *5-year Implementation Progress Report*, mandated by RCW 36.70A.130(9). The OFM forecast for Growth Management Act (GMA) population projections by counties will be revised in time for the next periodic update in 2036, with a planning horizon of 2036-2056.

Housing Allocation

Figure 1. City of Spokane Housing Unit Capacity by Affordability with HAPT Housing Unit Allocation 2020-2046



In previous periodic updates, including the 2017 periodic update, cities in the region used the population allocation, or estimated population increase, to create their own housing units need forecast. In addition to the previous requirements under GMA for cities to plan for population and employment increases, this 2026 periodic update incorporates new methods of estimating housing needs by forecast population in each income band, as required by HB 1220 (2021) and codified in RCW 36.70A.070.

The Spokane County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) adopted a methodology to estimate housing needs by income band in Spokane County Resolution 2025-0033, using the WA Commerce Housing for All Planning Tool (HAPT). Following this methodology, the City has prepared a full report *Accommodating Affordable Housing*, June 2025, with an October 2026 update to include the preferred alternative. This is a required document in preparation for the periodic update and is an appendix to the Comprehensive Plan. This work, along with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, identified gaps in the City's housing unit capacity by affordability if no change is undertaken, especially in the 0-80% AMI category. This gap has been addressed with changes to the Future Land Use Plan Map to add more area in the Residential High category, as well as additional Mixed Use category. More detailed analysis can be found in the Accommodating Affordable Housing report and the FEIS.

WA Commerce has extensive guidance on planning for housing on their webpage which was used by City of Spokane Planning staff and the Plan Commission in the review and revision of the Comprehensive Plan (https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growth-management/housing-planning/).

Inherent in this discussion is the recognition that, in the lower income bands, WA Commerce guidance indicates that affordable housing units are typically provided through multifamily housing units (see below table on WA Commerce Housing Typologies and their assumed affordability level). Additionally, current

data indicates that the most affordable units in Spokane are found in multi-unit housing. However, while necessary to accommodate the recommended housing types for incomes below 80% AMI, this does not preclude the City from allowing other types of units, such as cottage housing or townhomes, in all land use categories to meet those housing needs while still providing a path to homeownership.

The following table is from WA Commerce Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element Book 2 (January 2026). Further discussion mentioned in the table is available in the guidebook.

Figure 2. WA Department of Commerce graphic illustrating housing types by income levels.

Exhibit 12. Example of relating zone categories to housing types and income levels served in moderate-cost communities

Zone category	Typical housing types allowed	Lowest potential income level served		Assumed affordability level for capacity analysis
		Market rate	With subsidies and/or incentives	
Low Density	Detached single family homes	Higher income (>120% AMI)	Not typically feasible at scale*	**Higher income (>120% AMI)**
Moderate Density	Townhomes, duplex, triplex, quadplex	Moderate income (>80-120% AMI)	Not typically feasible at scale*	**Moderate income (>80-120% AMI)**
Low-Rise Multifamily	Walk-up apartments, condominiums (2-3-floors)	Low income (>50-80% AMI)	Extremely low and very low income (0-50% AMI)	**Low income (0-80% AMI) and PSH**
Mid-Rise Multifamily	Apartments, condominiums	Low income (>50-80% AMI)	Extremely low and very low income (0-50% AMI)	**Low income (0-80% AMI) and PSH**
ADUs (all zones)	Accessory Dwelling Units on developed residential lots	Low income (>50-80% AMI)	N/A	**Low income (>50-80% AMI) – Group with Low-Rise and/or Mid-Rise Multifamily**

* See discussion in 3.2 below.

Environmental Review (EIS Process)

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is an informational document that provides the City, public, Tribes, and agencies with information related to environmental impacts to be considered in the decision-making process. The document provides analysis of potential impacts related to land use, housing, transportation, and other environmental factors to help inform selection of the Preferred Alternative and identify potential mitigation to projected growth.

The PlanSpokane 2046 growth alternatives and Preferred Alternative were evaluated through a programmatic EIS process in accordance with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The FEIS analyzed the Preferred Alternative map and the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) draft prepared for the Plan Commission hearing on this matter. The FEIS, DEIS, and associated documents, including an interactive StoryMap, may be viewed at PlanSpokane.org.

The EIS process included:

- A SEPA Determination of Significance (DS) issued on February 5, 2025.
- The comment period for the DS (Scoping period) from February 5, 2025, to April 7, 2025.
- A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) prepared following the DS, and in conformance with the Board of County Commissioners Resolution 2024-0348 (population allocation) and the adopted Board of County Commissioners housing allocation methodology, BOCC Resolution 2025-0033.
- The DEIS issued on December 18, 2025.
- The comment period for the DEIS from December 18, 2025, to February 18, 2026. Upon request, an additional 15 days were provided, extending the comment period to March 5, 2026.
- Comments received from agencies and individuals during the DEIS comment period, have been compiled and responded to in the Final EIS.
- Programmatic Final EIS made available on October 26, 2026.
- A Notice of Availability of the FEIS published October 26, 2026.

Public Engagement

Public engagement has been integrated throughout the periodic update planning process. Opportunities for input include public workshops, comment periods associated with the EIS, and ongoing outreach to community members and stakeholders. Feedback received through these efforts has informed both the evaluation of alternatives and development of the Preferred Alternative and development of the Future Land Use Map. Engagement has been summarized in a series of engagement reports, available on the project webpage.

In addition to the listed Plan Commission workshops and public engagement opportunities, numerous public workshops discussing the PlanSpokane 2046 Periodic Update occurred with the Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board, Transportation Commission, and City Council. Overall, PlanSpokane 2046 has had over 4,800 direct individual touchpoints during engagement as of the end of September 2026, including workshop attendees, survey participants, and pop-up event discussions.

In addition to direct engagement and presentations, the project has incorporated robust outreach to provide community members information about the project and how to be involved. Outreach efforts have included the monthly PlanSpokane newsletter with approximately 1,800 subscribers, the City webpage, Engage Spokane virtual platform, interactive StoryMaps, an educational video series, other City newsletters, social media, and direct emails. Engagement analytics indicate there were over 50,000 views from community members learning about PlanSpokane 2046.

Additionally, all public comment received via email and written postcards have been provided to the Spokane Plan Commission in preparation for this public hearing, will be forwarded to City Council, and will also be provided to the City Clerk's Office as supporting documents to City Council's action. A summary of all public comments is available on the PlanSpokane 2046 website. The text of all public comments is also available upon request. Exhibit A, Climate Engagement Tracker, and Exhibit B, PlanSpokane Engagement Tracker is included in this staff report.

Comprehensive Plan Chapter Updates/Revisions to Existing Chapters

All Chapters, aside from Shorelines which is on a separate update cycle, were reviewed and revised as part of PlanSpokane 2046. All chapters have been reviewed by City of Spokane Planning staff using the WA Commerce Periodic Update Checklist as well as reviewed by WA Commerce staff, to ensure conformance with the required GMA Comprehensive Plan Elements described in RCW 36.70A.070. WA Commerce is currently engaged in rulemaking for the housing element.

The first component of the process involves reviewing and revising the existing elements (chapters and technical appendices) of the Comprehensive Plan. This work includes updating policies to reflect changes in state law, incorporating new requirements related to housing and climate, and improving the overall clarity and usability of the document. Note that in the Growth Management Act required features such as transportation are described as "elements". These features are typically adopted as a "chapter" of a Comprehensive Plan, but this is not a GMA requirement.

Draft chapters have been developed and made available for public and Plan Commission review throughout the process, allowing for continual community feedback and refinement. The Plan Commission also established the Chapter Review Subcommittee to undertake chapter review. These were open public meetings and guided the review and revision of all Chapters, excluding Shorelines.

The last update to the text of the Comprehensive Plan Chapters was published on the city's webpage PlanSpokane.org on October 26, 2026. This is referred to as the "Plan Commission Hearing Draft". Changes to the plan may be made by the Plan Commission during their Public Hearing, currently scheduled for November 9, 2026. These changes will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at their public hearing on this matter, not yet scheduled.

The following is discussion of Comprehensive Plan GMA "elements" and PlanSpokane Chapters which underwent significant change or modification.

Community Indicators

This is a new chapter added to the Comprehensive Plan as Chapter 2. It replaces the previous Chapter 2 which was titled Implementation. This is not a required Comprehensive Plan element, but it does

incorporate new GMA "5-year Check In" also known as the Implementation Progress Report RCW 36.70A.130. The Chapter provides a framework for the City to track and monitor progress in implementing the Comprehensive Plan, while ensuring key themes heard from the community during public engagement continue to be considered after adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

Climate Planning and Resilience Element Integration

A new element, Climate Planning and Resilience, was required to be added for the 2026 periodic update. The City of Spokane has chosen to integrate the climate element into existing chapters, rather than create a new element/chapter. For brevity in this document, the climate planning work is documented in the Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board Resolution 2026-001, *Resolution recommending support of the Climate Policy Integration Document in the 2026 Periodic Update* (February 2026).

Key topics of the climate element include greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). In addition to new Comprehensive Plan goals and policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions and stabilizing VMT per capita, the Future Land Use Map places development emphasis near transit investments, and downtown to support those efforts. FEIS analysis of the Preferred Alternative found improvement in GHG and VMT goals over Alternative 1, Existing Conditions. However, as demonstrated in the DEIS alternative review, VMT reduction planning goal cannot be addressed through adjustments to land use alone. Through the goals and policies in PlanSpokane 2046, and the associated programs and projects that will carry them out, the City recognizes that achieving VMT per capita reductions, as required by RCW, requires going beyond the growth scenario alone and into other areas of programming and investment, such as investing in Transportation Demand Management programs and accelerating the buildout of the City's multimodal transportation network. The Transportation Facilities Plan located in Appendix C – Transportation, provides further assessment and targets addressing VMT and Multimodal Level of Service (MMLOS), as required by recent climate planning legislation.

Housing Element Updates, including planning for housing units by income bands

As part of the PlanSpokane 2046 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, the City of Spokane is seeking to better understand how to support existing housing while also addressing future housing needs. With that goal in mind, the City has undertaken several directed projects analyzing local housing needs and capacity. Many of these are mandated and guided by changes to the Growth Management Act adopted by the State Legislature in recent years. These include the 2023 "Middle Housing Bill" (House Bill or "HB" 1110) and the 2021 housing needs bill (HB 1220). All of the following work builds upon the Housing Action Plan, adopted in July 2021.

The City of Spokane has updated the Housing Element using WA Commerce Guidance. The regional Housing Unit allocation process was outlined earlier in this document. The Housing Chapter has been updated to include definitions and policies around STEP housing.

Additional study and documentation have been undertaken and are included as appendices to this update to the Comprehensive Plan. These include:

- City's Land Capacity Analysis, adopted by City Council in February (RES 2025-0015)

- Accommodating Affordable Housing report updated in October 2026 to include Emergency Housing Capacity.
- Racially Disparate Impacts and Displacement Risk Report, October 2025

In addition, the City has prepared a report *"Adequate Provisions for Existing and Projected Housing Needs of All Economic Segments of the Community",* as required by RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d) outlining the current programs that support the development of affordable housing, anticipated to be recognized by City Council by resolution at time of Comprehensive Plan adoption. Additional housing incentive programs may become available to the city in the future through the federal housing bill known as the *21st Century ROAD to Housing Act* as well as WA state programs.

Capital Facilities and Utilities

The Capital Facilities Element of PlanSpokane 2046, as required by the Growth Management Act (GMA), consists of three main parts. The first is the Capital Facilities Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, which provides the guiding framework for capital facilities management and growth through goals and policies. Second is the Capital Facilities Plan, which is the twenty-year facilities plan and level of service standards. Third is the Capital Improvement Program which is a six-year budget and implementation plan for capital facilities.

In this update, the Capital Facilities Plan has been written to guide the coordination of anticipated growth and the development of crucial services like water systems and sanitary sewer systems, stormwater facilities, schools, and parks over the next twenty years. This Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) provides the long-range work program for capital facilities, carries out the intent of the Comprehensive Plan, and gives further direction to implement the plan.

The CFP identifies both long-range facility service capacities and projected deficiencies, then outlines the actions necessary to meet such deficiencies. When a department or organization has prepared a separate plan that provides a more detailed analysis of these elements, the CFP directs the reader to those plans. The City of Spokane conducts a number of these "functional" or specific plans to address specific utility and service needs, such as the 6-Year Water Program. City-led, system-specific plans, such as the Water Program, are available online here through City of Spokane Capital Programs.

The updated CFP also contains an inventory of existing and proposed capital facilities, establishes level of service (LOS) standards, apart from transportation elements that are addressed separately in the Transportation Facilities Plan in Appendix C – Transportation of the Comprehensive Plan. The Transportation Facilities Plan addresses new statewide requirements for transportation LOS standards that include Multimodal Level of Service (MMLOS), as well as new statewide requirements for assessing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

In updating the Capital Facilities Element and CFP to address qualitative rather than quantitative measures of LOS for crucial services such as public safety and utilities, and by updating the CFP to include climate planning, the Capital Facilities and Utilities components of PlanSpokane 2046 achieve compliance with RCW 36.70A - Growth Management – Planning by Selected Counties and Cities.

Growth Strategy (Land Use Element)

A key component of the work around this Periodic Update to the Comprehensive Plan has focused on updating the City's long-term growth strategy to respond to changing needs. The City developed and evaluated three growth alternatives and analyzed them in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), representing different approaches to accommodating future population and employment growth. These alternatives were informed by technical analysis and refined through feedback from the public and the Spokane Plan Commission. The three alternatives analyzed were: 1) "Stay the Course," 2) "Distributed & Balanced," and 3) "Center City & Regional Hubs," representing the range of ways to accommodate growth.

Based on this evaluation, a Preferred Alternative Growth Map was developed. This map provides a policy-level framework for where and how growth should occur and serves as a foundation for the development of a Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan Commission held a Public Hearing on the Preferred Alternative Map in April 2026. Their recommendation was forwarded to City Council, who held a Public Hearing on this in May 2026, at which time staff was directed to proceed with creating a Future Land Use Plan Map from the direction in the Preferred Alternative.

A central component of this update is the selection of a preferred growth strategy for the City of Spokane through 2046. Three alternatives were evaluated through a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) released for public comment in December 2025. Based on this analysis, along with public engagement and Plan Commission input, staff with direction from Plan Commission developed a Preferred Alternative Growth Map that blended key features of Alternatives 2 and 3. On April 14, 2026, the Plan Commission held a public hearing on the Preferred Alternative Growth Map, and forwarded a generalized recommendation to City Council on what changes should be considered in the next phase of work, leading to a Future Land Use Map. City Council on May 18, 2026, RES 2026-0035, adopted a Preferred Alternative Land Use Map, with minor modifications to the Plan Commission version sent to them.

The Preferred Alternative and subsequent Future Land Use Map was designed to:

- Accommodate projected population growth of at least 23,357 residents by 2046;
- Provide sufficient housing capacity across all income levels, consistent with new state housing requirements and the requirements of RCW 36.70A.070;
- Support climate goals by encouraging more compact, transit-oriented development patterns;
- Maintain employment capacity and existing industrial land uses; and
- Utilize existing infrastructure and public investments efficiently.

The FEIS analysis indicates that the Future Land Use Map improves the outcomes listed above compared to existing conditions, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, vehicle miles traveled, land use efficiency, and housing affordability at all income bands.

In addition to planning for population growth and land use, the DEIS analysis looked at three different employment scenarios. Since Spokane County, unlike some other parts of WA state, does not adopt an employment projection, the City wished to explore various scenarios to identify potential differing impacts of the different scenarios. For regional consistency, the City's FEIS uses the Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC)'s employment projections. Employment projections follow the Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) allocations that SRTC uses in the regional model.

Future Land Use Map, a component of the Growth Strategy

The Future Land Use Map, housed in the Growth Strategy chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, was developed following adoption of the more generalized Preferred Alternative Growth Map and represents the City's recommended approach for accommodating future growth as part of the 2026 Periodic Update to the Comprehensive Plan (PlanSpokane 2046). This alternative is informed by technical analysis in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), public engagement, and guidance from the Spokane Plan Commission.

Key Characteristics

- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD):**
  The Future Land Use Map emphasizes increased residential and mixed-use development near existing and planned transit corridors and downtown. This pattern supports limiting vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions while improving access to jobs and services.
- **Housing Capacity and Affordability:**
  The Future Land Use Map provides sufficient land use capacity to accommodate projected population growth and meet state requirements for housing across all income levels. Increased capacity is focused in areas where multifamily and mixed-income housing types have access to transit and services.
- **Targeted Growth:**
  Existing centers and corridors (focused growth areas) are updated to "Mixed Use Land Use" under the Urban Hubs strategy but continue to provide a focus for mixed use (commercial and residential) growth, with additional land use capacity introduced in select locations. This reinforces established development patterns while allowing for strategic intensification. The draft Growth Strategy goals recognize the benefit of limited mixed-use development and neighborhood-scale commercial outside of these designated areas to provide greater access to services and daily needs for all community members. The allowance of neighborhood scale businesses will be addressed in the updated Development Code (BUILDSpokane) in 2027.
- **Downtown and Core Areas:**
  The draft Future Land Use Map maintains current development allowances in downtown Spokane, including areas with no height limits. This supports continued high-intensity development and reinforces downtown as a regional employment and activity center. The Spokane Downtown Plan, adopted by ordinance C-36080, as part of the Comprehensive Plan in September 2021 will continue as a component of the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- **Limited Change in Some Areas:**
  Areas such as Latah Valley, Grandview, and Thorpe generally retain existing land use designations, with only minor adjustments studied in this area along Inland Empire Way (in the Vinegar Flats area). This approach recognizes existing development patterns and planned growth already underway. Additional areas not identified for growth priority or intensity increases in the Preferred Alternative Growth Map are intended to maintain their current level of intensity and allowances. The Plan Commission or City Council may remand the draft to designate areas for "subarea" or "area specific" planning if additional small area analysis is required.

- **Integration of Ongoing and Recent Planning Efforts:**
  The Future Land Use Map incorporates recommendations from recent and ongoing subarea planning efforts, including:
    - Division Street TOD planning
    - East Central (ReFIVE/5th Avenue) planning
    - Centers and Corridors Update Study
    - South Logan TOD Plan
    - Hillyard Sub Area Plan
- **Efficient Use of Infrastructure:**
  By focusing growth in already-served areas, the Future Land Use Map leverages existing utility systems and public investments, while planning where additional infrastructure expansion may be necessary.

Staff Recommendation

City Staff recommends that the Plan Commission finds the draft PlanSpokane 2026-2046 Comprehensive Plan to be consistent with the goals and requirements of RCW 36.70A.130 and forwards a recommendation of approval to the City Council.

The updated Comprehensive Plan, PlanSpokane 2046, meets the City's objectives for growth management, housing, and climate integration. Compared to existing conditions, it demonstrates improved performance in areas evaluated in the FEIS, including housing capacity, environmental outcomes, particularly around GHG and VMT, and land use efficiency.

This periodic update also reflects community desire while aligning with state requirements for planning for housing at all income levels and integrating climate considerations into land use planning. However, Plan Commission may still propose amendments to this document at their hearing and City Council may also adjust at their adoption of the periodic update to the Comprehensive Plan by Resolution, expected in early 2027. In general, any amendments should avoid expanding beyond the growth that was analyzed in the FEIS to avoid additional costs and time.

Based on review of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), applicable state requirements, and public input received to date, staff finds that PlanSpokane 2046:

- **Provides Adequate Housing Capacity:**
  Accommodates projected population growth and meets state requirements to plan for housing across all income levels, including increased capacity for multifamily housing.
- **Supports Employment and Economic Development:**
  Maintains existing industrial land designations and preserves sufficient land capacity for employment uses.
- **Enhances Mixed-Use and Commercial Opportunities:**
  Expands and strengthens centers and corridors through the transition to Urban Hubs and expands opportunities for mixed-use and neighborhood-serving commercial development throughout the city.
- **Advances Climate and Sustainability Goals:**
  Promotes compact, transit-oriented development patterns that contribute to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

- **Utilizes Existing Infrastructure Efficiently:**
  Focuses growth in areas with existing or planned infrastructure, supporting cost-effective service delivery and minimizing the need for expansion.
- **Aligns with the Comprehensive Plan Update Process:**
  Reflects analysis conducted through the EIS, incorporates community input, and is consistent with guidance from the Washington State Department of Commerce and RCW 36.70A (Growth Management Act).

Plan Commission Action

The Plan Commission is asked to make a recommendation to City Council for adoption of the PlanSpokane 2026-2046 and find that this periodic update meets the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act RCW 36.70A.

This item will then move forward to the City Council for consideration. This is expected in early 2027.

Exhibits:

A. Climate Public Engagement Tracker
B. Public Engagement Tracker PlanSpokane

Exhibit A:

Climate Public Engagement Tracker

Climate Planning Public Engagement and Outreach Tracker

The engagement and outreach opportunities below are associated specifically with the Climate Planning effort as part of PlanSpokane 2046. Where information duplicates events tracked under overall PlanSpokane 2046 outreach and engagement, these events included targeted Climate Planning information and activities. More information, including engagement summaries, can be found at my.spokanecity.org/climateplanning.

Event	Date
Expo '74 Tabling Event, City Block	May 18, 2024
City Council Study Session	Aug. 29, 2024
Fall Leaf Festival Tabling Event	Nov. 19, 2024
Community Climate Planning Survey	Dec. 5, 2024 – Jan. 31, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Dec. 12, 2024
District 2 Neighborhood Council Workshop	Dec. 17, 2024
District 3 Neighborhood Council Workshop	Dec. 18, 2024
District 1 Neighborhood Council Workshop	Dec. 18, 2024
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Jan. 9, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	Jan. 22, 2025
Council Chambers Tabling	Jan. 27, 2025
City Council Urban Experience Committee	Feb. 10, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Feb. 13, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Mar. 13, 2025
City Council PIES Committee	Mar. 17, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	Mar. 26, 2025
Aging & Long-Term Care of Eastern WA	Mar. 28, 2025
Riverfront Spring Market Tabling	Apr. 9, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Apr. 10, 2025
Growing Neighbors Presentation	Apr 14, 2025
Lilac City Live Tabling	Apr. 17, 2025
City Council PIES Committee	Apr. 21, 2025
Earth Day Community Workshop	Apr. 22, 2025
Eastern Earth Day Tabling	Apr. 23, 2025



Climate Planning was funded by Washington's Climate Commitment Act. The WA Department of Commerce climate planning grant is supported with funding from Washington's Climate Commitment Act. The CCA supports Washington's climate action efforts by putting cap-and-invest dollars to work reducing climate pollution, creating jobs, and improving public health. Information about the CCA is available on their website.

Climate Planning Public Engagement and Outreach Tracker

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Event	Date
Friends of the Library Book Sale Tabling	Apr. 26, 2025
Arbor Day Celebration Tabling	Apr. 26, 2025
ReCraft Fair and Earth Day Block Party	Apr. 26, 2025
Focus Group: Youth	Apr. 28, 2025
Focus Group: NE Spokane	May 3, 2025
Focus Group: Climate Justice	May 7, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	May 22, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	June 12, 2025
City Council PIES Committee	June 16, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	July 10, 2025
Community Climate Policy Survey	July 21, 2025 – Aug. 31, 2025
Unity in the Community Tabling	Aug. 16, 2025
Council Chambers Tabling	Aug. 25, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Sept. 18, 2025
WSECU Fall Fest	Oct. 4, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Oct. 9, 2025
Fall Leaf Festival	Oct. 18, 2025
Neighborhood Summit Tabling	Oct. 25, 2025
Joint Meeting w/ Plan Commission and Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Oct. 29, 2025
District 2 Community Workshop	Nov. 5, 2025
District 1 Community Workshop	Nov. 12, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Nov. 13, 2025
Focus Group: Youth	Nov. 13, 2025
District 3 Community Workshop	Nov. 18, 2025



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Climate Planning Public Engagement and Outreach Tracker

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Event	Date
Citywide Community Workshop	Nov. 19, 2025
Focus Group: Climate Justice	Nov. 19, 2025
Focus Group: Food Access and Security	Dec. 2, 2025
Focus Group: Under-Resourced Communities	Dec. 3, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Dec. 11, 2025
Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Jan. 8, 2026
Joint Meeting w/ Plan Commission and Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board	Jan. 28, 2026
Environmental Justice Workshop	Feb. 26, 2026
Spokane Mountaineers Presentation	Mar. 16, 2026

FUNDED BY WASHINGTON'S CLIMATE COMMITMENT ACT

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Exhibit B:

PlanSpokane Public Engagement Tracker

Periodic Update Public Engagement and Outreach Tracker

The below engagement and outreach opportunities are related specifically to the overall PlanSpokane 2046 periodic update. Summaries of the engagement opportunities can be found on the About page of PlanSpokane.org.

Event	Date
Plan Commission Workshop	Sept. 25, 2024
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Oct. 3, 2024
City Council Study Session	Oct. 24, 2024
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Nov. 7, 2024
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Dec. 5, 2024
Plan Commission Workshop	Dec. 11, 2024
Plan Commission Workshop	Jan. 8, 2025
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Jan. 9, 2025
Engage Spokane Vision Board	Jan. 9, 2025 – Apr. 10, 2025
City Council Urban Experience Committee	Jan. 12, 2025
Council Chambers Tabling	Jan. 27, 2025
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Feb. 6, 2025
Spokane Neighborhoods Community Assembly	Feb. 6, 2025
Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council	Feb. 18, 2025
Agency and Tribal Meeting	Feb. 19, 2025
Spokane Continuum of Care Board	Feb. 25, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	Feb. 26, 2025
Land Use Subcommittee of CA	Feb. 27, 2025
District 1 Visioning Workshop	Mar. 5, 2025
Police Captains Presentation	Mar. 5, 2025
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Mar. 6, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	Mar. 12, 2025
Community-Wide Visioning Workshop	Mar. 12, 2025
Chief Garry Park Neighborhood Council	Mar. 19, 2025
District 2 Visioning Workshop	Mar. 25, 2025
District 3 Visioning Workshop	Mar. 27, 2025
Aging & Long-Term Care of Eastern WA	Mar. 28, 2025

Periodic Update Public Engagement and Outreach Tracker

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Event	Date
Visioning Survey	Mar. 31 – Apr 18, 2025
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Apr. 3, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Apr. 9, 2025
Riverfront Spring Market Tabling	Apr. 9, 2025
NEPDA Presentation	Apr. 11, 2025
Lilac City Live Tabling	Apr. 17, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	Apr. 23, 2025
Friends of the Library Book Sale Tabling	Apr 26, 2025
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	May 8, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	May 14, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	May 28, 2025
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	June 5, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	June 11, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	June 25, 2025
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	June 26, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	July 9, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	July 23, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	Aug. 13, 2025
Unity in the Community Tabling	Aug. 16, 2025
Council Chambers Tabling	Aug. 25, 2025
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Sept. 4, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	Sept. 10, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	Sept. 24, 2025
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Oct. 2, 2025
WSECU Fall Fest	Oct. 4, 2025
Fall Leaf Festival	Oct. 18, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	Oct. 22, 2025

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Event	Date
Land Use Subcommittee of CA	Oct. 23, 2025
Neighborhood Summit Tabling	Oct. 25, 2025
District 2 Community Workshop	Nov. 5, 2025
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Nov. 6, 2025
Spokane Neighborhoods Community Assembly	Nov. 6, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	Nov. 12, 2025
District 1 Community Workshop	Nov. 12, 2025
District 3 Community Workshop	Nov. 18, 2025
Citywide Community Workshop	Nov. 19, 2025
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Dec. 4, 2025
Plan Commission Workshop	Dec. 10, 2025
PlanSpokane DEIS Agency and Tribal Govt Mtg	Jan. 6, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Jan. 8, 2026
Council Chambers Tabling	Jan. 12, 2026
PlanSpokane Virtual Lunch and Learn	Jan. 13, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Jan. 14, 2026
PlanSpokane Listening Hours – City Hall	Jan. 20, 2026
Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council Meeting	Jan. 20, 2026
Downtown BID Board Presentation	Jan. 21, 2026
DSP Board Presentation	Jan. 21, 2026
Spokane Urban Nature Presentation	Jan. 23, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Jan. 28, 2026
PlanSpokane Listening Hours – Hillyard	Feb. 3, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Feb. 5, 2026
PlanSpokane Listening Hours – Liberty Park	Feb. 5, 2026
PlanSpokane Listening Hours – Shadle Park	Feb. 10, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Feb. 11, 2026

Periodic Update Public Engagement and Outreach Tracker

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Event	Date
PlanSpokane Listening Hours – South Hill	Feb. 12, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Feb. 25, 2026
City Council Study Session	Feb. 26, 2026
Spokane-Kootenai Real Estate Market Forum Tabling	Feb. 26, 2026
Mayor's Small Business Advisory Council	Mar. 3, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Mar. 5, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Mar. 11, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Mar. 25, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Apr. 2, 2026
Spokane Neighborhoods Community Assembly	Apr. 2, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Apr. 13, 2026
Community Days Tabling	Apr. 13, 2026
City Council Urban Experience Committee	Apr. 20, 2026
Jewish Family Services Presentation	Apr. 23, 2026
Arbor Day Celebration Tabling	Apr. 25, 2026
City Council Finance and Administration Committee	Apr. 27, 2026
Latah Valley Community Open House - Tabling	Apr. 28, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	May 7, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	May 13, 2026
West Central Neighborhood Council Presentation	May 13, 2026
City Council Study Session	May 14, 2026
NAI Black Presentation	June 2, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	June 4, 2026
Spokane Neighborhoods Community Assembly	June 4, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	June 22, 2026
Spokane Arts Commission Presentation	June 23, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	July 2, 2026

Periodic Update Public Engagement and Outreach Tracker

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Event	Date
Plan Commission Workshop	July 23, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Aug. 13, 2026
Lincoln Heights Neighborhood Council	Aug. 18, 2026
City Council Study Session	Aug. 20, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Aug. 26, 2026
Emerson Garfield Neighborhood Council	Aug. 26, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Sept. 3, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Sept. 9, 2026
Neighborhood Council and CA Comment Period Presentation	Sept. 21, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Sept. 23, 2026
District 1 Coffee Chat	Sept. 29, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Oct. 1, 2026
Spokane Neighborhoods Community Assembly	Oct. 1, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Oct. 14, 2026
PlanSpokane Monthly Newsletter	Oct. 27, 2026
Plan Commission Workshop	Oct. 28, 2026