

Chapter and Policy Update

The City has completed the first round of review and edits to several Comprehensive Plan chapters. The following document provides the updated goals and policies meant to guide growth and development in the City of Spokane through the lens of the **Neighborhoods** element.

As part of the [PlanSpokane 2046 Periodic Update](#), drafts of the non-technical chapters of the Comprehensive Plan are now available for public review and comment. **Please send all comments and recommendations to PlanSpokane@spokanecity.org.** We encourage the public to include the Chapter name and Goal/Policy number(s) as applicable for ease of comment consideration.

Each of the available chapters have been updated from the [current Comprehensive Plan](#) to reflect recent plans and studies, updated state legislation, and extensive community feedback, seeking to create a streamlined plan that will be easier to read and implement.

Updates throughout the draft chapters include the removal of unnecessary text as well as new, moved, or removed policies. Also included are minor edits to the language to ensure clarity and consistency throughout the Plan. Not all minor edits have been marked, but icons and notes (shown in the sidebar on the right) provide additional insight into larger changes. Any policies removed from the chapter are highlighted at the end.

Additional changes to each chapter are likely to occur based on continued [Climate Planning](#) and [Racially Disparate Impacts Analysis](#) as well as public feedback and the selection of a preferred alternative for the final Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). See PlanSpokane.org for more information on all the ongoing work for PlanSpokane 2046.

In summary, to date, this chapter has seen the following changes:

Community Health REPORT CARD	
Action	Number of Policies
New Goals & Policies	7
Removed Goals & Policies	2
Changed Goals & Policies (Moved, Change in Direction)	5

To help track where changes have been made, the following icons will appear where:



General information or notation is provided, clarifying changes to the existing text.



Language was streamlined or condensed. Minor changes won't be marked.



New text or policy was added, not sourced from the current plan.



Two or more policies in the existing plan were combined into one.



A policy or language was added because of a change in state law requirements.



Climate and Resiliency work might impact this language in the future.



Racially Disparate Impacts or Displacement work may impact this language in the future.



Text, goals, or policies were removed—a reason will be provided.

Neighborhoods

Introduction: The Future of Spokane's Neighborhoods

The neighborhoods chapter contains goals and policies that set the direction for citywide neighborhood growth and development. They establish basic principles that apply to all neighborhoods, ensuring an overall growth pattern that represents the interests and desires of the entire community.

This chapter's goals and policies are intended to enable Spokane to be a cohesive network of unique neighborhoods that residents are proud to call home by providing residents with all they need to live healthy, happy lives.

Discussion of Spokane's neighborhoods cannot be complete without highlighting the Neighborhood Councils. Often it can be difficult to discern whether policy or other guidance in this document is referring to Neighborhood Councils - the member bodies that inform and represent the neighborhoods as described in Article VIII of the City Charter- or the physical neighborhood itself. In general, these goals and policies apply to and benefit both. For clarity, any time the text is referring directly to the Neighborhood Councils, the full term will be used. The word 'neighborhood' generally refers to the physical neighborhood, which may or may not conform to the Neighborhood Councils boundaries.

Goals and Policies

Goals and policies provide specificity for planning and decision-making. Overall, they indicate desired directions, aims, or accomplishments in relation to the growth and development of Spokane.

Goal: N-1, The Downtown Neighborhood

Recognize downtown Spokane as the primary economic and cultural center of the region and improve its viability as a desirable neighborhood in which to live, visit, and conduct business.

Policy: N-1.1, Downtown Development

Provide a variety of housing, recreation, and daily service opportunities within the downtown neighborhood that attract and retain neighborhood residents at all income levels who support downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, recognizing the value that the downtown neighborhood holds for all residents, visitors, and employees in the city.

Goal: N-2, Neighborhood Development

Reinforce the stability and vibrancy of the city's neighborhoods to attract a diversity of residents and businesses to ensure high residential quality, community connectedness, and economic vitality.



Better cross-referencing is something staff is developing as part of the final format—including a needed cross reference here to Chapter 13, Governance through Civic Participation.



The header section here used to include a reference to the EIS, but since the City is developing a new EIS for this update the reference was out of date.



This policy has been reworded to strengthen the downtown neighborhood's relationship to other neighborhoods.

Policy: N-2.1, Neighborhood Quality of Life

Ensure that Spokane's neighborhoods continue to offer residents transportation and living options, safe streets, and trusted public services, as well as cultural, social, economic, educational, and recreational opportunities that sustain and enhance the vitality, diversity, and quality of life within neighborhoods.

Policy: N-2.2, Neighborhood Services

Provide economic opportunities and community events that are centrally located, easily accessible, and affordable to support neighborhoods in enabling people to live, work, shop, socialize, and receive other essential services within their neighborhood.

Policy: N-2.3, Accessible Services

Ensure that neighborhood-based services are available and accessible to residents of all ages and abilities, such as being in proximity to public transit routes, bicycle infrastructure, or robust amenities for people walking and rolling.

Policy: N-2.4, Neighborhood Improvement

Encourage revitalization and improvement programs to conserve and upgrade existing properties and buildings to prevent deterioration of current housing stock and support adaptive reuse.

Policy: N-2.5, Neighborhood Arts

Provide access to public art, including sculptures, murals, special sites, and facilities, in all neighborhoods through programs and investments.

Policy: N-2.6, Housing Diversity

Expand the diversity of housing options for neighborhood residents of all income levels by preserving existing housing and allowing for the development of moderate density housing options in all neighborhoods.

Policy: N-2.7, Building Community and Sense of Place

Promote efforts that provide neighborhoods with social amenities, opportunities for social interaction, and a sense of place and belonging that helps build community connection.

Goal: N-3, Neighborhood Facilities

Maximize the usefulness of, and access to, existing and future neighborhood facilities and services while minimizing the impacts of major facilities located within neighborhoods.



"Cultural opportunities" was added here to highlight their value to communities.



Some of the terms in this policy have been updated to more current/inclusive forms.



This policy has been updated to provide additional support for resiliency.



A cross-reference to Chapter 3, Land Use, is likely to be included here.



Policy 2.6 is new, sourced from the Building Opportunity for Housing work and held until the update to include. It also has connections to ongoing anti-displacement work.



Policy N-2.7 was formerly a goal—it has been combined into a policy under Goal N-2.



A cross-reference will be added here to the term "major facilities" in the glossary.

Policy: N-3.1, Multipurpose Use of Neighborhood Facilities

Work with neighborhoods to develop a strategy for the multipurpose and/or shared use of existing structures and the extension of services within neighborhoods for neighborhood activities.

Policy: N-3.2, Major Facilities

Work with Neighborhood Councils and relevant groups to explore mitigation measures, public amenity enhancements, and alternative locations when siting major facilities.

Policy: N-3.3, Gathering Places

Increase the number of public gathering places within neighborhoods to encourage neighborhood socialization and promote a more cohesive and safer neighborhood, including the provision of indoor spaces for gatherings and events in all weather and seasons.

Goal: N-4, Traffic and Circulation

Provide Spokane residents with clean air, safe streets, and peaceful living environments by ensuring impacts to neighborhoods are considered when planning or changing the transportation network, particularly in overburdened communities.

Policy: N-4.1, Neighborhood Streets

Refrain, when possible, from constructing new arterials or other high-traffic roadways that bisect neighborhoods and from widening streets within neighborhoods for the purpose of accommodating additional automobiles.

Policy: N-4.2, Traffic Patterns

Alter traffic patterns and enhance neighborhood streets to include large street trees, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, traffic circles, stop signs, and/or narrower streets to discourage speeding and improve neighborhood safety.

Policy: N-4.3, Neighborhood Business Traffic

Ensure that the size of a neighborhood business is appropriate for the size of the neighborhood it serves so that trips generated by non-local traffic through the neighborhood are minimized.

Policy: N-4.4, Multimodal Transportation

Promote a variety of transportation options, including walking, biking, rolling, and public transportation, to reduce automobile dependency and neighborhood traffic.



Neighborhood Facilities may be added to the glossary of defined terms later in the update.



The original policy was redundant with policies in Chapter 3. It has been reworded to focus more on neighborhood impacts.



This policy was moved here from Goal N-7, which has been made a policy under Goal N-2.



Original Policy 4.1 and the goal were combined into one, better aligning with the intent of this Chapter. As a result, the policies below have been renumbered by one. Traffic has a strong climate connection as well.



This policy was updated to more closely relate to current complete streets and safe transportation concepts.



This policy may move to Chapter 3, where the document will likely address commercial uses inside residential neighborhoods more directly.



Examples of what constitutes "multimodal" were added to N-4.4 to ensure clarity.

Policy: N-4.5, Connections for People Who Walk or Bike

Establish a continuous network of facilities and paths between and among all neighborhoods for the use of people who walk, bike or use other forms of human-scale mobility.

Policy: N-4.6, Design for Walking

Design neighborhoods for people walking by increasing transportation options, convenience, safety, social interaction, and comfortable streetscapes, recognizing that meeting the needs of people walking has benefits for those using all forms of mobility.

Policy: N-4.7, Sidewalks

Identify and implement strategies to maintain, repair, or build new sidewalks in existing neighborhoods with connectivity gaps, and require sidewalks in new areas of development.

Policy: N-4.8, Safe Mobility

Establish design principles to enhance safety in neighborhoods for people walking or biking through adequate lighting, crosswalks, landscape design, sidewalks, pathways, building access visible from the street, and open views.

Policy: N-4.9, School Walking and Bus Routes

Coordinate with local schools and colleges to identify bus, biking, and walking routes to and from neighborhood schools that require safety and infrastructure improvements.

Goal: N-5, Open Space

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

Policy: N-5.1, Future Parks Planning

Develop and utilize public-private partnerships between neighborhood groups and the City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department to locate land and develop financing strategies that meet the level of service standards for neighborhood parks and/or open space to provide neighborhood residents with areas for recreation and socializing, reinforcing a sense of home and community.

Policy: N-5.2, Connectivity via Greenbelts and Open Space

Connect neighborhoods with an open space greenbelt system, including paths and non-vehicular access, to increase opportunities for alternative forms of transportation between and among neighborhoods.



The 'discussion' under this policy has been incorporated into the policy itself.



The mention of safety improvements in this policy was added following public engagement on the South Logan TOD Study, highlighting that need.



Some of the language in the original 'discussion' under this policy has been inserted into the policy itself.



Connectivity between neighborhoods was a big topic during public engagement efforts. Thus, these concepts have been strengthened here.

Goal: N-6, The Natural Environment

Protect and enhance the natural environment within neighborhoods.

Policy: N-6.1, Environmental Planning

Protect and steward the natural environment within neighborhoods when introducing new projects to support community health, safety, and livability.

Policy: N-6.2, Open Space and Nature Corridors

Consider and implement connections between and among neighborhoods and designated open spaces/nature corridors when planning, designating, and maintaining such areas.

Policy: N-6.3, Maintenance of City-Owned Open Space and Amenities

Coordinate and partner with neighborhood groups in the maintenance and operation of City property, with the intent of ensuring proper maintenance and operation of facilities for neighborhood use like greenways, paths, street features, and parks.

Goal: N-7, Neighborhood Planning

Goal: Coordinate and partner with Neighborhood Councils when developing, adopting, or amending public projects and programs in consideration of each neighborhood's sense of identity, unique needs, and opportunities.

Policy: N-7.1, Inclusive Neighborhood Planning

Ensure that any planning involving or affecting neighborhoods is conducted to include the contribution of all interested parties, including those from vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, Neighborhood Councils, institutions, organizations, and individuals of all ages and abilities, property owners, renters, businesses, employees, and visitors.

Policy: N-7.2, Neighborhood Planning

Develop a process and avenues through which neighborhood groups and residents can participate in and inform community planning, policy, and code development and amendments, commensurate with the requirements of state law and the ideals of inclusive, effective planning.

Policy: N-7.3, Plan Consistency and Implementation

Consider and address the needs of neighborhoods expressed in adopted neighborhood plans by consulting these plans and analyzing the impacts of any new City plans, programs, or policies against the goals and stated desires of neighborhood plans, including during comprehensive plan amendments and updates.



N-6.2 and N-6.3 have been reworded to provide for a connection between the topic and neighborhoods.



Neighborhood planning has evolved in Spokane over time—this goal and its policies have been reworded to better reflect that there is and should be multiple opportunities and avenues for neighborhood interaction with the policy and planning of the City, not just the one program that began in the past.



Some of the policies in the Governance and Public Participation chapter are related to these concepts. Accordingly, a cross reference to that chapter is likely to be added for this goal.



The ongoing Climate and Resiliency work may impact this section later in the process.

Policy: N-7.4, Connections and Impacts Between and Among Neighborhoods

Consider the impacts of decisions on both the neighborhood most directly involved but also how neighborhoods are interconnected and relate to each other when conducting planning or policy/code amendments.

POLICIES REMOVED FROM THE TEXT:

The following policies have been removed from the text, largely due to redundancy, unclear goals/success, and similar factors.

Policy: N-5.2, Parks and Squares in Neighborhood Centers

Include a park and/or square in each neighborhood center.

Policy: N-7.2, City Hall Outreach

Encourage City Hall outreach efforts in neighborhoods by providing neighborhoods with public information regarding city announcements, newsletters, and other neighborhood specific information.

Policy: N-6.2, Code Enforcement

Enforce the city codes for public nuisances impacting neighborhood properties.

Policy: N-8.7, Agreement for Joint Planning

Agree Coordinate with the county, affected neighborhoods, and interested stakeholders on a consistent process for developing neighborhood plans within the adjacent unincorporated Urban Growth Area as consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA).

Policy: N-8.8, Neighborhood Planning Outside the City

Use the City of Spokane, and Spokane County, and Growth Management Act planning processes when conducting planning in neighborhoods within the city's unincorporated UGA.

Policy: N-8.9, Consistency of Plans Outside the City

Maintain consistency between the City's unincorporated UGA neighborhood plans and the City of Spokane and Spokane County Comprehensive Plans.



N 5.2 will likely be moved to the Land Use Chapter.



This policy is already addressed in the Governance through Civic Participation chapter.



Policy 6.2 is an implementation action, not a policy. The City's code enforcement is guided by SMC standards. Joint planning may be included in Chapter 3, Land Use as well.



These three policies (N 8.7 through N 8.9) are a subject of State Law and the Growth Management Act—accordingly these policies have no effect beyond those already required by the state. Furthermore, per GMA, the City has no authority over neighborhood plans or general zoning/code in adjacent jurisdictions.

The topic of joint planning between the City and County is also a topic already in the Land Use Chapter.