

# **BUILDING HEIGHTS ON SPOKANE FALLS BOULEVARD**

**DRAFT Report - August 2017**

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**City of Spokane Planning Department**





# Building Heights on Spokane Falls Boulevard:

A Study Into the Challenges and Opportunities of the Spokane Municipal Code, the Downtown Plan, and the Development Requirements of the City of Spokane as they Apply to Shading on Riverfront Park



Prepared by the Planning and Development Department  
City of Spokane, 808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd., 99201  
Summer, 2017

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# PART I

## Introduction

On March 22, 2017, Council President Ben Stuckart and the Downtown Spokane Partnership requested that the Spokane Plan Commission undertake a study to evaluate building height limits along Spokane Falls Boulevard as a disincentive for redevelopment of surface level parking lots. With a \$65 million investment in redevelopment of Riverfront Park as well as an unprecedented investment in Downtown Spokane currently underway, the timing is ripe for redevelopment of surface level parking lot uses adjacent to Riverfront Park. According to Mr. David Peterson, representing the property owners associated with those surface level parking lots across from Riverfront Park, height limits adopted in 2009 following the Downtown Plan Update have proved to be an obstacle to redevelopment of the very sites identified as “catalytic opportunity sites” in that Downtown Plan Update.

On April 12, 2017, the Spokane Plan Commission approved a project charter to study Spokane Falls Boulevard Building Height Limits. The charter envisioned convening a stakeholder working group to review existing City code and policy, and to recommend a framework for possible revisions to code that were consistent with existing Comprehensive and Downtown Plan policies, and/or recommend a scope for policy revisions to be considered through the 2018 Downtown Plan Update. The Spokane Falls Boulevard building heights working group met four times. With the input and support of consultant Mark Hinshaw they identified some recommendations that included a framework for some short-term code amendments to increase flexibility and incentivize development, as well as some recommendations for consideration in the long term.

## Executive Summary

This report encapsulates the information evaluated by the working group, and their recommendations. The report includes:

- An overview of the **Project Initiation**, including background on the initial request by the DSP, as initiated by the property owners' representative, and detailing the project process and scope;
- A **Code and Policy Study**, which provides a review of relevant goals and policy contained in the City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan and Fast Forward Spokane - the 2008 Downtown Plan Update, as well as the building height requirements contained in the Spokane Municipal Code (SMC);
- A **Technical Analysis**, which reviews previous and updated shading studies; and
- A **Finding and Recommendations** section, which summarizes the recommended framework for potential code amendments to bonus height allowances within the study area, as well as some longer-term recommendations and considerations for future implementation.

Specifically, the working group recommended a framework for amending SMC standards for building height bonuses within the DTC-100 zone (which is located only along Spokane Falls Boulevard) in the near future. The recommended framework is intended to incentivize residential development in that area, to activate the street, and to create economically feasible redevelopment opportunities while minimizing the impacts to light, air, vistas, and shade in the park, particularly along the Howard Street Promenade.

The Work Group also provided several longer-term recommendations, to include planning for coordinated streetscape elements along Spokane Falls Boulevard; considering the potential elimination of the DTC-100 zone altogether, as part of the 2018 Downtown Plan Update; and, a review of the Downtown design standards and guidelines, including a study of height and massing, as part of the Downtown Plan Update scope or through a subsequent strategic action, assuming adequate budget and time.

## PART II

### Project Initiation and Plan Commission

#### Summary of Request by DSP/Property Owner

Following a request by the City Council President, the Plan Commission heard a request by Mr. Mark Richard of the Downtown Spokane Partnership and Mr. David Peterson of Goodale & Barbieri, representing owners of some properties located on Spokane Falls Boulevard within the DTC-100 zone, asking the City to eliminate the height requirements within the DTC-100 zone. Those height requirements currently state that buildings over 100 feet in height must step back from the park in order to protect sunlight in the park.

In a letter from Mr. Peterson<sup>1</sup> and an email from Mr. Richard<sup>2</sup>, both to Council President Stuckart, Mr. Richard and Mr. Peterson asserted that the current standard, which requires that buildings over 100 feet be stepped back by 15 feet for each additional story in height above 100 feet, is detrimental to fostering development of remaining surface parking lot parcels along the south side of the park. They stated that the limitation of heights in this location had already precluded a single development proposal for the property at the corner of Spokane Falls Boulevard and Stevens Street. They were concerned that the building height requirements were "hindering development and creating unintended consequences for residential housing and commercial development."

In Mr. Peterson's letter to President Stuckart, he made the following assertions regarding the height limitations:

- Restriction in height was inconsistent with the intent of the zoning code to "prevent uncontrollable outward growth."
- Building height restrictions cause underinvestment in land improvement.
- Higher densities boost transit usage.
- High-rise development downtown would:
  - Increase local employment;
  - Enhance retail demand downtown;
  - Support entertainment venues; and,
  - Create a sense of place.

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1 Letter from Mr. David Peterson to President Ben Stuckart, January 26, 2017.

2 Email dated January 30, 2017.

In an email from Mr. Richard to the Council President, Mr. Richard directly requested that the height limitation imposed by the SMC, as called for in Fast Forward Spokane, the 2008 update to the Downtown Plan, be removed entirely as it is preventing development of downtown.

### Summary of Plan Commission Scope and Action

Following the request and presentation, the Plan Commission requested that Planning staff develop a scope to study and consider the request, including its potential policy ramifications, and to present that scope at the next earliest convenience. Following background research and study, Lisa Key, Planning Director for the City, presented a draft project charter at a Plan Commission workshop on April 12, 2017.

**Table 1 - Working Group Members**

Name	Affiliation
Todd Beyreuther (Chair)	Plan Commissioner
Michael Baker	Plan Commissioner (alternate)
Chris Batten	Plan Commissioner
Christy Jeffers	Plan Commissioner
Greg Francis	Community Assembly
Chris Wright	Parks Board
Mark Richard	Downtown Spokane Partnership
Andrew Rolwes	Downtown Spokane Partnership (alternate)
Jim Price	Citizen Rep
Jim Kolva	Riverside Neighborhood
Lisa Key	Planning Director
Leroy Eadie	Parks Director
Gary Bernardo	Bernardo Wills Architects
Ann Martin	Heylman Martin Architects
David Peterson	Goodale & Barbieri

**Table 2 - Associated Officials/Staff**

Name	Department/Affiliation
Ben Stuckart	City Council
Susan Traver	Parks Board
Louis Meuler	Principal Planner
Tirrell Black	Associate Planner
Tami Palmquist	Associate Planner
Kevin Freibott	Assistant Planner
Omar Akkari	Urban Designer
Garrett Jones	Parks Planning and Development Manager
Julie Happy	Communications Manager
Sherri Vernon	Downtown Spokane Partnership
James Richman	Assistant City Attorney

The project charter laid out a process for re-addressing the height limitation topic, utilizing a series of meetings with a multi-disciplinary project working group. The working group would meet a total of four times, in May through June of 2017, with the following goals:

**Meeting 1** – Discuss background and project goals, walk the length of the project to familiarize the group with the topic.

**Meeting 2** – Review possible alternative designs consistent with existing Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan policy, which could be addressed through code amendment. Discuss possible refinements to policy that could be contemplated as part of the Downtown Plan Update, or through a possible Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

**Meeting 3** – Continue to refine topics discussed in Meeting 2. Develop draft recommendations for further refinement in Meeting 4.

**Meeting 4** – Summarize findings of the analysis and compile final recommendations for report.

In order to facilitate the discussion, and to provide specialized expertise into design options addressing the unique concerns of development in these types of situations, the City secured the services of Mark Hinshaw of Walker-Macy under an existing professional services contract with the City.

### Working Group Membership

Following direction from Plan Commission, the working group was established with the membership shown in **Table 1**. In addition to the working group, the persons listed in **Table 2**

contributed their time and expertise to the effort.

### **Report Preparation**

At the end of the four meetings, the project scope and charter identified that a final summary report would be prepared by staff, and that the following items specifically would be included in this summary report:

- Review of existing policy, code, and design standards (Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Plan, SMC).
- Review of previous and updated shading studies and the effect of shading on the park/public uses.
- Design examples that fit the current policy.
- Potential code modifications/clarification that could be developed immediately (SMC), consistent with existing policy.
- Potential update/amendment to policy established in the Downtown Plan for possible consideration during 2018 Downtown Plan Update.
- Recommendations for additional/updated policy, code, and design standard guidance.

This report has been prepared according to those guidelines, and in consultation with concerned City Departments, as based upon input received by the working group in the above described meetings.

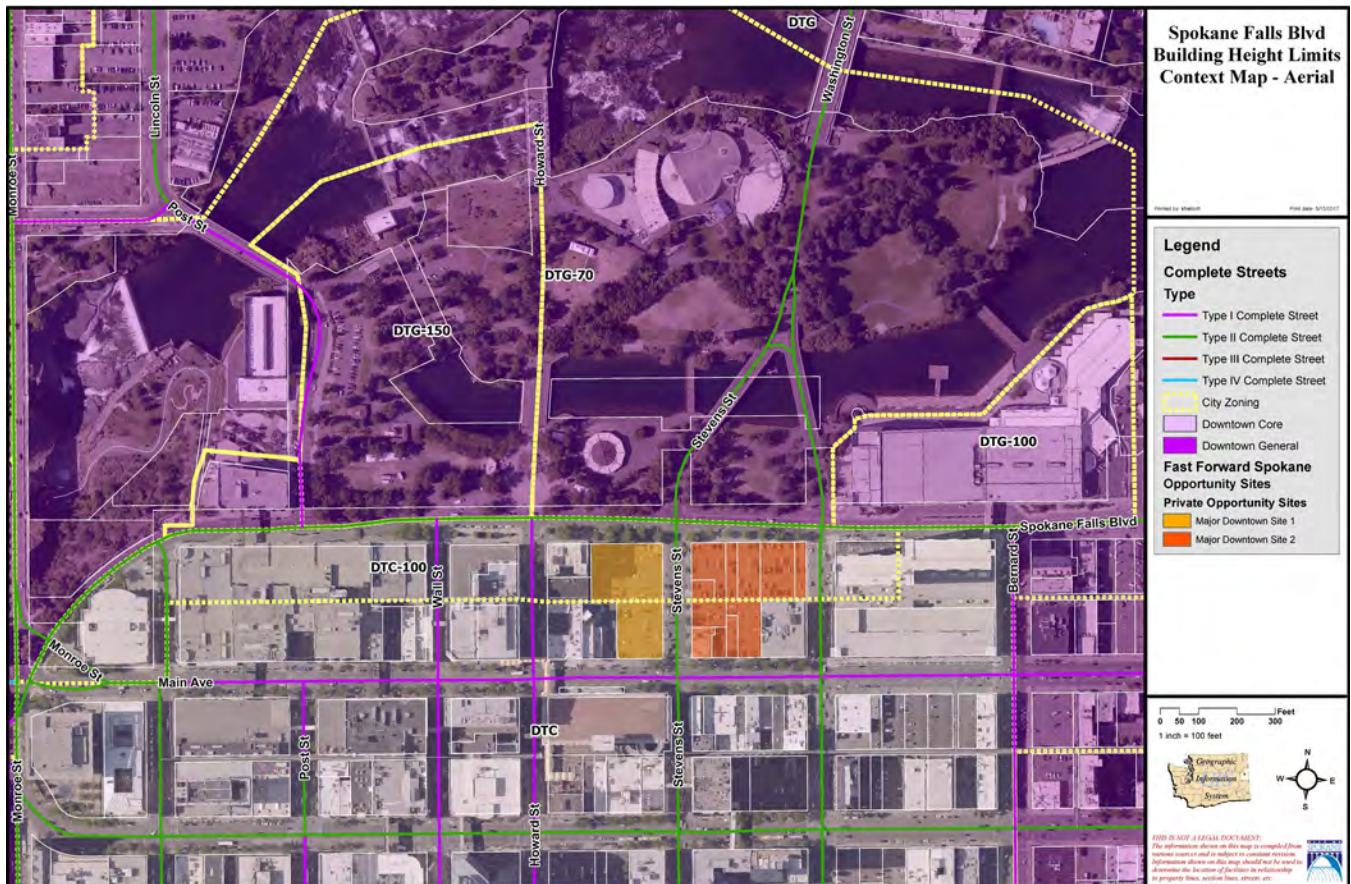


Fig. 1 - The map above provides an aerial overview of the study area for the working group. The orange and yellow shapes represent those properties most likely to develop in the near future, though this study considers the whole of the DTC-100 zone, not just those shapes.

## PART III

### Code and Policy Study

When addressing the topic of building heights in downtown Spokane, there are several levels of studies, policies, and standards to consider. This section gives a short summary of the pertinent documents and their directive and effect on building heights and shading.

#### Comprehensive Plan Policy and Direction

The work program that resulted in the creation of this report began shortly before approval of Shaping Spokane, the 2017 update to the City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan. Between the completion of the working group meetings and the finalization of this report, Shaping Spokane was approved by the City Council. As such, the following policy discussion includes minor changes to policies discussed by the working group.

#### Applicable Policies

The following policies are listed in the order they appear within the plan.

##### Land Use

*Chapter 3, Land Use provides land use and development guidance in the City. The following policies relate directly to development standards and the promotion of development.*

##### LU 2.2, Performance Standards

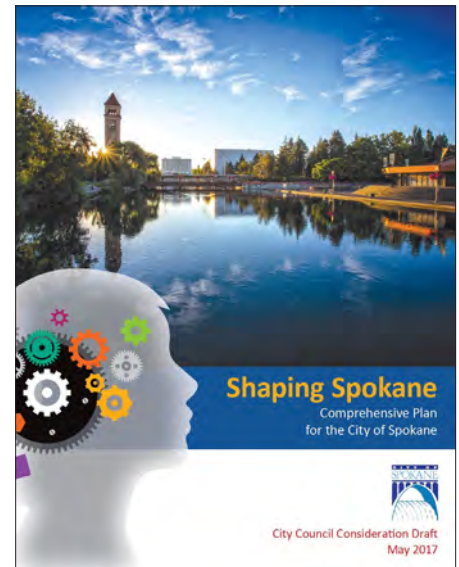
*Employ performance and design standards with sufficient flexibility and appropriate incentives to ensure that development is compatible with surrounding land uses.*

The discussion of this policy goes on to say that any such standards should address, among other topics, structural mass, open space, green areas, landscaping, and buffering. The discussion also gives allowance for “increased building height, reduced parking, and increased density, in exchange for development that enhances the public realm.”<sup>1</sup>

##### LU 7.1, Regulatory Structure

*Develop a land use regulatory structure that utilizes a variety of mechanisms to promote development that provides a public benefit.*

The discussion of this policy goes on to state that incentives are a tool that can be used to encourage development with a public benefit aspect. It also states that regulations should be predictable, reliable, and adaptable to changing living and working arrangements. Those changes are cited as resulting from technological advances, not economic situations, though the discussion also states that regulations should be broad enough to encourage desirable development.



*Fig. 2 - The City Council adopted the latest update to the Comprehensive Plan, known as “Shaping Spokane,” on June 26, 2017. The policy text discussed at right represents the latest language adopted by City Council. For full text of the Comprehensive Plan, see [www.shapingspokane.org](http://www.shapingspokane.org).*

<sup>1</sup> Shaping Spokane, the Spokane Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 3, p. 3-17.

## **Economic Development**

### ED 3.10, Downtown Spokane

*Promote downtown Spokane as the economic and cultural center of the region.*

The discussion following speaks of continuing to support the revitalization of downtown, specifically as it relates to the development of housing and the expansion of job opportunities.

The Economic Development policy above provides direction to support and promote downtown – directly relating to the creation and ongoing update of the Downtown Plan.

## **Social Health**

### SH 6.3, Natural Surveillance

*Design activities and spaces so that users of the space are visible rather than concealed.*

The discussion under this policy centers on design features such as building orientation and design elements that encourage visibility and public interaction in public spaces, including the entrances/exits to public parks and open spaces.

## **Neighborhoods**

### N 1.1, Downtown Development

*Develop downtown Spokane as the primary economic and cultural center of the region and provide a variety of housing, recreation, and daily service opportunities that attract and retain neighborhood residents.*

The discussion for this Policy centers on enhancing downtown and making it a “desirable neighborhood” with a stable resident population. Further, the discussion states that a healthy downtown neighborhood provides a needed market base for retail, services, etc.

## **Parks and Recreation**

### PRS 1.4, Property Owners and Developers

*Work cooperatively with property owners and developers to preserve open space areas within or between developments, especially those that provide visual or physical linkages to the open space network.*

The discussion under this policy states that the City should explore the use of incentives to protect open space, including the use of bonus densities and transfer of development rights.

### PRS 2.3, Parks and Recreation Amenities

*Continue to develop parks and recreation amenities that enhance the local economy.*

The discussion centers on efforts in park and recreation amenities as they relate to value to both residents and visitors and their cumulative effect on the economy.

## ***Policy Summary***

The policies above clearly state that downtown is a key economic resource and development of downtown is important to realize the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. They go on to say that downtown development can be shaped by incentives, inclusion of public amenities, and a healthy residential component. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan gives clear direction that open spaces (and parks) are a valuable component of development, even within the downtown.

All subsequent planning, including the Downtown Plan and any other ancillary studies and plans (such as the City's Capital Improvement Plan, downtown parking standards, the Spokane Municipal Code) has been conducted according to and consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Downtown Plan**

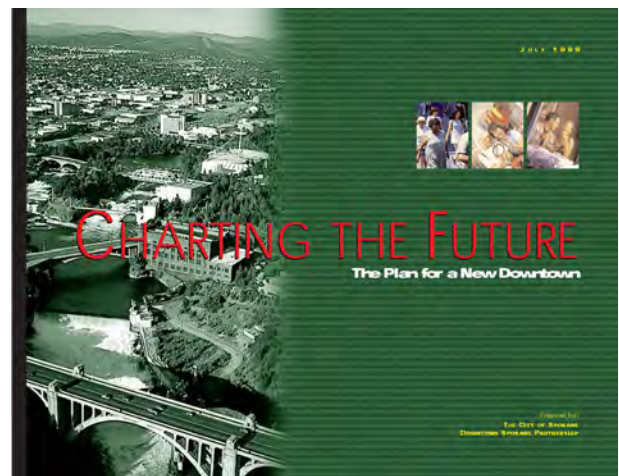
#### **Plan for a New Downtown**

The Downtown Plan, originally adopted by the City in 1999, lays out a vision and a path for development and enhancement of Downtown Spokane. The 1999 plan, titled "The Plan for a New Downtown," was created following an extensive public process that included close partnership with the Downtown Spokane Partnership (DSP) and the efforts and input of more than 1,500 members of the community. The downtown plan prepared then was found to be within the framework of the City's existing Comprehensive Plan and was subsequently incorporated by reference into that document – making it, functionally, a part of the Comprehensive Plan, with equal force and protection under State law.

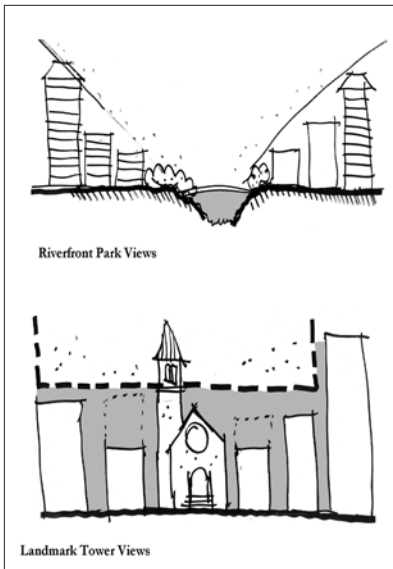
The 1999 plan included many key points, including:

- Description of the downtown as the "center and focal point" of the City;
- The existence of a need for market rate housing downtown;
- A surplus of vacant land and surface parking in the downtown;
- The stated need to create a safe pedestrian-friendly street level environment;
- A vision for downtown that included a vision for Riverfront Park as "the 'Jewel' of the City . . . the heart of a growing and vital Downtown."

In specific relation to the topic under discussion, the original Downtown Plan discussed the need and intent to develop Howard Street as a "string of pearls," a central pedestrian element in the downtown. Discussion included development of enhanced pedestrian activity utilizing wide sidewalks, street furniture, public art, outdoor restaurants, and improvements in the sidewalk to building interface. Further, the plan discussed Spokane Falls Boulevard as a key east/west connection in the downtown. The plan expected new development and enhanced pedestrian amenities along Spokane Falls Boulevard.



*Fig. 3 - The original 1999 Downtown Plan, prepared after an extensive public process.*



*Fig. 4 - The 1999 Downtown Plan discussed views as they related to landmark towers as well as parks. While sunlight and shadows were discussed, the idea of limiting shade was not fully developed.*

### **Building Height and Massing – 1999 Plan**

The 1999 plan provided a short summary of past planning, which included a short discussion of the Olmsted Report of 1913, made to the Board of Park Commissioners.<sup>2</sup> In their Report on park opportunities and proposals within the City, the Olmsteds stated that not only was the control of building heights preferred in cities like Spokane, but that such controls should be enacted as soon as possible in order to avoid overcrowding the street and to minimize barriers to light and air at the ground level.

The Plan for a New Downtown built upon the statements of the Olmsteds and public input at the time the plan was written, stating that control of building heights could help allow penetration of sunlight and open views to vistas. Of specific discussion was maintaining views of Riverfront Park (Strategy 5.3) and views of landmark towers (Strategy 5.4). Most significantly to the topic of this report, the Riverfront Park Clock Tower was mentioned in particular.

### **Fast Forward Spokane – 2008 Update**

In 2008 the City conducted the first update to the downtown plan, titled “Fast Forward Spokane.” This effort also utilized a massive public process to update the plan after its first ten years in action. Included in this update were the following changes:

- The downtown planning area was increased in size to cover the eastern part of Kendall Yards as well as a large portion of the University District south of the River.
- Strategies and discussion of “influence areas” adjacent to downtown but outside the downtown plan area.
- Leveraging key assets like: the river and Riverfront Park; the centennial trail; the convention center; the Davenport Hotel; the INB Performing Arts Center; the Spokane Arena; the downtown mall; and the city’s location and sense of history.
- A new vision statement for the downtown.
- Expansion on the idea of “green streets” into a true “Complete Streets” concept.
- New east-west links for circulation in addition to the Howard Street string-of-pearls concept from the original plan.
- Increased Transit.<sup>3</sup>



*Fig. 5 - Adopted in 2008, Fast Forward Spokane represented the first update to the Downtown Plan. Development of the plan update included significant work on building mass and height. Likewise, code amendments made following the adoption of the plan update also included new standards for height and massing as well as minimization of shade on Riverfront Park.*

<sup>2</sup> Prior to the formation of the Plan Commission, the Board of Park Commissioners served a similar role in the City of Spokane.

<sup>3</sup> Fast Forward Spokane specifically included discussion of a light rail through downtown - a concept that has since been replaced by the Central City Line.

- Discussion of catalytic opportunity sites, one of which is located within the DTC-100 zone under discussion in this report (catalytic opportunity site 2).
- A series of new strategies for success, including: complete streets; public space improvements; multi-modal transportation; gateways, signage, and wayfinding; housing; environmental stewardship; economic development; arts, culture, and entertainment.

### **Major Downtown Sites 1 and 2 – Stevens Street and Spokane Falls Boulevard**

Fast Forward Spokane identified nine catalytic opportunity sites and two catalytic opportunity zones within the plan area. According to the plan, these areas represent dynamic sites within the downtown that provide for an array of development potential. Each took into account both recent and possible future development in the vicinity as well as opportunities to build on that development and to align with desired built form of the site. Furthermore, each site had the potential to further and expand linkages within the downtown.



*Fig. 6 - Fast Forward Spokane (2008) included a schematic drawing of potential development on the surface lots on the south side of Spokane Falls Boulevard at Stevens Street.*

Major Downtown Sites 1 and 2 straddle either side of Stevens Street on the south side of Spokane Falls Boulevard.<sup>4</sup> Site 1 represents the western side of Stevens Street and Site 2 the eastern. Both contained surface lots at the adoption of Fast Forward Spokane and both were envisioned by the plan for mixed use development. Conceptual plans for Site 1 on the west incorporated 65 parking spaces and 9,600 square feet of ground-floor retail. Site 1 was envisioned to contain 94,400 square feet of office space and between 56 and 64 dwelling units in a tower configuration above the retail. Similar to the west side of the street, the conceptual plans for Site 2 was envisioned to contain 31,000 square feet of retail and up to 136 parking spaces on the ground floor with another tower above containing 192,000 square feet of office and up to 64 dwelling units.

### **Height and Massing – 2008 Plan**

The 2008 plan included a goal that states, "...foster and improve upon the unique, Downtown 'sense of place.'" Within the objectives of that goal was a requirement that development "strive to reasonably protect solar-access in key areas as well as view of key amenities." The strategies in the 2008 plan included a strong statement<sup>5</sup> that:

<sup>4</sup> Downtown sites 1 and 2 were originally identified in the 1999 plan but that plan did not include significant information on the disposition of those sites.

<sup>5</sup> Fast Forward Spokane, 2008, p. 81, "Access to Views and Sunlight."

*"The Spokane community expressed a strong desire to maintain maximum exposure to sunlight in significant public open spaces, such as Riverfront Park, by promoting buildings designed to reduce shadows."*

In order to support the land uses and strategies identified in the 2008 plan, the plan included a number of necessary requisite actions. Among these was the creation of standards and guidelines to ensure consistent development with the plan. Strategy 10.2 of the Standards and Guidelines strategies states that the City should seek to modify its zoning regulations to be consistent with the downtown plan.<sup>6</sup> As a result of that strategy, the City undertook an expansive public process to update its zoning regulations shortly after adoption of Fast Forward Spokane.

### **Other Relevant Policies**

#### *Downtown Plan Goal 2.2*

*Foster and improve upon the unique, Downtown "sense of place."*

The following relevant objectives were listed under this policy:

- Design complimentary infill and restrict surface parking lots.
- Encourage increased density and smaller building footprints.
- Strive to protect solar-access in key areas, as well as views of key amenities.

#### *Downtown Plan Goal 2.5:*

*Increase housing options Downtown and protect existing neighborhood character*

The following relevant objective was listed under this policy:

- Develop mixed use neighborhoods within Downtown

#### *Downtown Plan Goal 2.6*

*Incorporate sustainable practices in redevelopment efforts*

The following relevant objectives were listed under this policy:

- Improve live/work balance by promoting Downtown living

### **Spokane Municipal Code**

Following adoption of Fast Forward Spokane, the City undertook a code review and update process with the goal of accommodating the land use and development concepts in the plan. This process was led by an "Update Task Force " who provided industry insight and experience to the process. During that process a new section was proposed for the SMC § 17C.124, titled "Downtown Zoning." This new section included specific development regulations in accordance with the Downtown Plan. Additional updates were made to various other related sections of the SMC (i.e. parking & loading, landscaping and screening) as well as updates to the downtown design

During the preparation of code amendments following the adoption of Fast Forward Spokane in 2009, an Update Task Force was formed, which included representatives of the following organizations:

- Washington State University;
- Downtown Spokane Partnership;
- Sherry, Pratt, VanVoorhis Landscape Architects;
- NAC Architects;
- TerraBella, Inc.;
- Kolva & Associates;
- SRM Development;
- Heylman Martin Architects;
- Century 21 Real Estate;
- Kiemle and Hagood;

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 126.

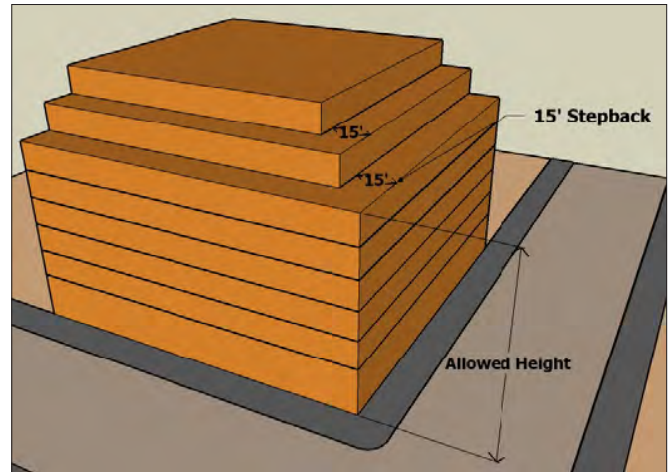
guidelines and the design review process. Following 10 meetings of the task force, 2 public open houses, 7 workshops with the Plan Commission, and many smaller presentations and meetings with groups throughout the City, the City Council approved the changes in December, 2009.

As a result of that process, the following requirement was included as SMC 17C.124.220.E:

*E. Additional Height Within Specific Height Designation Areas.*

*Additional stories for structures where the maximum height is specified with a dash after the zoning map symbol (i.e. DTG-70).*

- 1. One additional story is allowed for every fifteen feet of upper story structure stepback from a street lot line, up to the maximum number of stories allowed in the zone without a maximum height specified.*
- 2. In the DTC-100 zone one additional story is allowed for every fifteen feet of upper story structure stepback from Spokane Falls Boulevard. There is no upper story structure stepback required from street lot lines that are not adjacent to Spokane Falls Boulevard after the first fifteen feet of upper story structure stepback from Spokane Falls Boulevard.*



*Fig. 7 - The exhibit above is currently included in SMC 17C.124.220.E and gives a single example of how a theoretical structure would comply with the height standards.*

The intent of these standards was to accommodate development within the DTC-100 zone but also to minimize any shading impacts to the park, as requested by the public during the public participation process enacted during preparation of the code amendments.

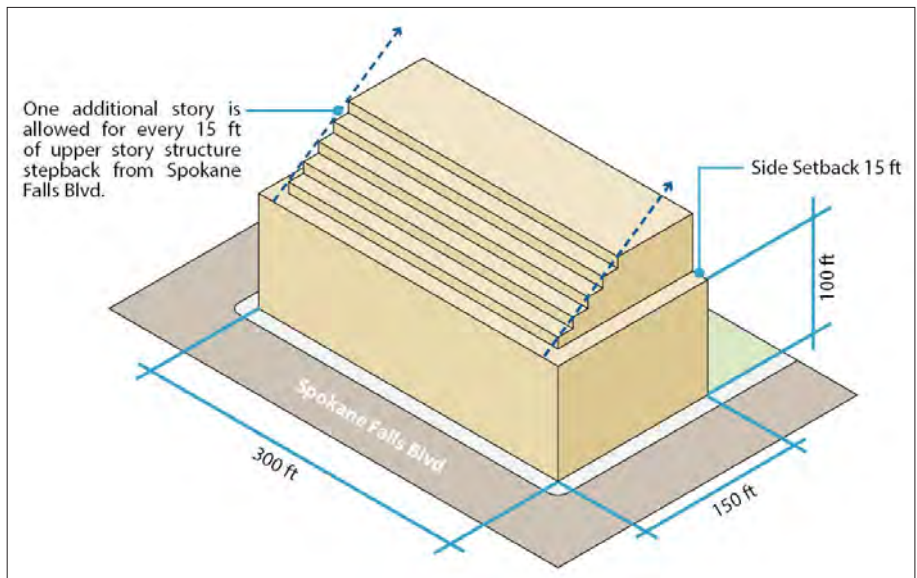
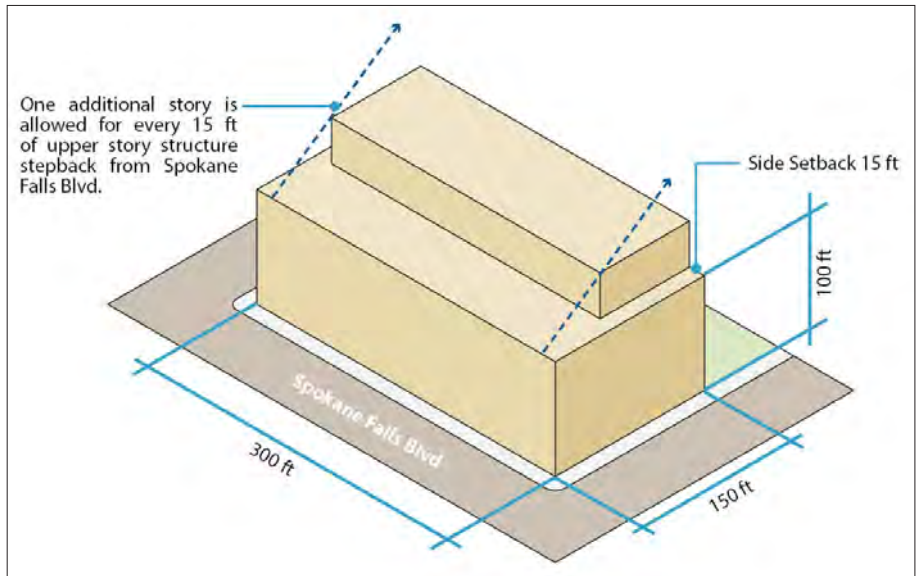
This section of the SMC also discusses height and massing for development outside the DTC-100 zone, including bonus heights for certain areas, provided that individual developments provide certain design features and amenities that provide for a public benefit, such as permanent affordable housing, street activating ground floor uses, alley enhancements, major public spaces/plazas, and a number of other similar features.<sup>7</sup> However, the SMC expressly states that these kinds of bonuses are not available within downtown zones that include a specific height number in the zone name, such as the DTC-100 zone.<sup>8</sup>

Lastly, SMC 17C.124.220.B.1 contains a requirement that is key to the topic of discussion and the original request. It states:

*"Changes to the height provisions are not allowed outside of a downtown plan update process."*

<sup>7</sup> SMC 17C.124.220.G

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.



*Figs. 8 and 9 - The two figures above were developed by City staff during the working group process to illustrate additional building envelopes that are allowed within the current SMC requirements. Analysis of the current SMC language indicated that the "wedding cake" shape shown in Figure 7 is not the only possible solution under the existing code.*

## PART IV

### Technical Analysis

Multiple technical studies related to the effects of shading on Riverfront Park have been conducted by both the City of Spokane and other agencies such as the Downtown Spokane Partnership. As the goal of the Downtown Plan is to minimize shadowing on the park, these studies and analyses have historically been used to demonstrate the extent of shadowing and, in the case of specific development proposals, the increased shadowing created by certain developments.

#### Previous Shading Studies

Many shading studies have been conducted through the years since the Downtown Plan was updated in 2008. These were considered and discussed by the working group during their deliberations.

#### Fast Forward Spokane (2008)

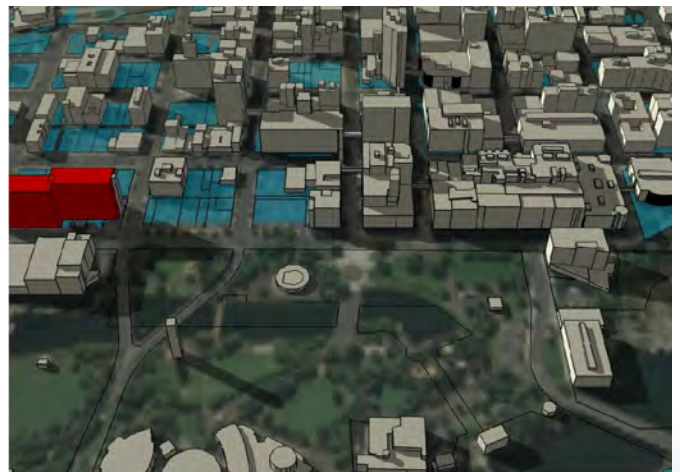
During the code update process for Fast Forward Spokane, MIG (the consultant for the 2008 Downtown Plan Update) conducted multiple meetings regarding height and massing downtown. Included in this discussion was a number of sample shading diagrams showing the shadow profile of several theoretical developments in a downtown like Spokane's. Also included were digital video simulations of shadows as they progress throughout the day.

#### Davenport Grand Development Application (2013)

During its consideration of the Davenport Grand development application, the City considered the shading effects of the proposed design. Several models were produced showing the varied effects of shade from the proposed hotel on the park. An administrative interpretation was issued on September 24, 2013 by the Planning Director of the time, Mr. Scott Chesney. His interpretation found that the impacts to the park from the hotel would be minimal and the building was allowed to exceed the 100' building height limit provided that certain steps were taken to ensure shading would be minimized (i.e. the building was set back from Spokane Falls Boulevard above the first floor) and in consideration of the existing effects of the theater building to the north.



*Fig. 10 - Sample shading from the schematic design for opportunity sites 1 and 2 presented during the 2009 code update process. MIG, the consultant on the Fast Forward Spokane update process, conducted several meetings on shading in the park, as shown here.*



*Fig. 11 - An excerpt from the Planning Director Decision in 2013 regarding the proposed (at the time) Davenport Grand development.*

## Updated Shading Study

### City Study

As a part of the preparation of this report and the work of the working group, the City developed an updated shading study. The original study was augmented in order to account for new development and to correct certain modeling errors that were inherent in the original model (existing buildings that did not cast shadows but did not affect the overall park shading, etc.). With buildings modeled to 200 feet in height, shadows during the late fall and winter were extensive and would reach, in some cases, as far as the northern arm of the Spokane River. The addition of a 200-foot building on one of the surface lots within the DTC-100 zone would reach beyond that onto the bike/pedestrian trail on the north bank. However, such a building would not be allowed under current zoning.

The City-prepared shading study showed an important comparison between buildings built to the current code requirements (stepped back above 100' by 15' for each story) and those built to a theoretical worst case scenario of 200'. It was clear from this study that stepping back would have some effect in limiting shadows entering the park for those buildings. However, when compared to the shadows cast by existing development (or potential development of vacant lots fronting on Main Avenue, where there is no height restriction), the increased shaded area would be minimal in both cases.

For more images from this study, see the appendix to this report. Similar images are provided for different times and dates.



*Fig. 12 - This excerpt from the City's updated shading study shows the existing shadow profile on March 20 at 3 PM. It is presented here as an example of typical afternoon shading.*



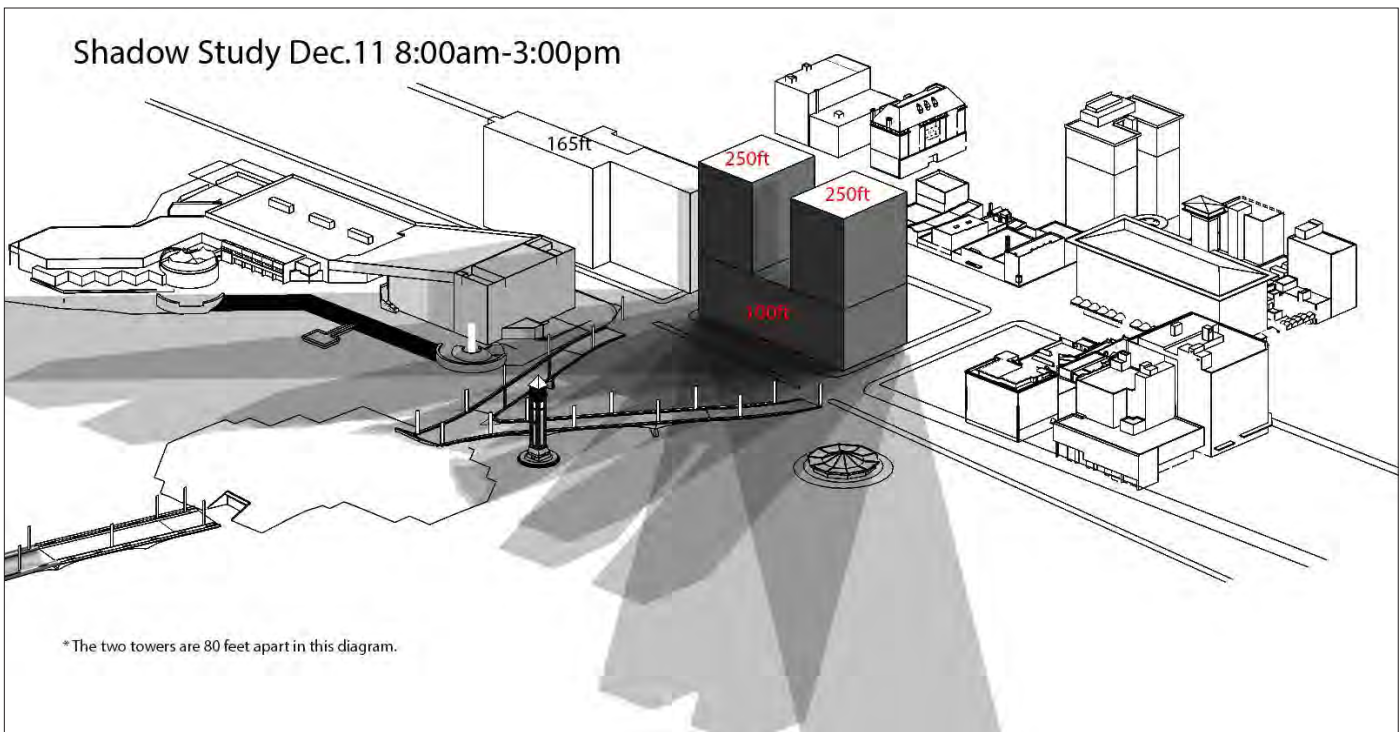
*Fig. 13 - This excerpt from the City's updated shading study shows the shadow profile on March 20 at 3 PM if new buildings were constructed on the two opportunity sites as well as the "Wheatland Bank" building, according to the current SMC height requirements. The "new" buildings' shadow profile is shown in purple.*



*Fig. 14 - This excerpt from the City's updated shading study shows the shadow profile on March 20 at 3 PM if new buildings were constructed at 200 feet, much taller than is currently allowed, and without the stepback currently required by code. The shadow profile of these taller towers is shown in blue.*

### **Downtown Spokane Partnership Study**

For the purposes of discussion and comparison, the Downtown Spokane Partnership presented its own shading study, conducted by NAC Architecture of Spokane. Their model differed slightly in that it used a twin tower configuration above 100' for the eastern property, showing that a light corridor would in fact sweep the park even if those two towers were 200' in height. The NAC study did not, however, show the effect of existing buildings surrounding the sites and their effect on shading.



*Fig 15 - Shadow study provided by DSP during the working group process. Note the gap in the shadow, which would swing west to east during the day. This model represents a December day and is thus a "worst case scenario." Spring to fall shadows would be greatly reduced.*

## PART V

### Findings and Recommendations

#### Working Group Discussion

Working group discussions began with a thorough exploration of the history of the topic, the nature of the request from the Downtown Spokane Partnership (DSP) and the property owner representative, and the various effects of different types of development on the two surface lots most likely to develop in the future. The prior shading studies were presented, as well as additional shading analyses by both the City and DSP. Also discussed were some preliminary renderings of possible development on those sites and additional discussion of features and designs that would include some form of public benefit.

Discussion followed three themes: (1) what is possible within the current standards and requirements; (2) what would be the various impacts and opportunities presented if greater building heights were allowed; and, (3) could the original request to vacate the building height requirements be accommodated based upon existing Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan policies. In addition to renderings provided by DSP regarding what might be developed if the height limit were removed, City staff created two new exhibits that clarify what is allowable under the current code allowances.<sup>1</sup>

Following four meetings, the working group came to the following conclusions:

1. The original request to vacate the height requirements in DTC-100 by a typical Municipal Code amendment is not possible, pursuant to SMC 17C.124.220.B.1.
2. While the height provisions in the SMC cannot be vacated, the allowances for height bonuses in this zone under the current code could be clarified through additional graphic representation of the existing code language.<sup>1</sup>
3. Additionally, there is an opportunity to amend the SMC consistent with existing Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan goals and policies, that would simultaneously maintain the current height restriction, while allowing for height bonuses with greater flexibility to incentivize certain types of development (as envisioned in both the Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan) in the zone.
4. There are internal inconsistencies in the SMC as it stands now that require clarification and/or correction.
5. The request to eliminate the height restrictions in the DTC-100 zone

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<sup>1</sup> See figures 8 and 9 above, p. 11.



*Fig 16 - The working group held four meetings in City Hall during May and June of 2017. These meetings were open to the public. The recommendation presented in this report represents the end result of those discussions.*

would require adjustments to existing Downtown Plan Policy, and is most appropriately considered through the more robust public engagement process required to amend the Downtown Plan Update.

While universal agreement to the conclusions was not reached, the working group generally agreed upon a framework for moving forward, as detailed below.

### **Working Group Recommendation**

The working group ultimately agreed, in general, to the following mechanism for allowing greater flexibility in building heights within the DTC-100 zone. It is important to note that this mechanism does not meet the original request to completely eliminate all height restrictions within the subject zone. However, the original requestors agreed that this was an adequate interim solution, given the constraints of the SMC and the Downtown Plan as it now stands.

### **Options for Implementation**

The working group identified the following three possible ways to accommodate the request:

1. Utilize the existing "plans in lieu" procedure in the SMC.
2. Create a new special district designation for part of the zone.
3. Amend the existing SMC standards for building height bonuses in the DTC-100 zone.

After discussion, the general consensus was that option three represented the best route forward. The "plans in lieu" procedures in the SMC are not well defined and could result in the opposite effect desired (i.e. uncertain process leading to long delays). Creating a special district would result in more complexity in the system than was thought prudent. It was generally agreed by the group and city staff that as long as any amendments to the SMC avoid modifying the base height limit within the DTC-100 zone, option 3 posed the most feasible solution.

### **Desired Outcomes**

The working group developed the following outcomes that would be sought by any action moving forward:

- a. Create opportunities within the DTC-100 zone for mixed-use redevelopment and incentives for residential development to occur in an economically viable manner.
- b. Put activity on the street.
- c. Create relationships with the enhanced park.
- d. Consider and mitigate development impacts to light, air, vistas and shade to the park, especially along the Howard Street Promenade

within Riverfront Park, while allowing more flexibility in development standards.

While shading is a concern in general, it was agreed that the key resource to protect in Riverfront Park is the Howard Street Promenade, as it provides a key sun-dependent use (the Rotary Fountain), it is part of the Howard Street string-of-pearls identified in the Downtown Plan, and it provides an important north-south route through the park tying the north bank to the rest of downtown.

### **Principles**

The working group developed a series of principles that they felt should apply to any work to amend the code as it relates to this topic. They are:

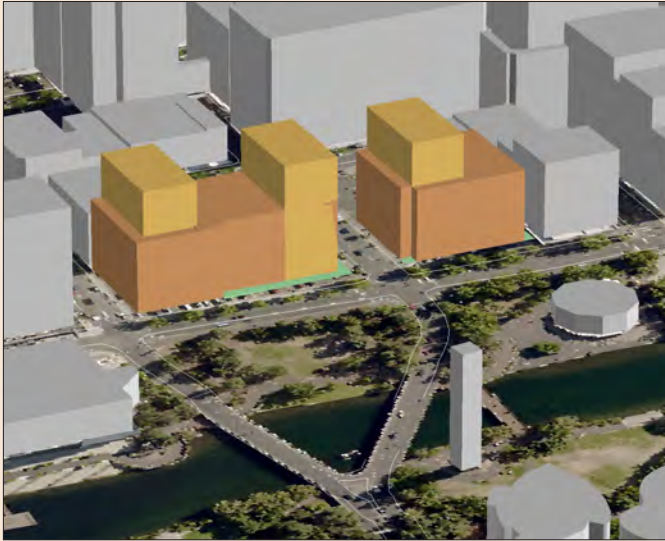
- a. Unique Place - Create a positive, highly identifiable environment in the area bounded by Main Street, the Spokane River and Riverfront Park, Lincoln Street, and Washington Street that will draw people to a wide range of public and private destinations.
- b. Integrated Development - Guide the redevelopment of properties along the south side of Spokane Falls Boulevard in order to result in a seamless integration with the enhanced park, so that the entire area is a lively and ever-changing part of downtown.
- c. Active Streetscapes - Ensure a lively and activated streetscape through both management of public spaces and activation by commercial and residential uses that embrace the public realm.
- d. Varied Building Forms - Promote flexibility in building location, form, height, and massing. Avoid creating a continuous "wall" effect fronting the park.
- e. Economic Development - Attract types of development and uses that can reinforce activities and spaces associated with the park and residents who can monitor and populate the area.
- f. Howard Street Promenade - Preserve significant amounts of sunlight throughout the year on the highly important corridor through the park.

### **Development Standards (Conceptual)**

The working group developed a range of new standards that they felt should be utilized when developing a code amendment. The following conceptual standards expand on the existing requirements of the SMC and meet the intent of the building height requirement while allowing for greater flexibility and reduced impediments to development.

All numbers in the following standards are highly conceptual in nature. Additional analysis and discussion is necessary to refine these numbers further. The numbers presented here are simply a sample of standards that would be successful.

- a. Floors occupied exclusively by residential, live/work, and/or hotel uses may be allowed as a bonus to extend above the underlying height



*Fig 17 - The model above depicts sample building mass with 10,000 square foot floor plates for the towers.*



*Fig 18 - The model at left depicts sample building mass with 14,000 square foot floor plates for the towers.*



*Fig 19 - The model at left depicts sample building mass with 18,750 square foot floor plates for the towers. Note that two 18,750 sq. ft. towers are not possible on the eastern properties as they would be closer than 50 feet. As such, one 18,750 sq. ft. tower is shown along with a 10,000 sq. ft. tower.*

### **Schematic Diagrams - Building Mass by Floor Plate Size**

In order to inform future policy discussions, the following schematic models give some idea of the mass of the eventual development possible, were the recommendations of the working group enacted. The three following models were developed by City staff according to the following assumptions:

- Both opportunity sites are aggregated into two large developments;
- The maximum size building base allowed under the code (with the working group changes) would be constructed;
- Any towers would be built to the maximum floor plate size allowed at full depth, north to south.
- Public plaza space was allocated according to the requirements of SMC 17C.124.580 (one square foot per 100 square feet of building floor area);
- The towers rise six 10' stories over the building base; and,

limit under certain conditions as indicated below.

- b. If residential and hotel uses are located in the 100-foot building base, an equal area of non-residential uses may be permitted above 100 feet, provided all other requirements of the bonus height provisions have been met.
- c. Floor plates above 100 feet shall be no larger than XXX sq. ft (anticipated to fall between 10,000 -18,750 square feet, with the actual floor plate limit to be determined from the subsequent public process).<sup>2</sup>
- d. The long dimension of building floors above 100 feet shall be perpendicular to Spokane Falls Blvd.
- e. Towers above 100 feet shall be spaced apart no less than 50 feet, or as may be determined from the subsequent public process.<sup>3</sup>
- f. Active retail (shops, personal services, and food services) or residential uses shall occupy no less than 50% of the street frontage . Corporate offices, banks, and financial institutions do not qualify as retail. Such uses shall have entrances directly on the public sidewalk.

### **Design Review and Guidelines**

Because of the relationship between properties in the DTC-100 Zone and significant public open spaces, such as Riverfront Park, the working group felt development should receive extra attention through the City's design review process. To this end, the working group felt a number of expectations should be made of proposed buildings, including:

- a. Architectural detail at the ground level that supports people walking, lingering, eating, and socializing. This should include elements such as movable tables and chairs, pedestrian-scaled lighting, pedestrian-scaled signs, generous windows that open out to the park with possibly roll-up or sliding sections, canopies, and artwork.
- b. Enhancements to the existing sidewalk areas to ensure that they feel welcoming, usable, visually interesting, and usable to all members of the public. Ways of extending character-giving aspects of the park should be provided in this wide sidewalk area. For example, places for live music and temporary art could be provided.
- c. Upper stories of buildings should be articulated with architectural "sculpting" such as decks, balconies, projecting bays, recesses, offsets, changes in materials and color, roof gardens, upper levels setbacks.



*Fig. 20 - During their presentation to the Plan Commission, DSP presented the rendering above (a proposed building in Los Angeles) as an example of a "sculpted" building such as that discussed in item C at right.*

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<sup>2</sup> Discussion centered around whether the Shoreline Master Plan requirements of SMC 17E.060.750.B.4 be used (i.e. no more than 145' on the diagonal and "less than ten thousand square feet" on any floor above 50' in height), 14,000 sq. ft. as suggested by the City's consultant, or 18,750 sq. ft. as suggested by the property owners' representative. The final number will need to be vetted through the subsequent public process required for any code amendments. See figures 16-18 for depictions of these various floor plate sizes.

<sup>3</sup> Also discussed was a distance of 70 feet, or roughly the width of adjacent north/south streets.

Flat, featureless, rectilinear forms are to be avoided.

- d. In order to reflect the importance of a gateway effect, the corners of buildings should be given special treatment such as public spaces, distinctive architectural expressions, major entrances, dramatic lighting, and unique landscape design.
- e. At the initial stage of review, the Design Review Board should express its priorities and not merely react to already-designed proposals. The process between the DRB and the applicant shall be a collaborative one. Adherence to the principles listed previously shall inform the review.
- f. Any towers above 100 feet should be placed so as to give consideration to sunlight, air, views, and vistas, especially on the Howard Street Promenade within Riverfront Park.

#### **Additional Code Recommendations**

The working group felt that a code amendment process should also consider the following tasks:

- a. Replace the existing image in SMC 17C.124.220.E.1 with the updated image presented to the working group.<sup>4</sup>
- b. Correct noted inconsistencies in the language in SMC 17C.124.220.

As regards item b above, the most significant inconsistency is one in SMC 17C.124.220.B, wherein it states that no bonus heights are allowed for zones with a height number in the name, such as the DTC-100 zone under consideration herein, followed in subsection E by standards for bonus heights in the DTC-100 zone.

#### **Long Term Recommendations by the Working Group**

It was generally understood by the working group that the solution presented above is short term in nature and that a longer term solution may be required. Also, as the topic of activating the street and important amenities on Spokane Falls Boulevard were discussed, it was agreed that some future streetscape planning would be valuable. The following recommendations for future action by the City were made by the working group:

- a. Plan for coordinated streetscape improvements along Spokane Falls Boulevard.
- b. Consider the elimination of the DTC-100 zone within the scope of the Downtown Plan Update.
- c. Review of Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines, including a study of height and massing standards, as part of the Downtown Plan Update scope, or as a subsequent strategic action , assuming adequate budget and time.

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<sup>4</sup> See figures 8 and 9 above.

It is also important to note that the discussions of the working group, while open to the public and publicly announced, did not include significant outreach to the public outside the working group members. Additional outreach and engagement will be required by City staff prior to any direct action on code changes which may be requested by City Council. Time was provided for public comment but none was given by any of the attendees outside the working group.

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Prepared by City Staff  
August, 2017

<https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/building-heights-on-spokane-falls-boulevard/>

## **APPENDIX A**

**City of Spokane**  
**City Council**

---

TO: Council President Ben Stuckart

FROM: Brian McClatchey, Policy Advisor

DATE: January 3, 2017

RE: Legislative history of SMC 17C.124.220(E) (requirement for “wedding cake” building envelope adjacent to Riverfront Park)

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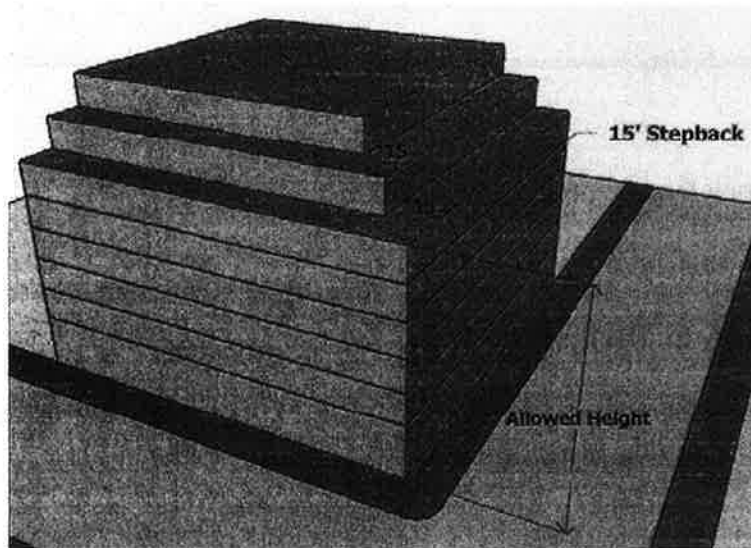
**Issue:**

You have asked me to provide the legislative history and background information on SMC 17C.124.220(E). This section provides that, in a small area directly across Spokane Falls Boulevard from Riverfront Park, buildings may be constructed with additional stories over 100 feet in height if each additional floor is stepped back (to the south and away from the Park) by 15 feet – the so-called “wedding cake” arrangement.

**Discussion:**

The specific text follows:

- E. Additional Height Within Specific Height Designation Areas.  
Additional stories for structures where the maximum height is specified with a dash after the zoning map symbol (i.e. DTG-70).
  - 1. One additional story is allowed for every fifteen feet of upper story structure stepback from a street lot line, up to the maximum number of stories allowed in the zone without a maximum height specified.



2. In the DTC-100 zone [i.e., downtown core, maximum of 100 feet in height] one additional story is allowed for every fifteen feet of upper story structure stepback from Spokane Falls Boulevard. There is no upper story structure stepback required from street lot lines that are not adjacent to Spokane Falls Boulevard after the first fifteen feet of upper story structure stepback from Spokane Falls Boulevard.

SMC 17C.124.220(E).

This section was codified as part of the downtown plan update in 2009 (specifically ordinance C-34522 (Dec. 14, 2009)). That ordinance was one of a number of ordinances which put the development regulations in place to implement the downtown plan.

In the lead-up to Council enactment of C-34522, the Plan Commission held workshops and hearings, and one document which was presented to them was the attached “building height and massing study” (Aug. 12, 2008).

The main conclusion, with respect to this code section, was the policy preference to maintain an open, light-filled, sunny edge of Riverfront Park. Having sunlight on one side of every street allows for a better public realm, because it allows for openness as well as the sense of enclosure that the shade provides.

The study included some shadow studies as well, showing that a building could be up to 75 feet high and not cast a shadow (in September) on the other side of a 100 foot right of way at any point during the day. As well, a building could be 55 feet high and not cast a shadow (again, in September) on the other side of an 80 foot right of way.

Spokane Falls Boulevard is approximately 100 feet wide. So, in order to avoid casting a shadow on the sidewalk on the north edge of Spokane Falls Boulevard in late summer/early fall (i.e., the end of the most active portion of the use of the Park), the buildings on the opposite side of the street should only be 75 feet high. However, out of

concern that this would both be too great a hindrance on development and would also not fit with the existing building scale, that number was raised to 100 feet. This means that a 100 foot high building directly across from Riverfront Park will cast shadows over the sidewalk but not quite (for example) to the Carrousel.

Based on the height and massing study, the decision was made to allow even greater height, if additional floors are stepped back from the Park by 15 feet per additional floor. Note that those floors would only have to be stepped back along Spokane Falls, and not (in the case of a hypothetical building at the corner of Spokane Falls and Washington) on the Washington Street side.

Council held final reading for ordinance C-34522 on Monday, December 14, 2009. Several individuals signed in to testify on the ordinance, and those testifying in favor included representatives from DSP (5 individuals, including Andrew Rowles), the Design Review Board, and the Plan Commission. In fact, the only issue with this ordinance appeared to be the provision which would require that new standalone commercial parking lots within the downtown core be contained within parking structures. Council Member French (Apple seconded) moved to strike that provision, which failed by a vote of 4-3 (Council President Shogan and Members Corker, Rush, and Snyder voted 'no' on the motion to amend). On that basis, the ordinance passed by a vote of 4-3 (French, McLaughlin and Apple voting 'no').

As stated previously, these regulations passed in late 2009 by the Council were intended to implement the downtown plan. Page 81 of that document (chapter 4 – also attached) notes

#### Access to Views and Sunlight

Significant existing views of historic landmarks from public rights-of-way can be preserved through sensitive site and building design, building orientation, stepbacks, and/or building height limits on blocks adjacent to landmark and contributing buildings. The Spokane community expressed a strong desire to maintain maximum exposure to sunlight in significant public open spaces, such as Riverfront Park, by promoting buildings designed to reduce shadows.

Downtown Spokane Plan, Chapter 4 – Strategic Framework (emphasis added).

There are six “urban form” (or “built form”) objectives to the Downtown Spokane Plan: urban density, active streetscapes, preservation/restoration/reuse, complementary infill, access to views and sunlight, and green infrastructure. The intentions of these built form objectives, “developed during the public planning process, are to preserve and enhance Downtown Spokane’s distinctive environment and history; to foster a sense of identity in Downtown; and to create an exciting, pedestrian-friendly environment.” Downtown Spokane Plan, at 80.



January 26, 2017

Spokane City Council  
Attn: Ben Stuckart, Council President  
808 W. Spokane Falls Boulevard  
Spokane, WA 99201

**RE: Spokane Falls Boulevard Height Restrictions**

Dear Mr. Stuckart,

Goodale and Barbieri Company has provided professional real estate services in the Pacific Northwest for nearly 80 years. Our extensive experience has positioned us to provide expert advice in commercial and residential real estate development.

We are deeply concerned that current height restrictions along Spokane Falls Boulevard are hindering development and creating unintended consequences for residential housing and commercial development.

Zoning within the City of Spokane is intentionally written and interpreted to prevent uncontrollable outward growth. Since there are restrictions on how far outward development can reach, it is common sense that we are able to build upward in the Downtown Core where that type of building is commonplace.

Building height restrictions cause underinvestment in land improvement. The intensity of land use on Spokane Falls Boulevard for newly zoned and constructed buildings is lower than that of existing downtown buildings. Consequently, lower valued land uses in highly valued Downtown Cores result in a loss of property tax bases. Further, there are numerous examples in the United States where building height restrictions lead to expanded growth outward and have overextended municipalities resulting in problems with governance, proper allocation of resources, and dilapidated improvements.

High densities boost ridership of mass transit. As large developments are encouraged farther and farther away from the City Core, motorization is encouraged. Alternatively, mass transit is discouraged. With the type of investment our community has made into the Spokane Transit Authority, it behooves us to ensure that our zoning codes reflect that commitment as well.

A downtown high-rise including uses such as office, retail or residential with complementary parking would facilitate employment opportunities, enhance retail demand and support entertainment venues, to name a few.

More importantly it can help give the City of Spokane a sense of place. It can often enhance the city's pride in its community. When traveling to Seattle, Portland and San Francisco, it is clear the city's economic impact for high-rise buildings is imperative for future growth. The height restriction has already led to a loss of a sizeable development along Spokane Falls Boulevard.

Considering the scarcity of land available in Downtown Spokane and the information above, we request the Spokane Falls Boulevard Height Restrictions be removed to promote growth and developability of Downtown Spokane.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Peterson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" being more prominent than the last name "Peterson".

David Peterson  
EVP and COO  
Goodale & Barbieri Company

Dp/crm

Cc: Andrew Rolwes

January 30, 2017

**To:** Honorable Ben Stuckart, Council President, Spokane City Council

**CC:** Mr. Mark Richard, Downtown Spokane Partnership

Mr. David Peterson, Goodale & Barbieri

**Subject:** Spokane Falls Blvd Height Restriction

Dear Council President Stuckart,

On behalf of the Downtown Spokane Partnership, we request your consideration of the removal of existing height restrictions along Spokane Falls Blvd. Per SMC 17C.124.220, Downtown Height and Massing:

"1. One additional story is allowed for every fifteen feet of upper story structure stepback from a street lot line, up to the maximum number of stories allowed in the zone without a maximum height specified."

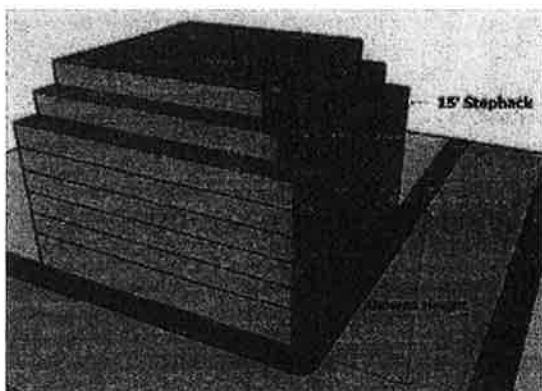


Figure 1: Stepback illustration

"2. In the DTC-100 zone one additional story is allowed for every fifteen feet of upper story structure stepback from Spokane Falls Boulevard. There is no upper story structure stepback required from street lot lines that are not adjacent to Spokane Falls Boulevard after the first fifteen feet of upper story structure stepback from Spokane Falls Boulevard."

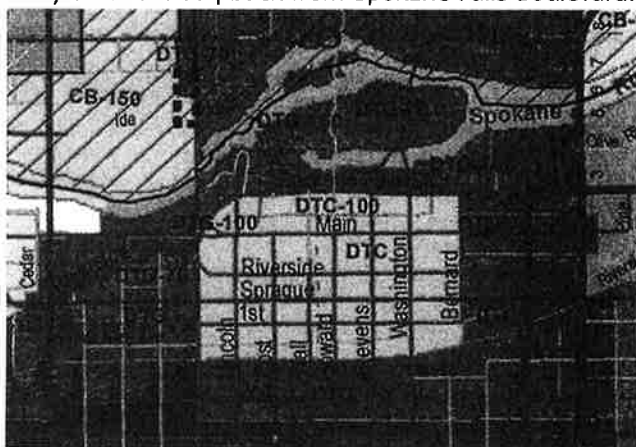


Figure 2: Current downtown zoning map

In our discussions with property owners and brokers along Spokane Falls Blvd, we learned that the height restriction and stepback requirement has already had the effect of precluding at least one development of the surface parking lots adjoining Stevens along Spokane Falls Blvd (see letter from Mr. David Peterson dated January 26, 2017, attached) . It also affects the Wheatland Bank Building, which is configured to add additional stories to the current four story building. With the Riverfront Park redevelopment effort now underway, these parcels will become that much more attractive to the mixed use development that the Downtown Plan foresees as a critical opportunity for these sites. However, the continued application of the height restriction unnecessarily precludes the height and density available at these parcels, and reduces their market value.

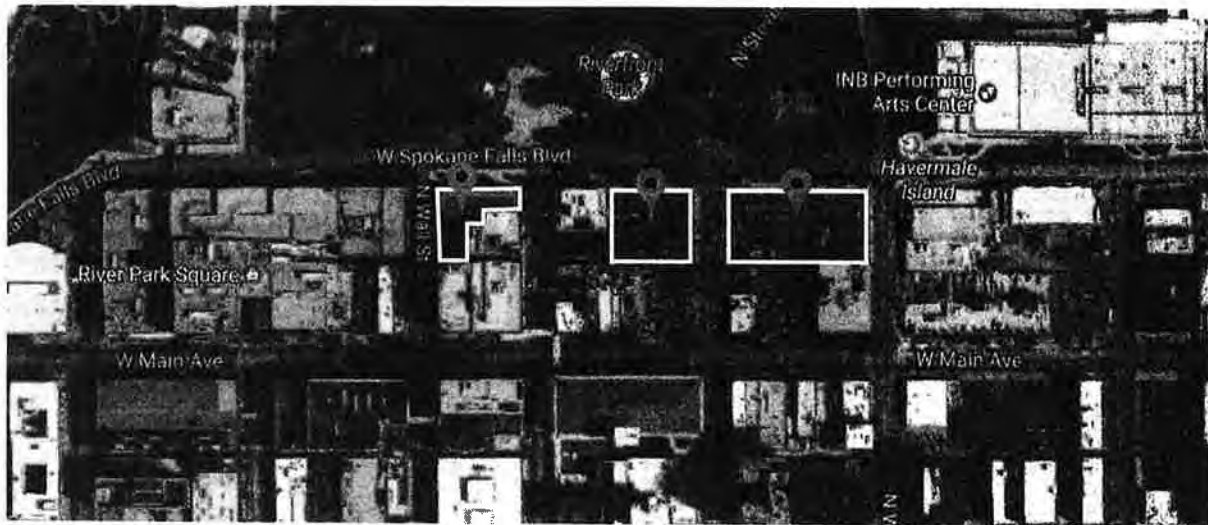


Figure 3: Parcels affected by the Spokane Falls Blvd height restriction and stepback requirement

We are conducting some additional research currently to determine shadowing impacts from 10+ story buildings along Spokane Falls Blvd and will provide that data as soon as it is ready.

The developable parcels on Spokane Falls Blvd are a crucial resource to downtown. Every effort to increase their market value (which completion of the Park will do in a major way) will serve the interests of downtown by fostering the next phase of compact, walkable, urban development, and the City by adding depth to its tax base. We believe that removing a factor which tends to hold back this potential is a relatively easy lift which we are very happy to support. Thank you for your consideration, and please contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding this proposal.

Sincerely,

Andrew Rolwes  
Downtown Spokane Partnership  
Public Policy and Parking Manager  
[arolwes@downtownspokane.net](mailto:arolwes@downtownspokane.net)  
509-456-0580



January 26, 2017

Spokane City Council  
Attn: Ben Stuckart, Council President  
808 W. Spokane Falls Boulevard  
Spokane, WA 99201

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High densities boost ridership of mass transit. As large developments are encouraged farther and farther away from the City Core, motorization is encouraged. Alternatively, mass transit is discouraged. With the type of investment our community has made into the Spokane Transit Authority, it behooves us to ensure that our zoning codes reflect that commitment as well.

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Respectfully,

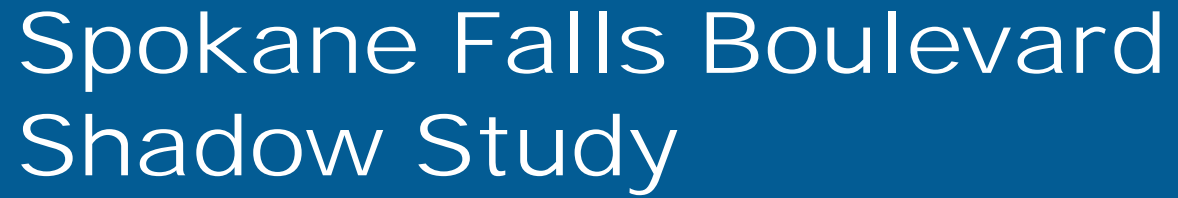


David Peterson  
EVP and COO  
Goodale & Barbieri Company

Dp/crm

Cc: Andrew Rolwes

## **APPENDIX B**

[illegible]



## Model Existing DTC-100 Maximum Height

- Washington Trust building has additional height potential. This building was raised to current maximum height limit
- Two vacant parcel areas between Howard and Washington raised to current maximum height limit

## Model Hypothetical 200ft Building Height

- Same foot prints as above

## Shadows calculated for specific dates and times

- Spring Equinox | March 20, 2017 (9am, 12pm, 3pm)
- Summer Solstice | June 2017 (9am, 12pm, 3pm)
- Fall Equinox | September 22, 2017 (9am, 12pm, 3pm)
- Winter Solstice | December 21, 2017 (9am, 12pm, 3pm)



### Data

- 2016 Pictometry | Aerial Image
- Spokane's Digital Elevation Model
- Building Foot Print Layer
- Building heights in building footprint layer based on LIDAR Data

### Methodology

- Model shadowing effects using the ESRI 3D Analyst Shadow Volume tool.
- Aerial Photo and building footprints draped over the digital elevation model

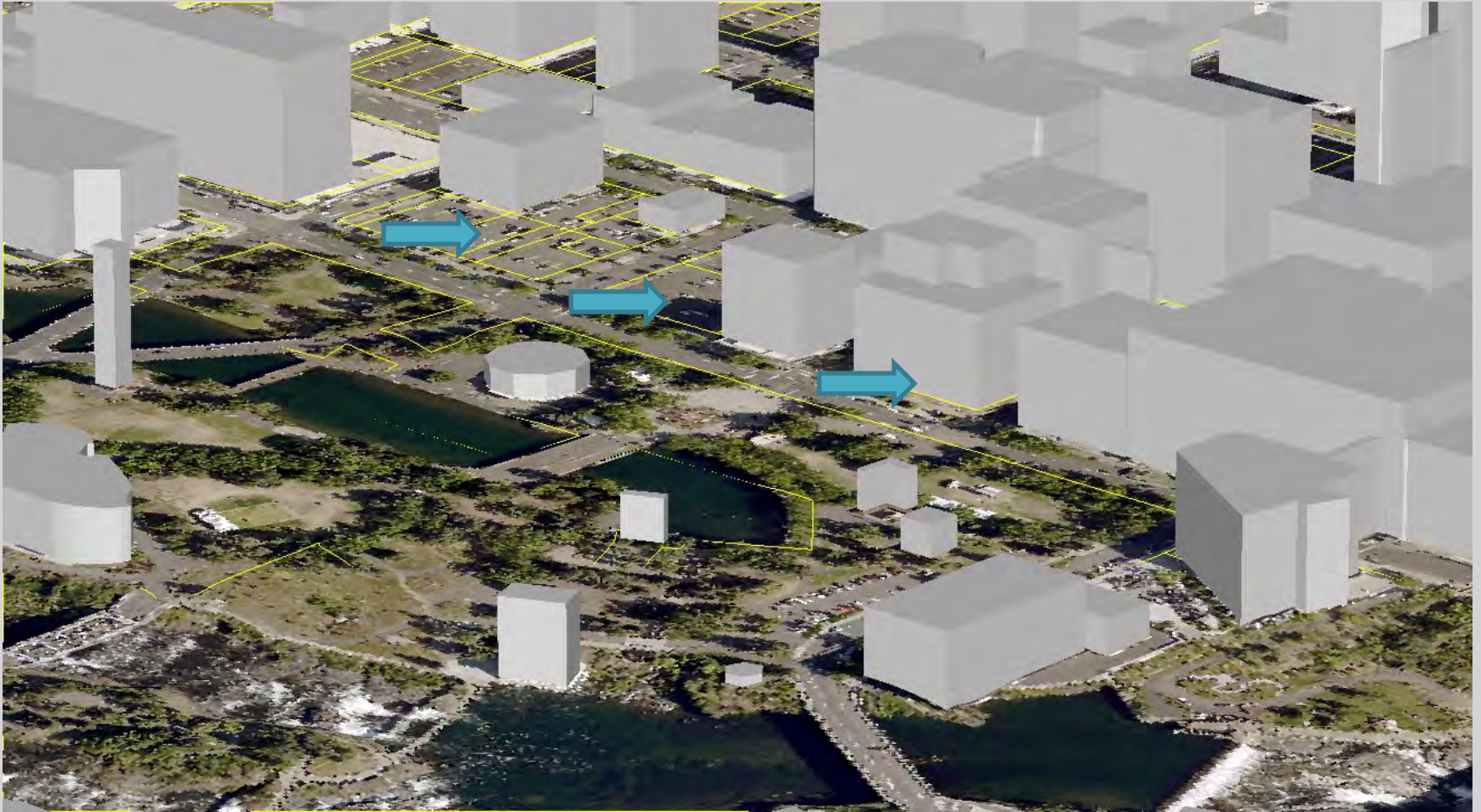


# Context / Study Sites





# Study Sites





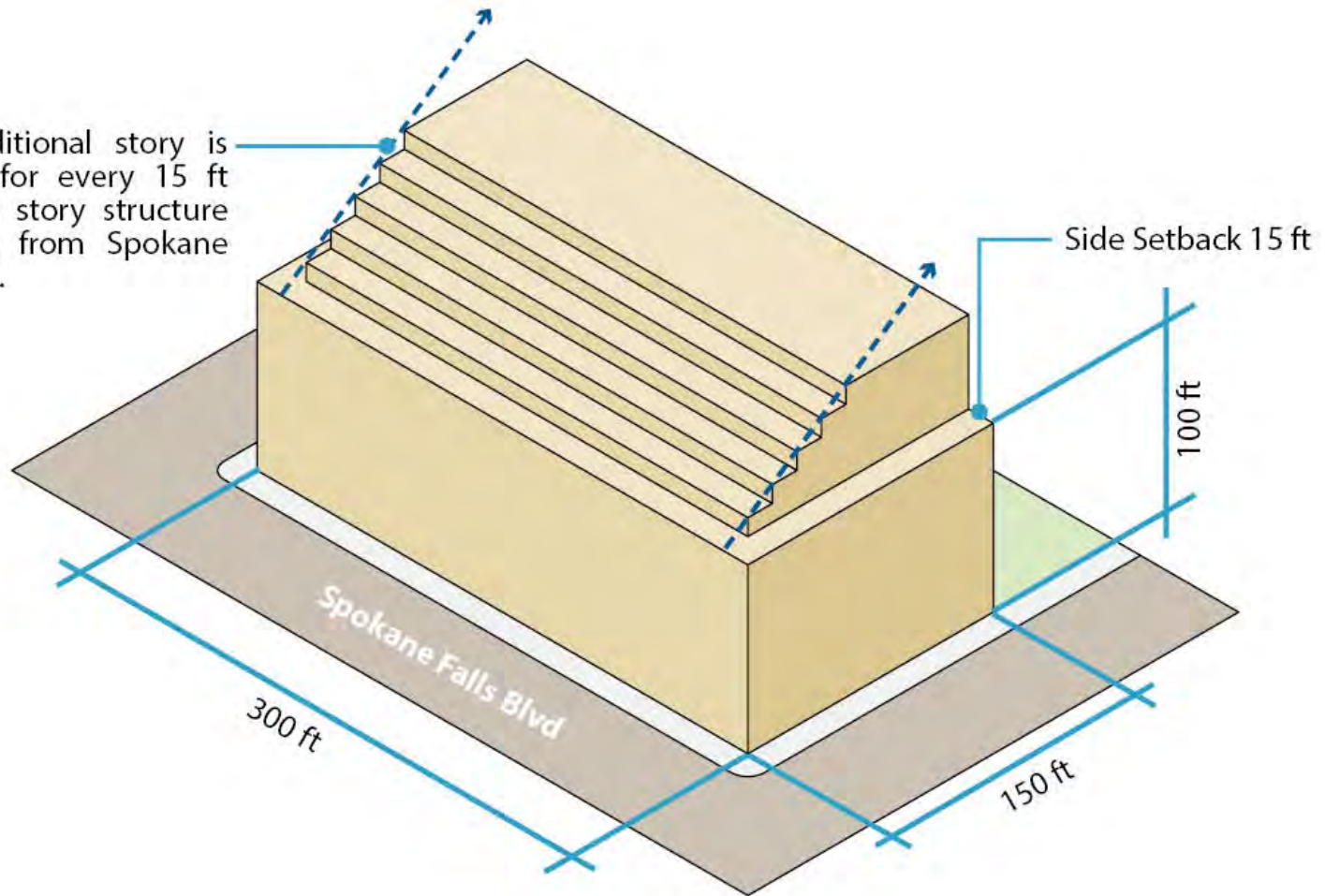
## Existing Height Limit DTC-100





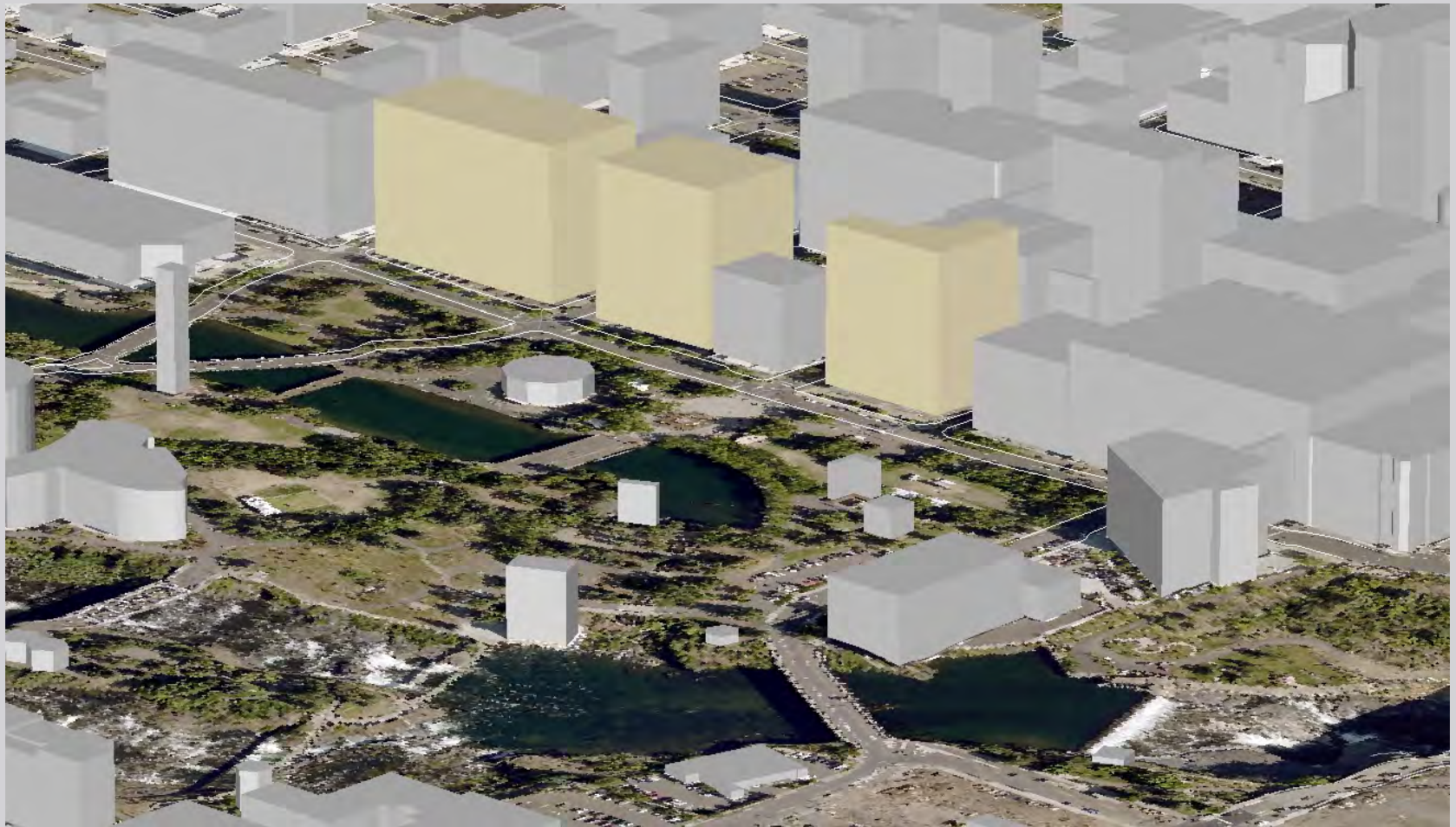
## Existing Height Limit DTC-100

One additional story is allowed for every 15 ft of upper story structure stepback from Spokane Falls Blvd.



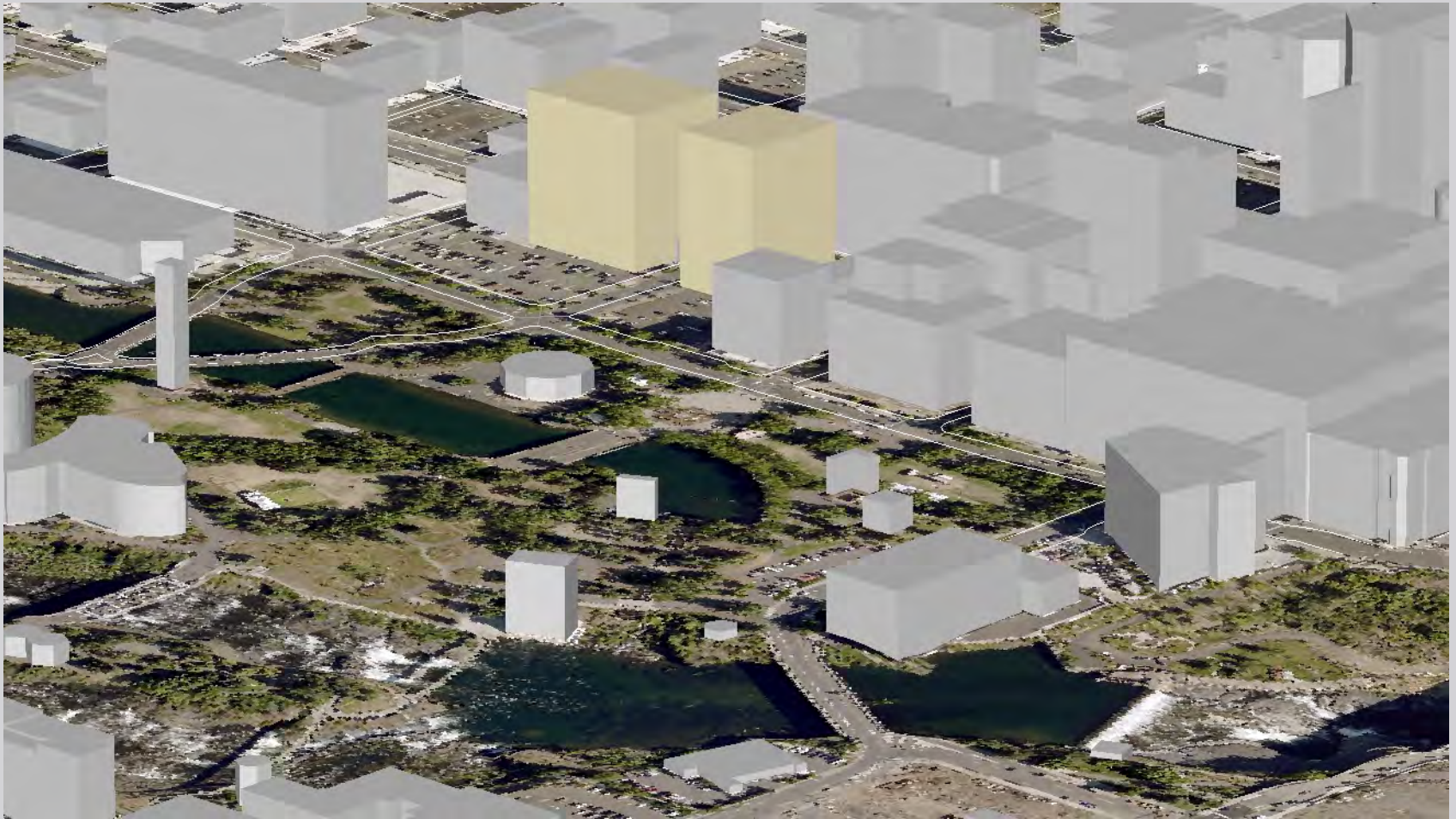


## 200 ft. Building Height





## 200 ft. South Building Height





## Spring Equinox 9AM | Current





## Spring Equinox 9AM | Existing Max Hgt.





Spring Equinox 9AM | 200 FT



Spokane Falls Blvd Shadow Study



# Spring Equinox 9AM | South 200 FT





## Spring Equinox 12PM | Current





## Spring Equinox 12PM | Existing Max Hgt.





Spring Equinox 12PM | 200 FT



Spokane Falls Blvd Shadow Study



Spring Equinox 12PM | South 200 FT



Spokane Falls Blvd Shadow Study



## Spring Equinox 3PM | Current





## Spring Equinox 3PM | Existing Max Hgt.





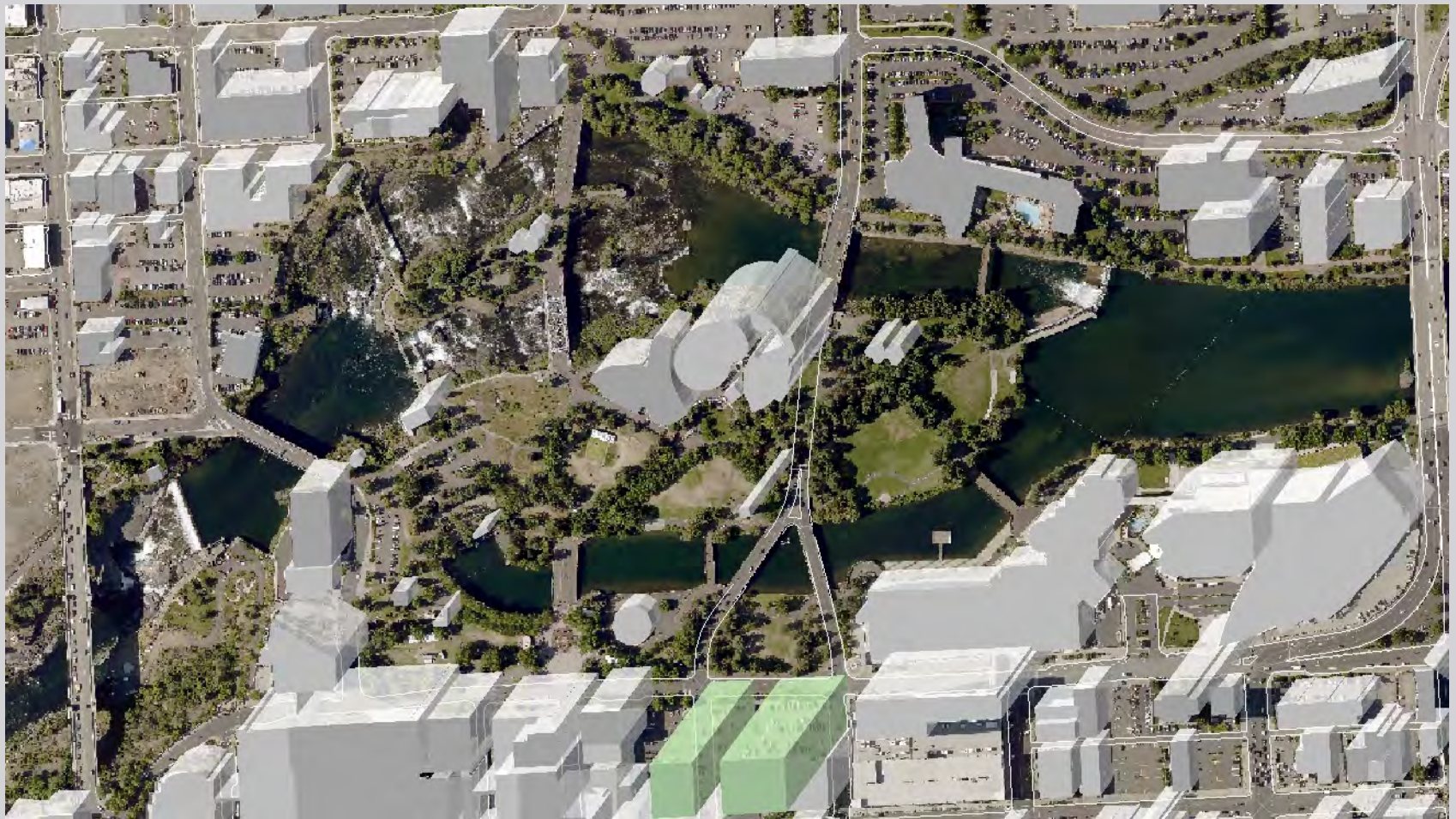
Spring Equinox 3PM | 200 FT



Spokane Falls Blvd Shadow Study

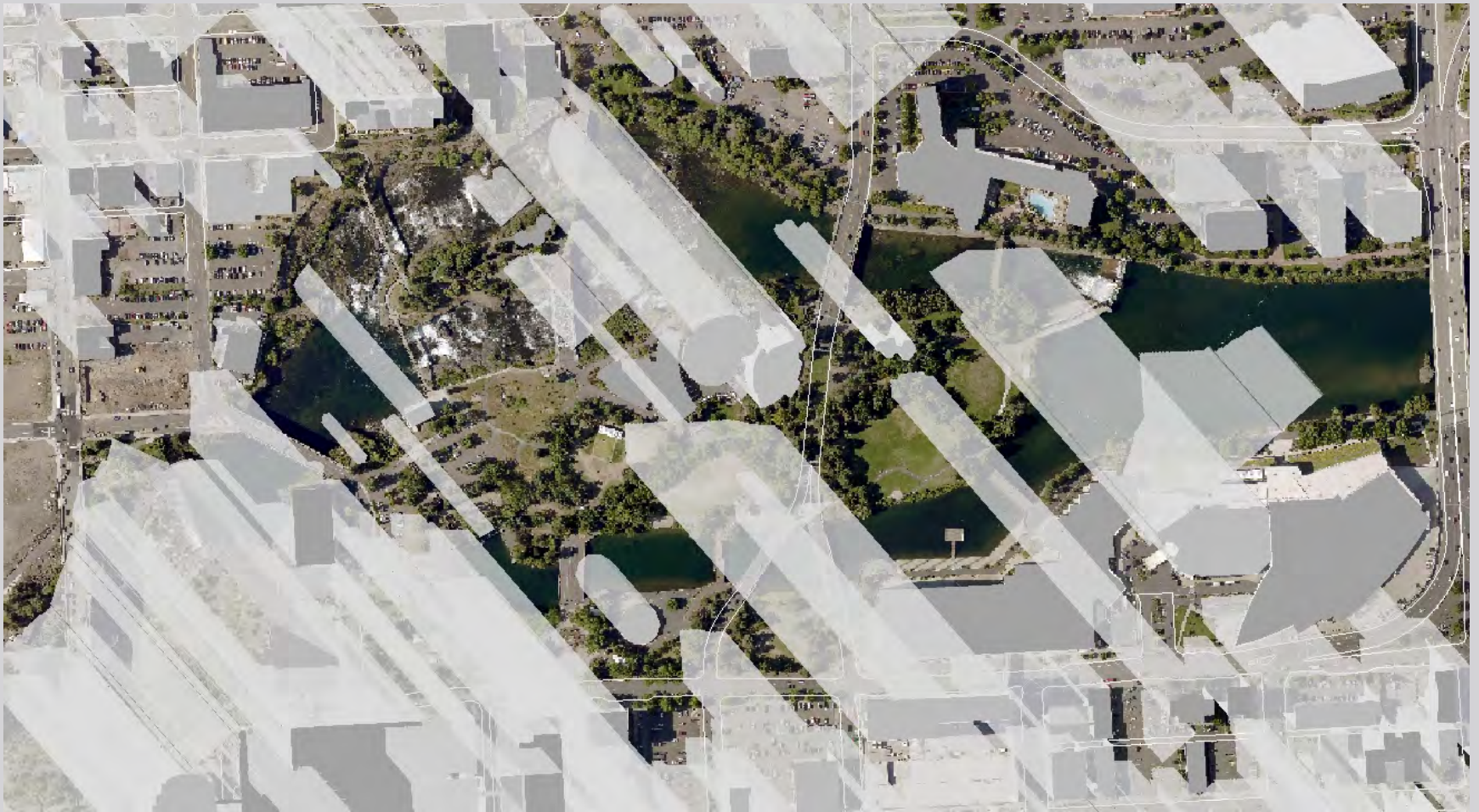


## Spring Equinox 3PM | South 200 FT



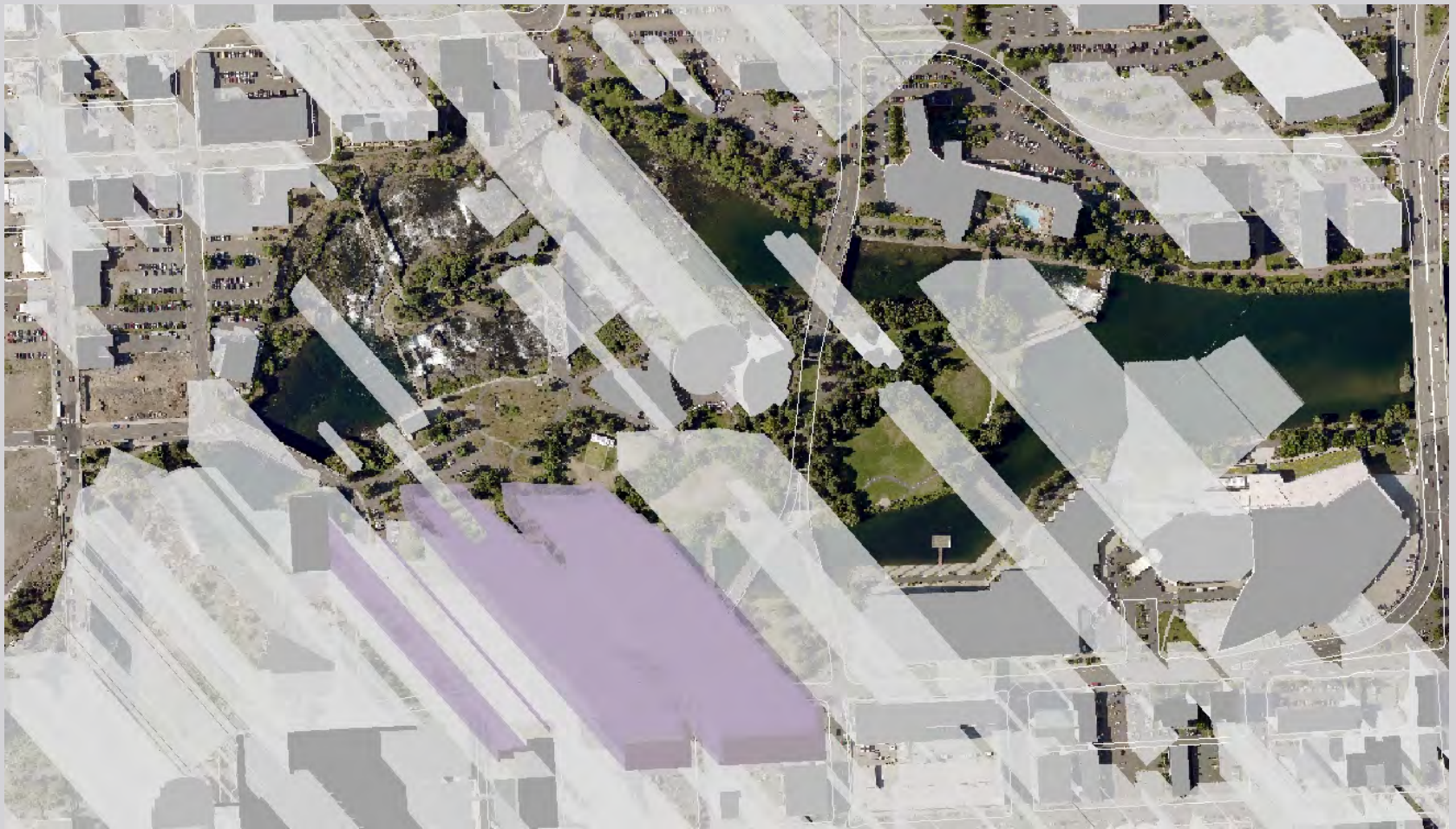


# Winter Solstice 9AM | Current



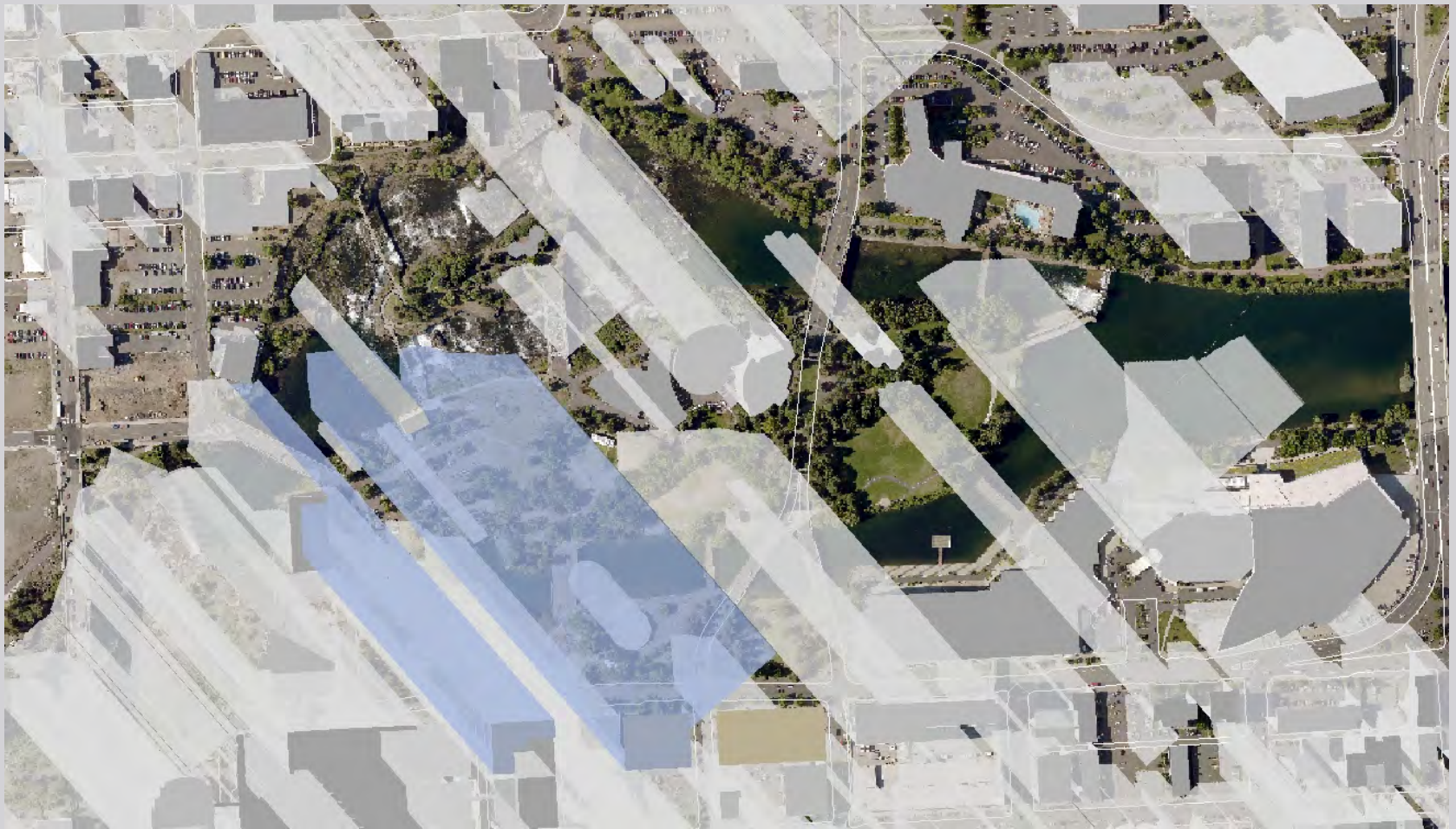


## Winter Solstice 9AM | Existing Max Hgt.





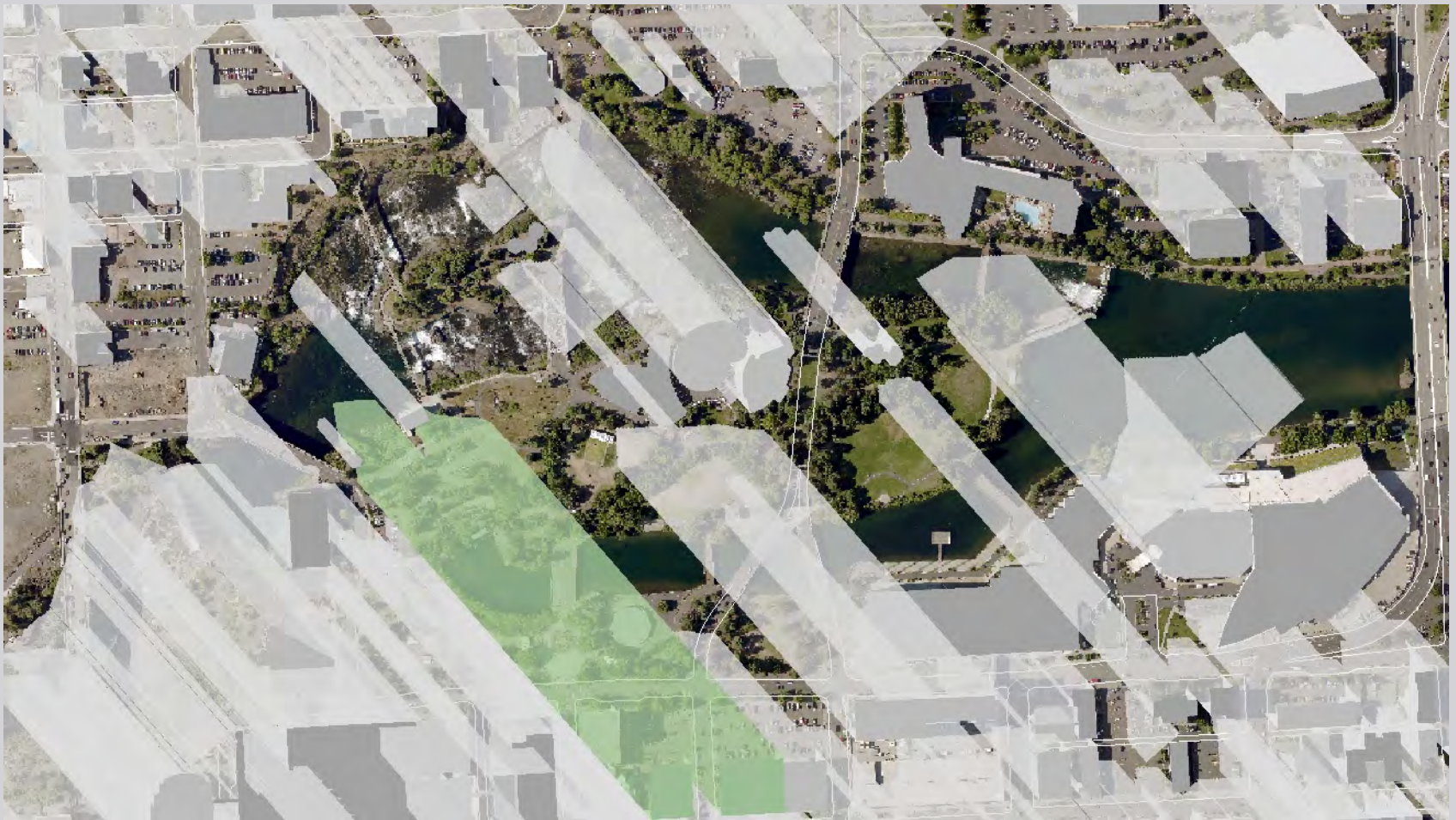
Winter Solstice 9AM | 200 FT



Spokane Falls Blvd Shadow Study

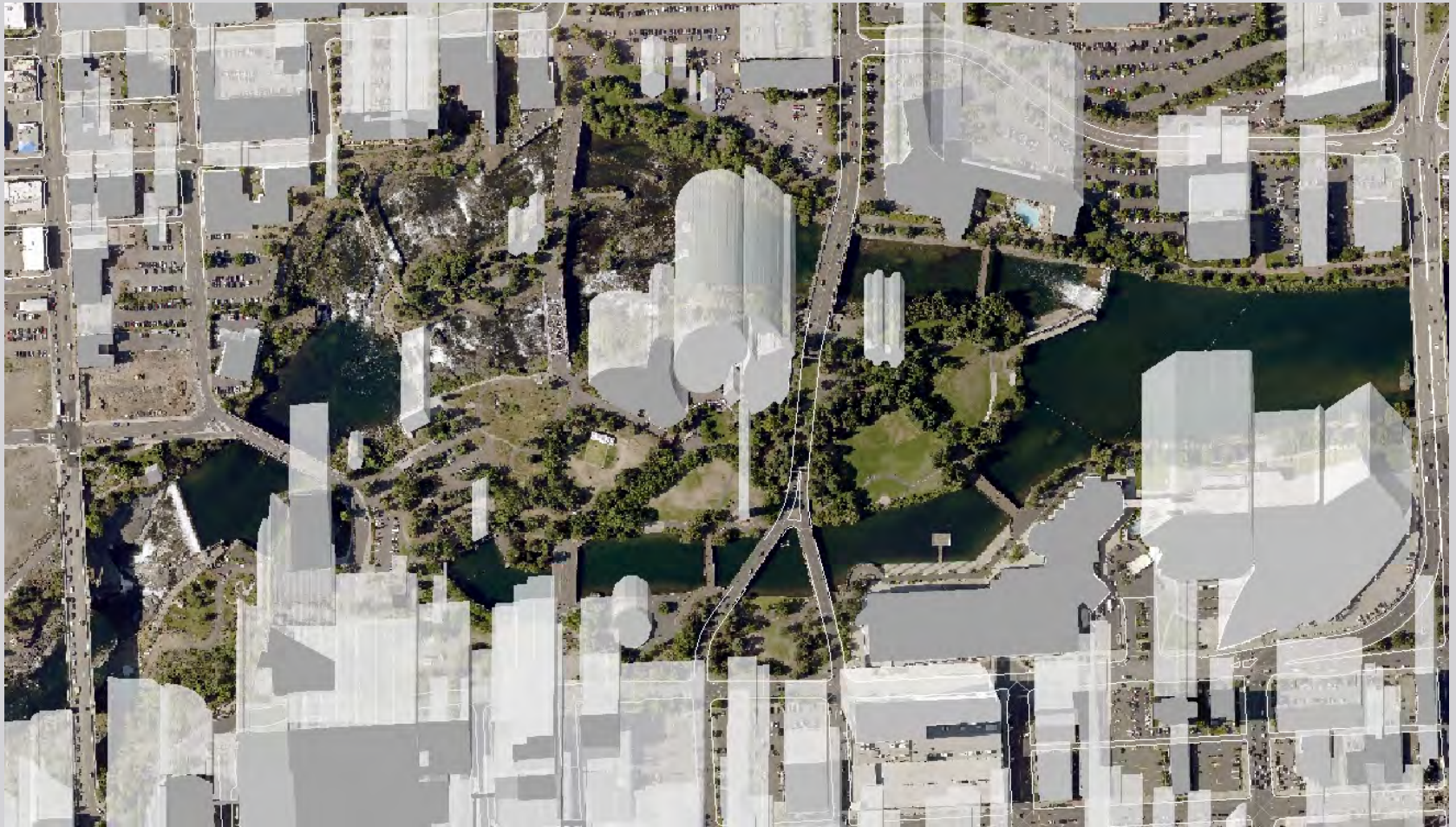


# Winter Solstice 9AM | South 200 FT





# Winter Solstice 12PM | Current



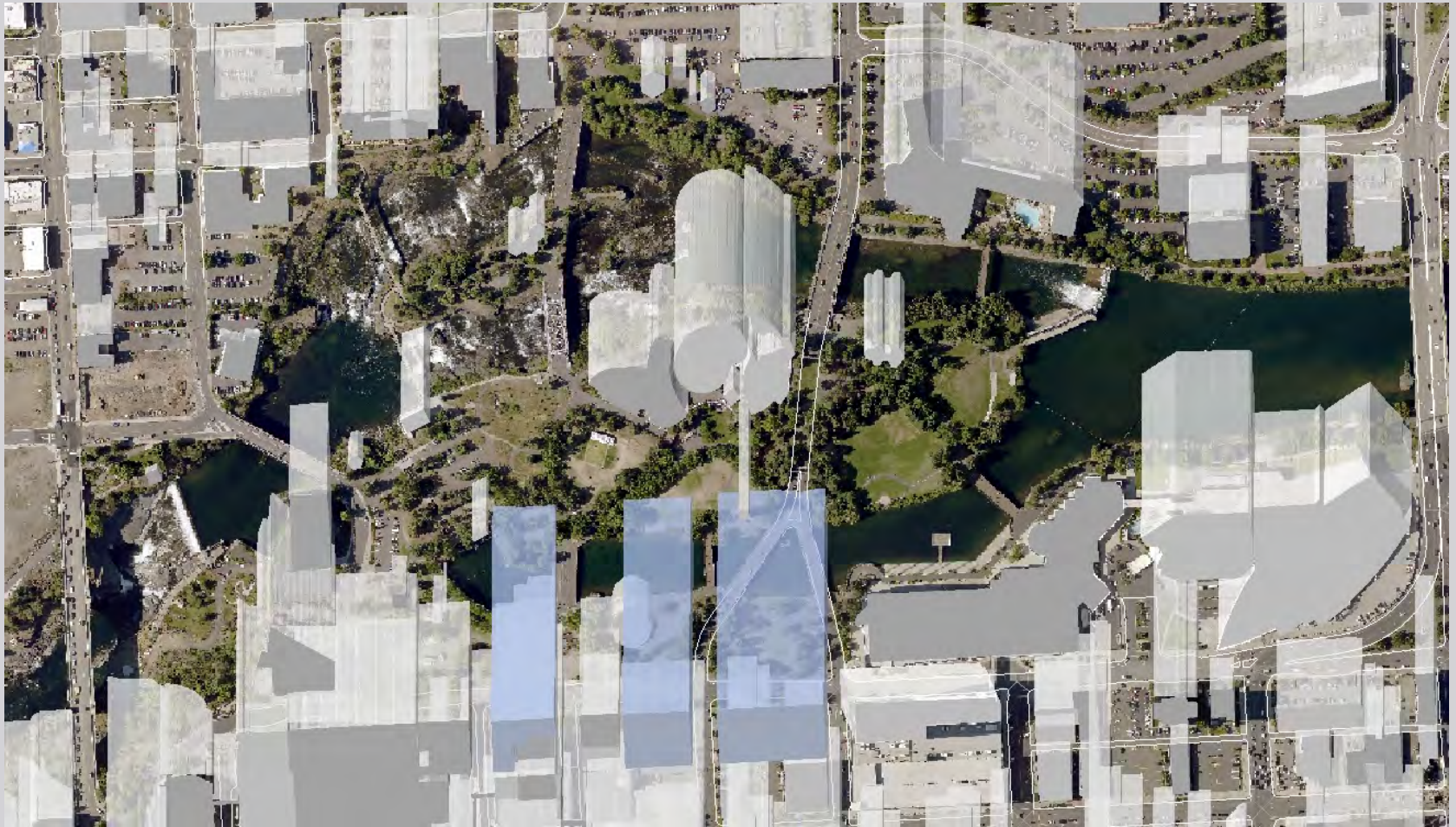


# Winter Solstice 12PM | Existing Max Hgt.





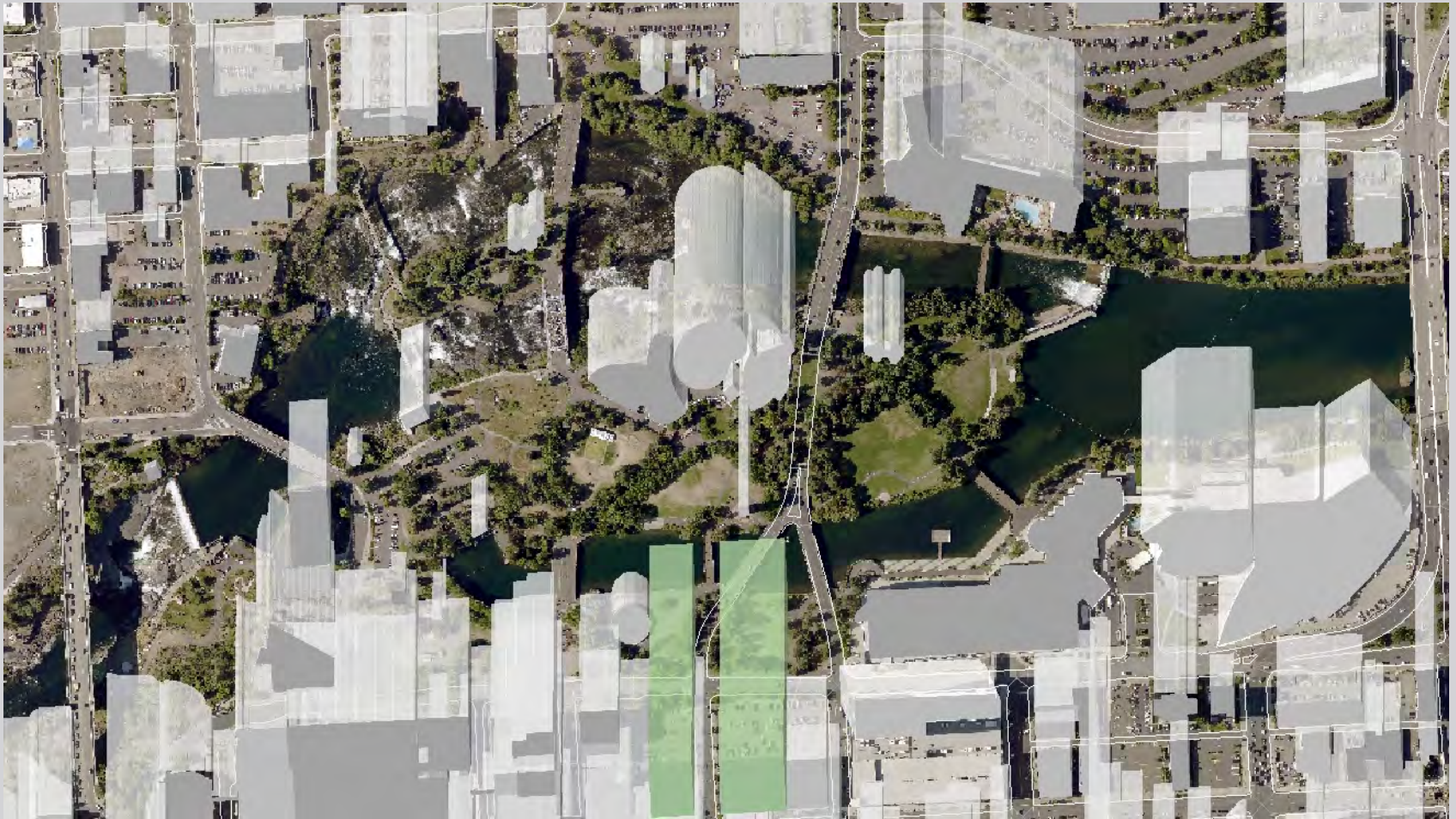
Winter Solstice 12PM | 200 FT



Spokane Falls Blvd Shadow Study



Winter Solstice 12PM | South 200 FT



Spokane Falls Blvd Shadow Study

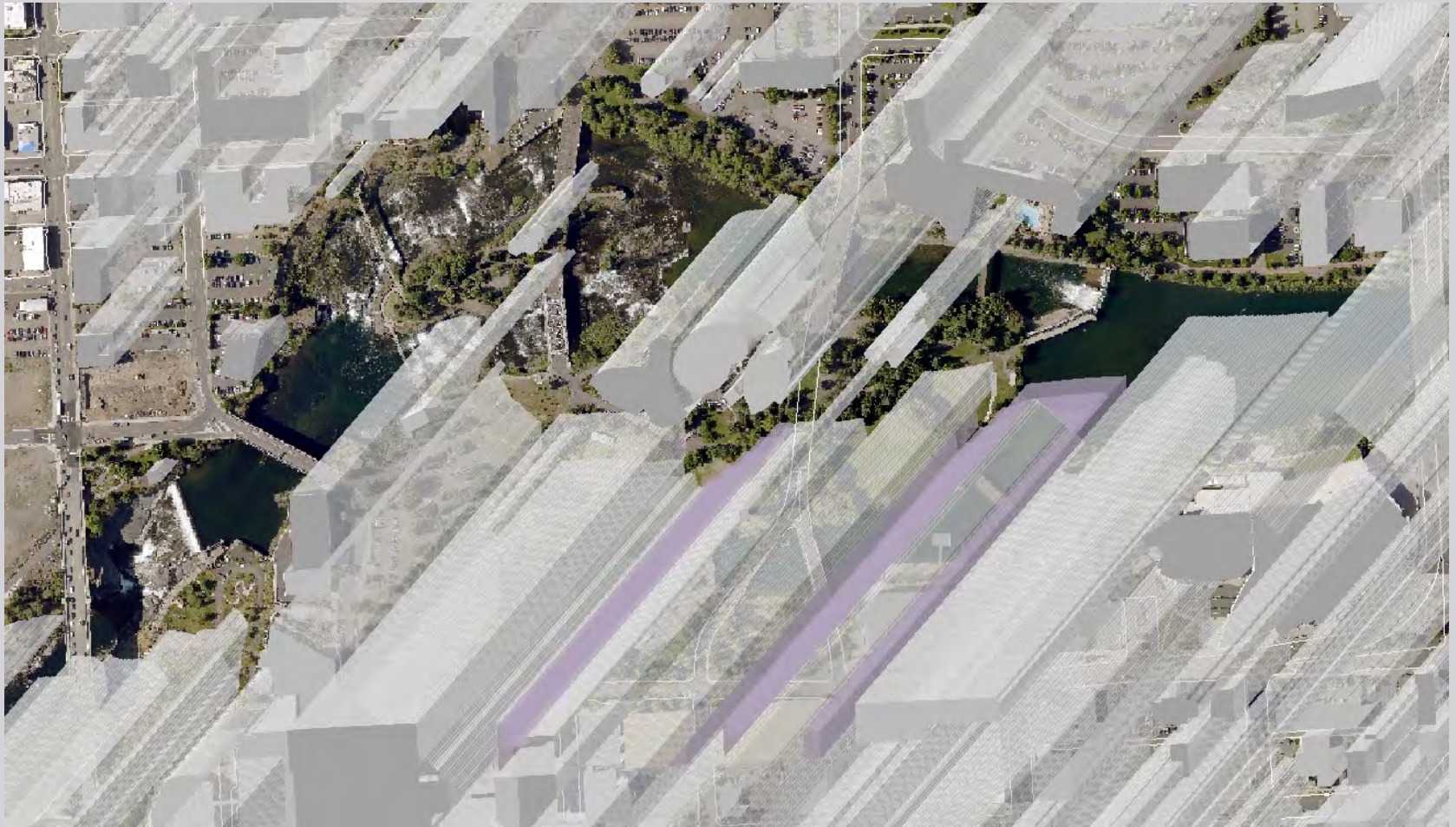


## Winter Solstice 3PM | Current



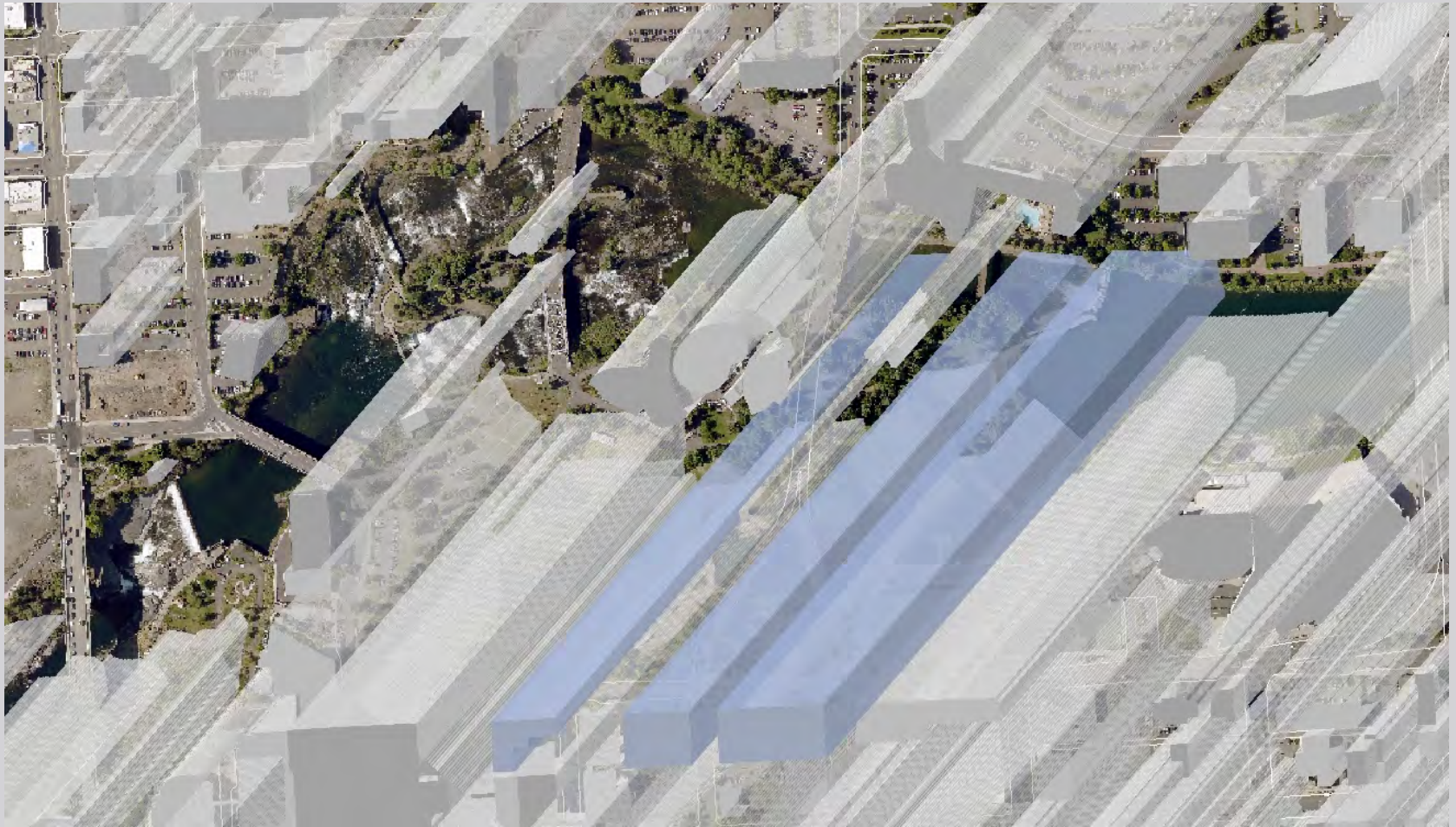


## Winter Solstice 3PM | Existing Max Hgt.





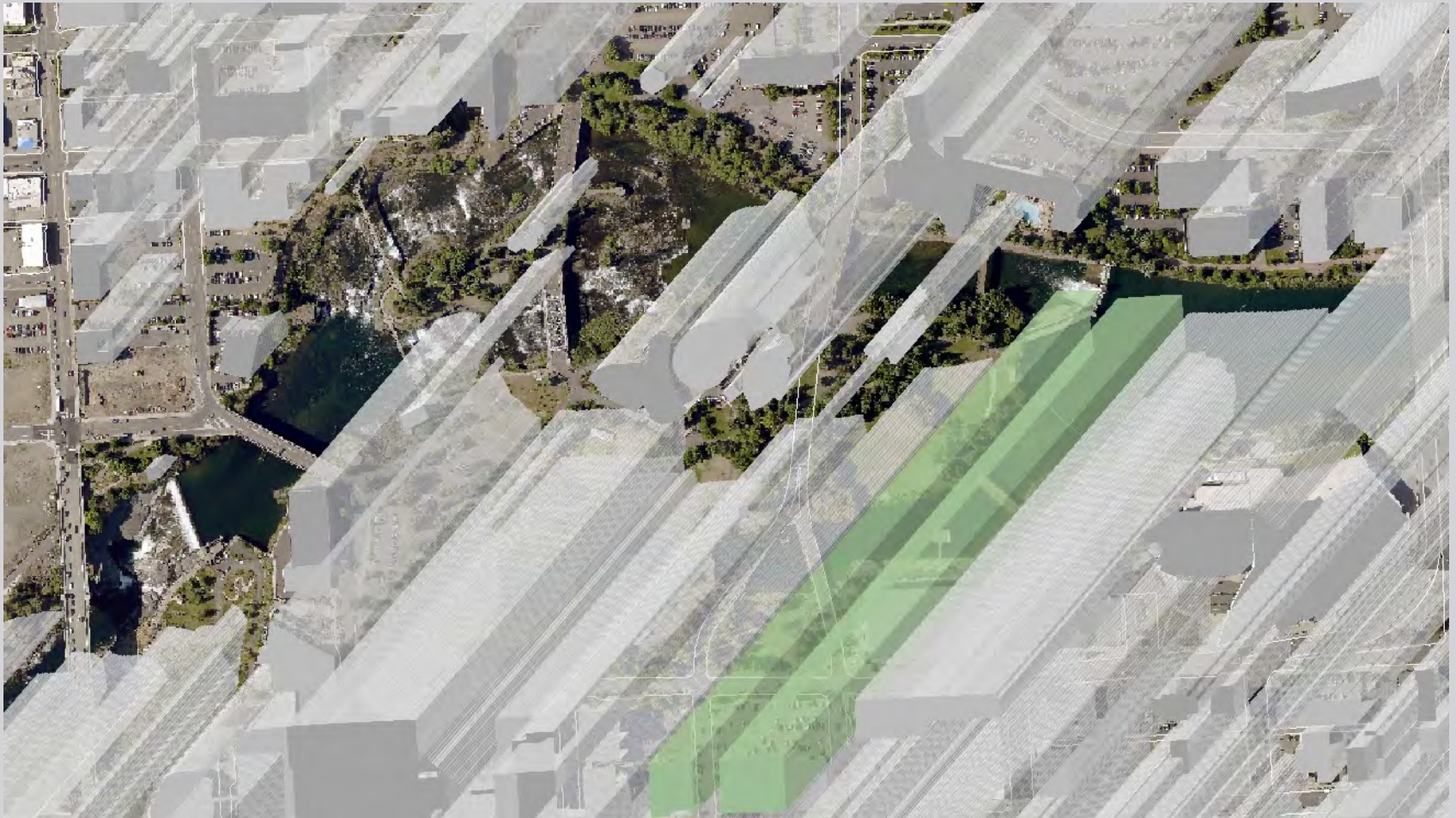
Winter Solstice 3PM | 200 FT



Spokane Falls Blvd Shadow Study



Winter Solstice 3PM | South 200 FT

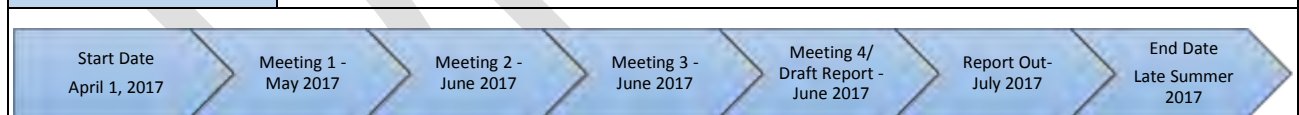


## **APPENDIX C**

**PROJECT CHARTER, Study Spokane Falls Blvd Bldg. Height Limits**

DRAFT For Plan Commission Consideration - April 12, 2017

<b>Project Title:</b>	Spokane Falls Blvd Building Heights, DTC-100 zoning
<b>Project Sponsor(s):</b>	Ben Stuckart, City Council President
<b>Project Manager:</b>	Lisa Key, Planning Director
<b>Project Purpose:</b>	To determine a recommended approach to address concerns from property owners/developers that the requirements of Spokane Municipal Code (SMC) 17C.124.220 as it relates to heights of buildings on the south side of Spokane Falls Boulevard.
<b>High-Level Requirements:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene a Stakeholder Working Group – Discuss project purpose and explore possible solutions to stated issues.</li> <li>• Final Report summarizing issue background, summary of findings from working group, and recommendations for possible code amendment, possible changes to policy as part of a planned Downtown Plan update, or through a possible Comprehensive Plan policy amendment.</li> <li>• Presentations on findings to Plan Commission and possibly City Council.</li> </ul>
<b>Risks:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This project was recently added to the Plan Commission work program and may delay work on other projects.</li> <li>• This project has the potential to be highly controversial which may delay the completion and final deliverables.</li> </ul>
<b>Constraints:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope needs to be limited to make efficient use of stakeholders' time, limited budget, and staff resources.</li> <li>• Outcome will be a potential recommendation on future action not a direct change to policy or code.</li> <li>• Limited effect (# of affected parcels); these sites have been identified as key sites in the Downtown Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Timeline:</b>	Completion of report and recommendations by late summer.



Staff Technical Assistance Team		
Project Role	Name	Job Title
Project Sponsor	Ben Stuckart	City Council President
Project Manager	Lisa Key	Planning Director
Project Coordinator	Tirrell Black	Associate Planner
Project Team Member	Kevin Freibott	Assistant Planner
Project Team Member	Omar Akkari	Urban Designer
Urban Design Consultant	Mark Hinshaw	Urban Designer, Walker Macy



## **PROJECT CHARTER, Study Spokane Falls Blvd Bldg. Height Limits**

DRAFT For Plan Commission Consideration - April 12, 2017

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**Topic/Goal:** To determine a recommended approach to addressing stated concerns from property owners/developers that the requirements of Spokane Municipal Code (SMC) 17C.124.220 as it relates to heights of buildings on the south side of Spokane Falls Boulevard.

**Directive:** Form a working group and study potential alternatives to the SMC provision and report back to the Plan Commission, per Plan Commission directive at the workshop on March 22, 2017.

**Budget/Funding Source:** Planning Department, Consultant Services Budget, not to exceed \$9800. (Budget does not include in-kind costs.)

### **Workgroup Members (13 + Staff):**

- Plan Commissioners (3)
- Community Assembly Representative (1)
- Parks Board Members (2)
- Parks Staff (1 + 1 Alternate)
- Planning Staff (1)
- Downtown Spokane Partnership (1 + 1 Alternate)
- Owner Representative (1)
- Citizen-at-Large Representative (1)
- Riverside Neighborhood Representative (1)
- Industry Representative (2)

**Final Outcome/Deliverable:** Final report (approx. 10 pages) giving limited background, summary of findings, and recommendation.

**Meeting Plan:** Four workgroup meetings, bi-weekly or monthly, with the following goals:

- Meeting 1 – Discuss background and project goals, walk length of project to familiarize group with topic.
- Meeting 2 – Review alternative designs possible consistent with existing Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan policy, that could be addressed through code amendment. Discuss possible refinements to policy that could be contemplated as part of the Downtown Plan Update, or through a possible Comprehensive Plan Amendment.
- Meeting 3 – Continue to refine topics discussed in Meeting 2. Develop draft recommendations for further refinement in Meeting 4.
- Meeting 4 – Summarize findings of analysis and compile final recommendations for report.

**Possible Consultant Assistance:** Consider using Mark Hinshaw (Walker-Macy) under current Personal Services Agreement. Mr. Hinshaw would likely help develop possible design alternatives within the current code and to facilitate discussion.



## **PROJECT CHARTER, Study Spokane Falls Blvd Bldg. Height Limits**

**DRAFT For Plan Commission Consideration - April 12, 2017**

**Report:** Following the meetings, Planning Department staff will create the final product, in consultation with the working group chair, and report back to Plan Commission with the final findings. The report will include the following:

- Review of existing policy, code, and design standards (Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Plan, SMC).
- Review of previous and updated shading studies and the effect of shading on the park/public uses.
- Design examples that fit the current policy.
- Potential code modifications/clarification that can be developed immediately (SMC), consistent with existing policy.
- Potential update/amendment to policy established in the Downtown Plan for possible consideration during 2018 Downtown Plan Update.
- Recommendations for additional/updated policy, code, and design standard guidance.

Following preparation of the report and circulation to the Plan Commission, Staff will present the findings at a Plan Commission workshop.

Plan Commission Working Group  
Spokane Falls Blvd Heights, DTC-100 zone standards  
Participants (May 2017)

name	affiliation
Todd Beyreuther	Spokane Plan Commissioner
Mike Baker	Spokane Plan Commissioner (alternate)
Chris Batten	Spokane Plan Commissioner
Christy Jeffers	Spokane Plan Commissioner
Greg Francis	Community Assembly
Chris Wright	Spokane Parks Board
Mark Richard	Downtown Spokane Partnership
Andrew Rolwes	Downtown Spokane Partnership (alternate)
Jim Price	Citizen Representative
Jim Kolva	Riverside Neighborhood Representative
Lisa Key	Spokane Planning Director
Leroy Eadie	Spokane Parks Director
Gary Bernardo	Bernardo Wills Architects
Ann Martin	Heylman Martin Architects
David Peterson	Goodale & Barbieri

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## Working Group Responsibilities

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The Stakeholder Working Group is comprised of a range of stakeholders. Working Group responsibilities include:

- Attending all the meetings if possible.
- Assigning an alternate if unable to attend all meetings.
- As a subcommittee of the Plan Commission, meetings will be held in a manner that conforms to the spirit of the Open Public Meetings Act. Meetings will be noticed and open to public attendance.

If approached by a media outlet, Working Group members will speak on behalf of themselves and not on behalf of the Working Group as a whole. Members may refer media inquiries to Julie Happy, Communications Manager, Business and Developer Services with the City of Spokane ([jhappy@spokanecity.org](mailto:jhappy@spokanecity.org) or 509.625.7773).

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## Meeting Guidelines

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The stakeholder working group will adhere to the following discussion guidelines:

- Listen when others are speaking.
- Seek to understand before seeking to be understood.
- Let the facilitator know if you feel like another participant is behaving disrespectfully or preventing you from speaking up.
- Focus on constructive problem-solving, not personalities.
- It's okay to disagree.

# Working Principles

**Draft: 5/17/2017 for discussion at Meeting #2, June 6, 2017**

Presentations on May 16 led to a robust discussion that followed. There seemed to be general agreement on many issues. To formalize this, we have drafted a number of key principles that can inform further discussions and help shape an eventual approach. These are not in any order of importance; they are equally important.

## Unique Place

Create a positive, highly identifiable environment in the area bounded by Main Street, the Spokane River and Riverfront Park, Lincoln Street, and Washington Street that will draw people to a wide range of public and private destinations.

## Integrated Development

Guide the redevelopment of properties along the south side of Spokane Fall Boulevard in order to result in a seamless integration with the enhanced park, so that entire area is a lively and ever-changing part of downtown.

## Active Streetscapes

Ensure a lively and activated streetscape through both management of public spaces and activation by commercial uses that embrace the public realm.

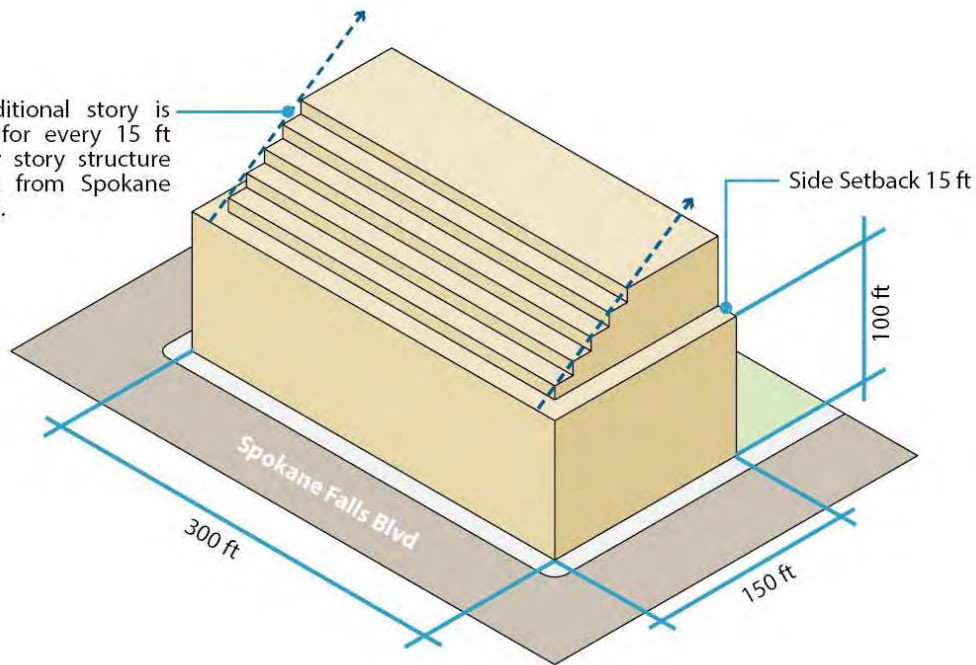
## Varied Building Forms

Promote flexibility in building location, form, height, and massing. Avoid creating a continuous “wall” effect fronting the park.

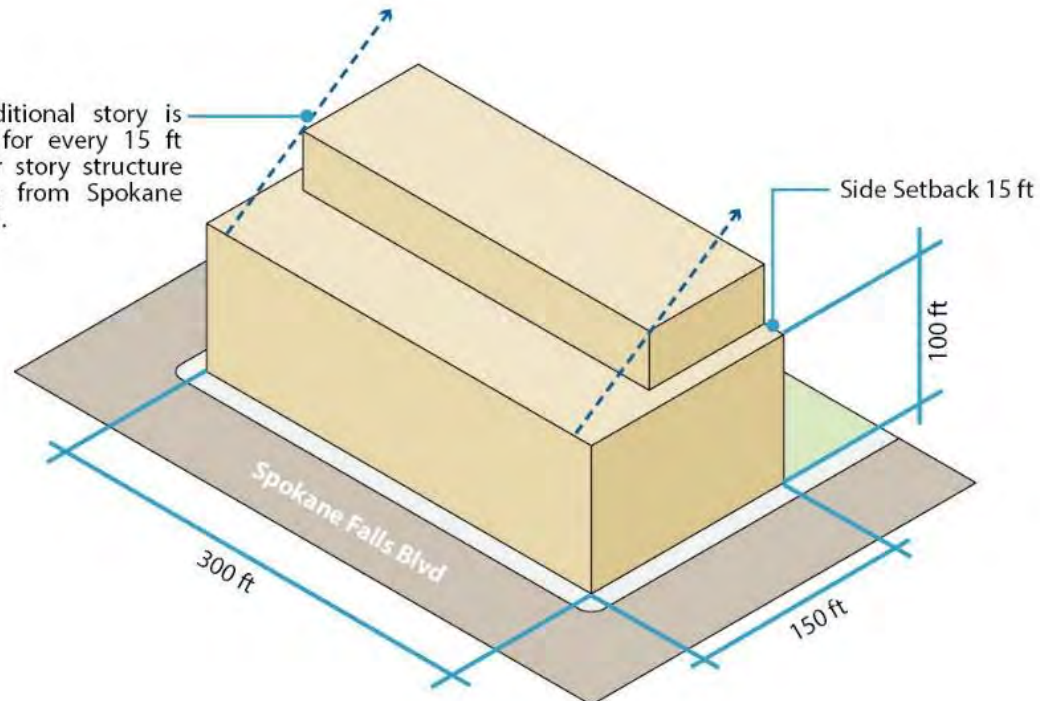
## Howard Street Corridor

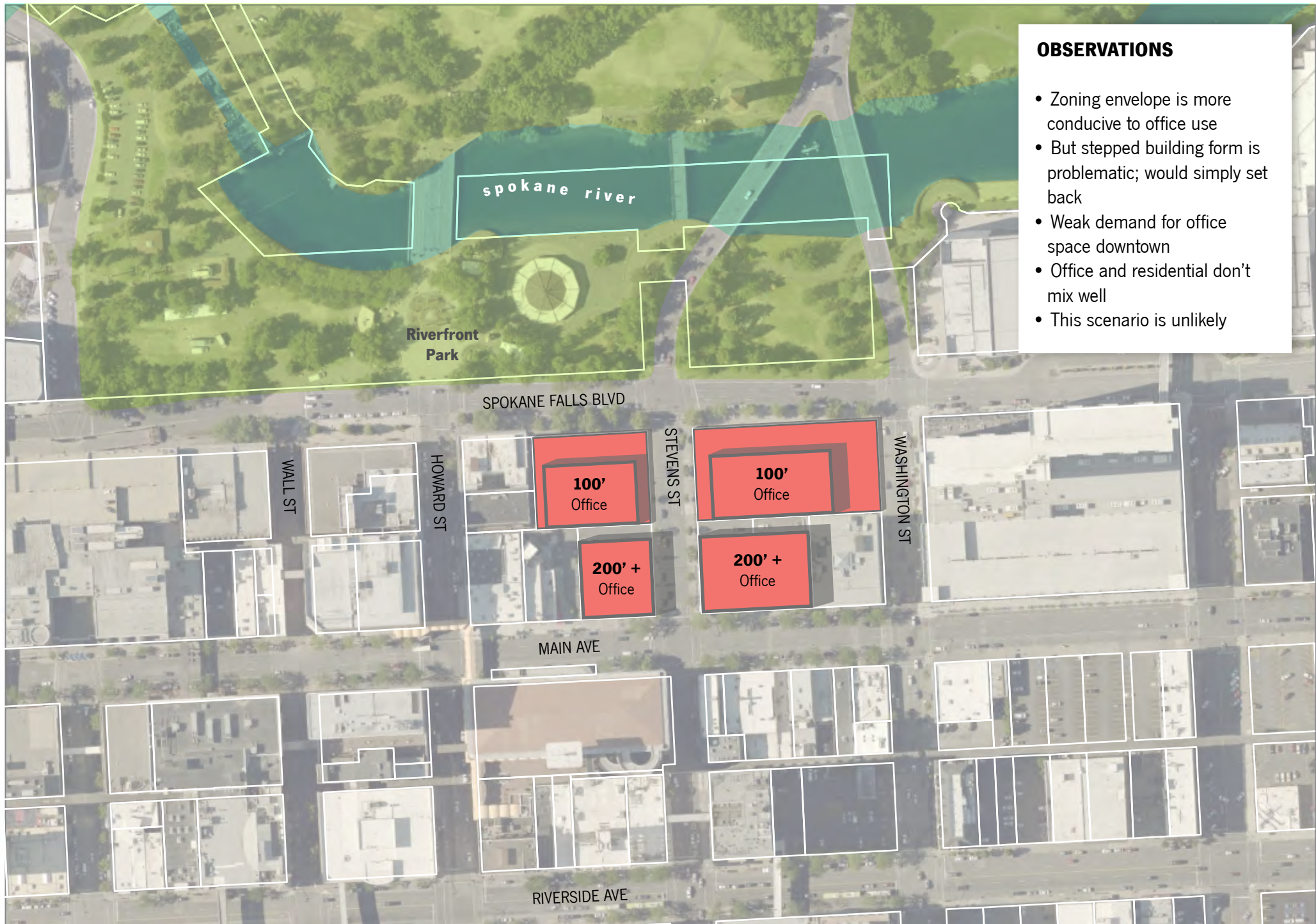
Preserve significant amounts of sunlight throughout the year on the highly important Howard Street corridor through the park.

One additional story is allowed for every 15 ft of upper story structure stepback from Spokane Falls Blvd.



One additional story is allowed for every 15 ft of upper story structure stepback from Spokane Falls Blvd.





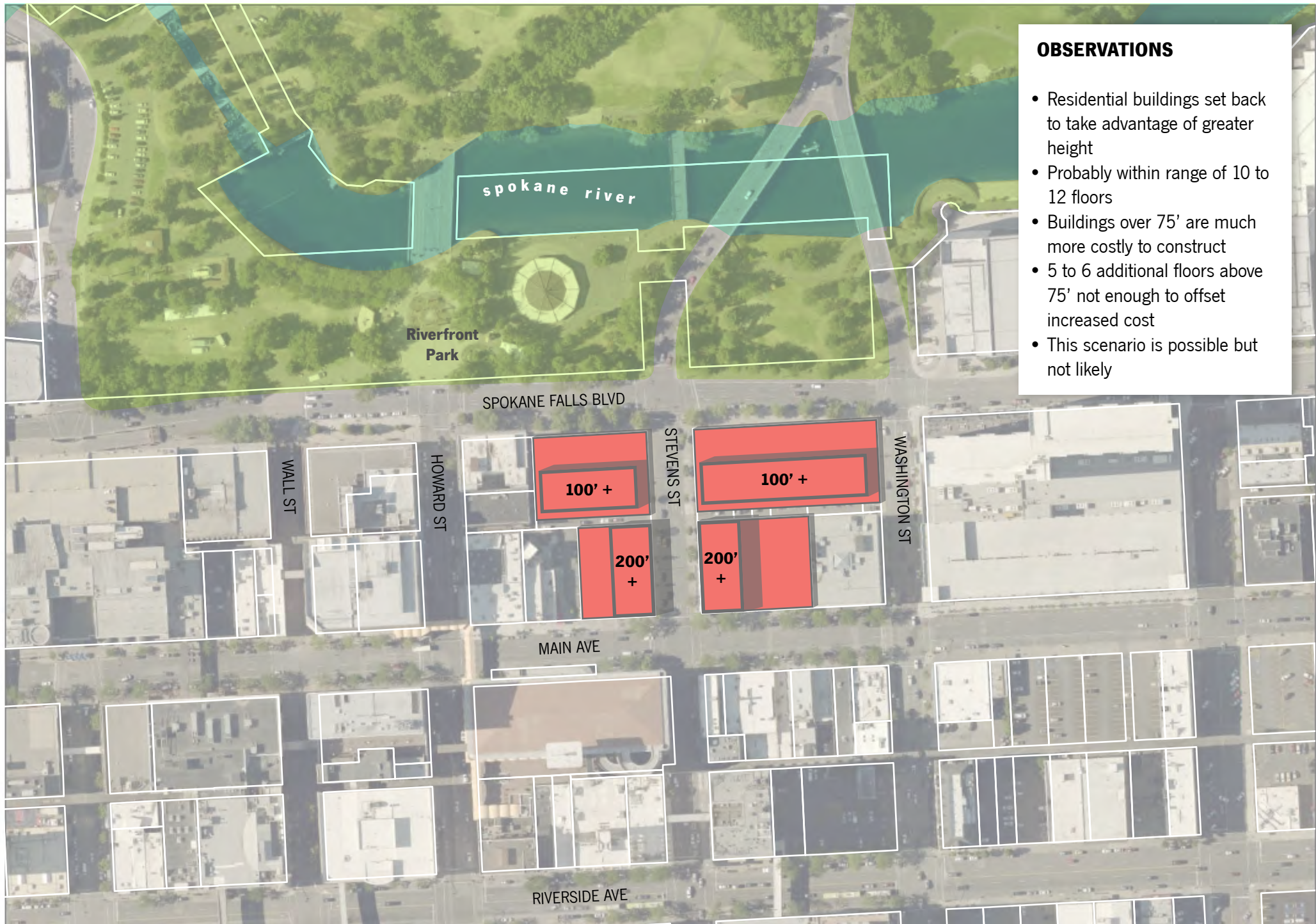
## OBSERVATIONS

- Zoning envelope is more conducive to office use
- But stepped building form is problematic; would simply set back
- Weak demand for office space downtown
- Office and residential don't mix well
- This scenario is unlikely

Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits

## Alternative A - Office (Current Regulations)





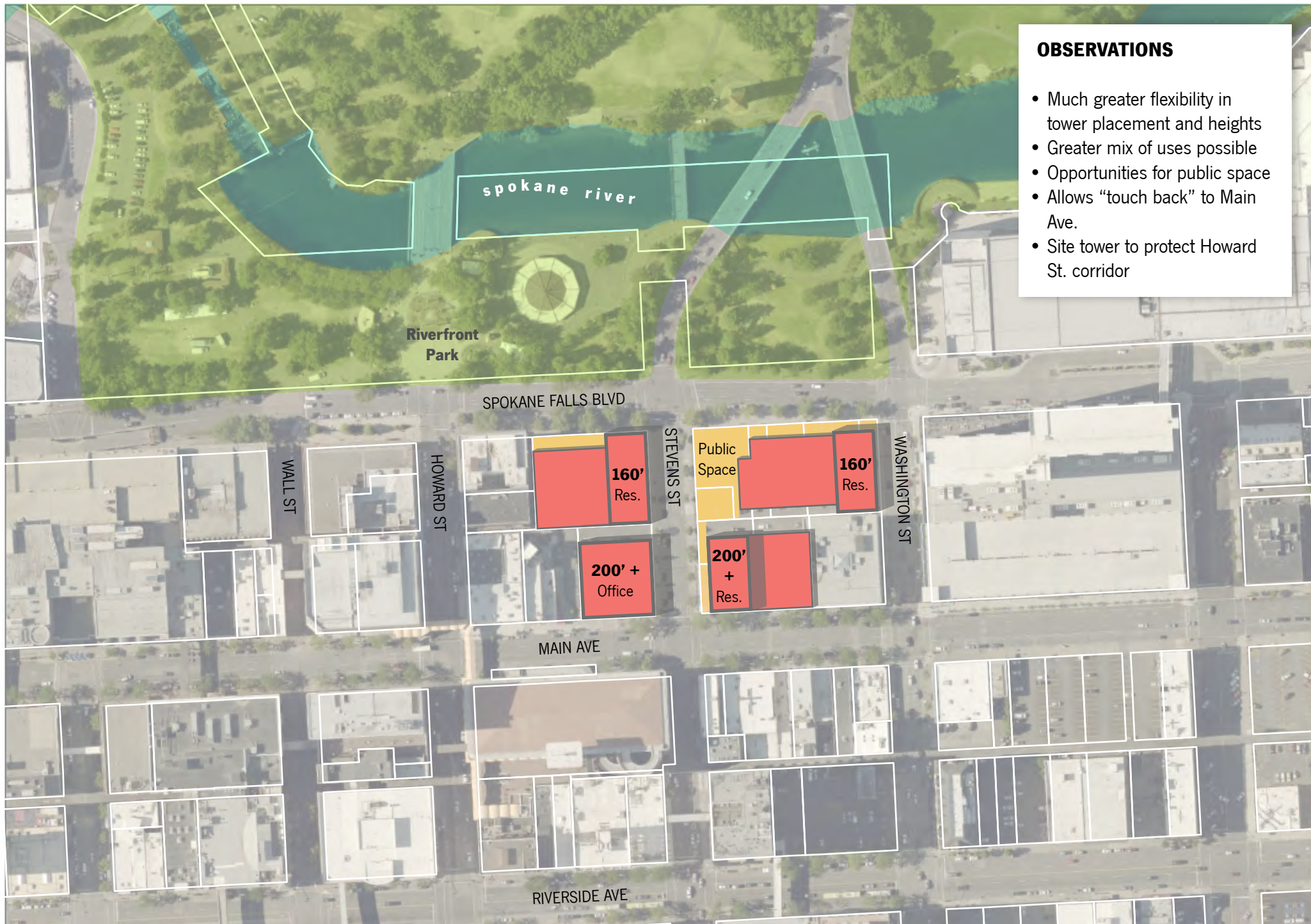
## OBSERVATIONS

- Residential buildings set back to take advantage of greater height
- Probably within range of 10 to 12 floors
- Buildings over 75' are much more costly to construct
- 5 to 6 additional floors above 75' not enough to offset increased cost
- This scenario is possible but not likely

Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits

## Alternative B - Residential or Hotel (Current Regulations)





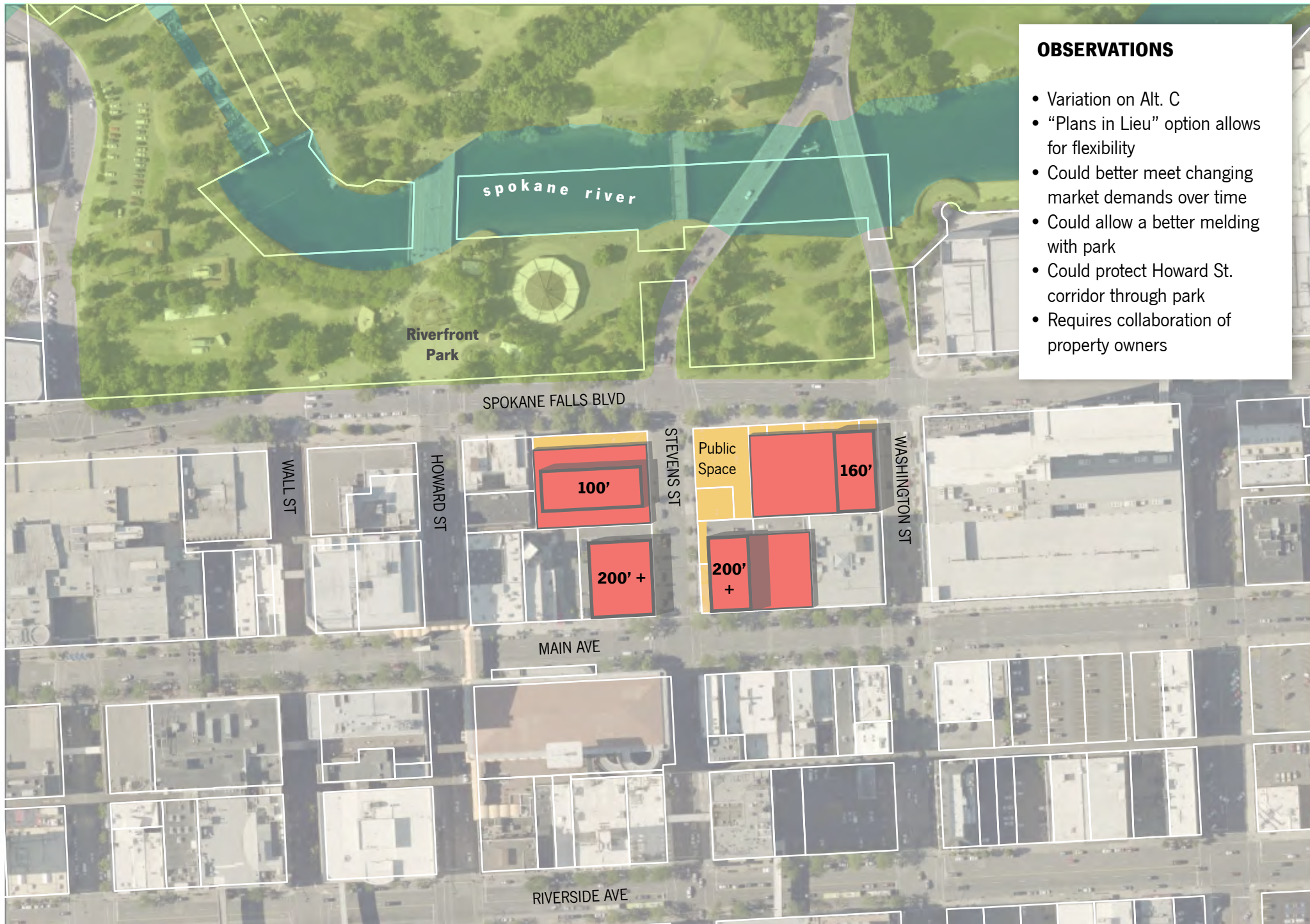
## OBSERVATIONS

- Much greater flexibility in tower placement and heights
- Greater mix of uses possible
- Opportunities for public space
- Allows “touch back” to Main Ave.
- Site tower to protect Howard St. corridor

Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits

## Alternative C - Using the “Plans in Lieu” Option

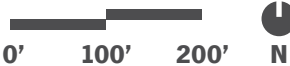




- ### OBSERVATIONS
- Variation on Alt. C
  - “Plans in Lieu” option allows for flexibility
  - Could better meet changing market demands over time
  - Could allow a better melding with park
  - Could protect Howard St. corridor through park
  - Requires collaboration of property owners

Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits

## Alternative D - Using the “Plans in Lieu” Option



**JUNE 21st  
10 AM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Summer Solstice**

**JUNE 21st  
11 AM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Summer Solstice**

**JUNE 21st  
12 PM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Summer Solstice**

**JUNE 21st  
1 PM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Summer Solstice**

**JUNE 21st  
2 PM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Summer Solstice**

**DEC. 21st  
10 AM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Winter Solstice**

**DEC. 21st  
11 AM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Winter Solstice**

**DEC. 21st  
12 PM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Winter Solstice**

**DEC. 21st  
1 PM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Winter Solstice**

**DEC. 21st  
2 PM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Winter Solstice**

**SEPT. 21st  
10 AM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Autumn Equinox**

**SEPT. 21st  
11 AM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Autumn Equinox**

**SEPT. 21st  
12 PM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Autumn Equinox**

**SEPT. 21st  
1 PM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Autumn Equinox**

**SEPT. 21st  
2 PM**



**Spokane Falls Blvd Building Height Limits**

**Alternative C - Shadow Study, Autumn Equinox**



May 16, 2017

Members of the Spokane Falls Boulevard Building Height Working Group  
808 W. Spokane Falls Boulevard  
Spokane, WA 99201

**RE: Spokane Falls Boulevard Height Restrictions**

Dear Members of the Spokane Falls Boulevard Building Height Working Group,

Thank you for allowing me to be part of this group and voice the ideas and concerns of Spokane developers and businesses. The concept of removing the Height Restriction along Spokane Falls Boulevard is important and worth consideration.

Prior to 2009, all properties along Spokane Falls Boulevard were in the unlimited height zone. This height restriction has created unintended consequences for new development. To date, already led to a loss of sizeable development along Spokane Falls Boulevard.

It created a hardship for developer Walt Worthy in developing the Davenport Grand Hotel however the City of Spokane recognized the constraints and took action to resolve. The city stated the intent of this title was to provide flexibility, adaptability, and reasonableness when special conditions exist and the strict application of the standard/procedure would not serve a public purpose. Ultimately, the development was allowed to move forward and the 100 foot height limitation was approved to accommodate a 165 foot building. The City of Spokane stated the project would add to the vitality of our Downtown Core.

The problem with the current zoning DTC-100 is that it creates an unrealistic height limit. Collectively, we need to create opportunities that will draw people to downtown and allow Spokane to grow and be more competitive. We believe Spokane Falls Boulevard properties are key for development that will help transform Spokane to an area that will attract business.

The future of Downtown Spokane will be anchored by young professionals that will want to live, work and play in an energetic community. Vibrant downtowns create healthy cities. Competition is fierce among cities to attract young professionals and new business. If Spokane fails to create this opportunity, we risk the economic benefits of job creation.

We need to continue the resurgence of our downtown and add to the momentum already generated by properties including the Michael Building, Davenport Grant Hotel, Chronicle Apartments, The M, and soon to be Ridpath Club Apartments.

We need to attract new downtown development and continue to develop residential, office, and retail opportunities for everyone. A vibrant downtown benefits everyone in many of the following ways:

- Enhance transit ridership
- Bring day-to-day activity and density closer to the park and central core
- Pride of community and regional name recognition
- Increased foot traffic in Riverfront Park
- New construction jobs
- New and improved tax base
- New jobs created by businesses occupying office space
- New livable apartments bringing residents downtown and generating business for retail shops and restaurants
- Increase developer probability of success

I would ask that we collaboratively work together to find a creative solution to remove the current Spokane Falls Boulevard Height Restriction.

Respectfully,



David Peterson  
Executive Vice President and COO  
Goodale & Barbieri Company

Dp/crm

Cc: Mark Richard



## Spokane Falls Blvd Height Restriction

### Plan Commission Working Group

May 16, 2017

#### **Problem statement:**

Current Spokane Municipal Code and correlating Zoning restrictions have played a significant role in preventing catalytic private investment on several key parcels identified as an “opportunity” location in the Downtown Plan.

#### **Background:**

Dating back to approximately 2009, provisions were put in place in municipal code and zoning regulations that require significant setbacks and/or stair stepping of any structure placed on 4 parcels immediately adjacent to the south of Riverfront Park, under the auspices of reducing shade that could be cast on the public park as caused by vertical development.

As a result, the sites are limited to improvements above approximately 140 feet in height, causing the loss of significant air space that could otherwise enable a mixed use housing or commercial office project to perform on these locations. The adverse impact of the regulations are evidenced directly by the loss of at least one multi-million dollar development.

The Growth Management Act, Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan all call for high density infill development to occur in the downtown core. In fact, counter to these mandates and policies to reduce shadows in the Park, these affected parcels are identified as Opportunity Sites in the adopted Downtown Plan. Refer to Chapters 3 and 4 of the adopted Downtown Plan.

#### Chapter 3

- 2.2 Encourage increased density and smaller building footprints (especially within Downtown Core and along railroad viaduct)
- 2.3 Reduce the supply of off-street surface parking through higher and better uses of available land

#### Chapter 4

pg 72; majority of properties impacted by the shadow restrictions are identified as Catalytic Opportunity Sites 1 and 2

Pg 80 “The tallest and most intensive new development within Spokane should be concentrated within Downtown”

pg 85 Map 4.3; a significant portion of the effected sites are identified as “catalytic opportunity sites in

The level of detail and subsequent limitations placed on these “catalytic opportunity sites” as referenced on pages 81-85 of the Downtown Plan and corresponding City Code are inconsistent with the market’s ability to sustain anything remotely catalytic, and cannot be underestimated in their impact on curtailing development at all over the past 10 years.

Further, the ordinance does not achieve the “desired outcome” of reducing shadows on the Park. Physical structures of 300’ or more could be built on the south, or Main street side of the block, that would cast greater shadows on the Park than that which is presently allowed adjacent to the Park. The unintended consequences of existing regulations has deterred development in this area, primarily due to loss of projected return on investment and the related inability to fully capture the attributes of park-side development. What arguable are the most desirable locations to develop in the Downtown Core has been rendered much less desirable.

The Central City Line mass transit project proposed by Spokane Transit Authority identifies these parcels as “Opportunity Sites” that are used in STA’s calculating an estimated \$175,000,000 economic impact (<https://www.spokanetransit.com/files/content/CCL-Economic-Impact-Study-12-2014.pdf>) along the route as compelling data in arguing the need for a federal Small Starts Grant. If this return is to be fully realized, restrictions on these parcels need to be removed to allow for development to occur.

Taxpayers in the City voted to have over \$60,000,000 invested into renovating the iconic Riverfront Park, and yet, this investment is insufficient to catalyze either commercial or mixed use residential development in what is one of the strongest markets Spokane has experienced in 20 years or more. It is our professional opinion this is in large part due to the restrictions imposed on these parcels.

Economic development (Rejuvenation of the core area of downtown, as well as the generation of tax dollars to the city and job creation that would result) was one of the top messaging points used in promoting the passage of the 2014 Riverfront Park Bond Proposition 2 to voters. This campaign decision was driven by polling data gathered by Moore Information on August 6-7 of 2014, which showed 71% of surveyed voters were more likely to vote for the measure if the aforementioned was true. The rationale for support among surveyed voters was true across all Party lines. \*see attachment A

Demand to live and work adjacent to parks is such that higher density development on these parcels would allow Spokane City Parks to better realize this claim of economic and tax revenue return. A 2001 study conducted by John Crompton from the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences out of Texas A&M ([http://www.actrees.org/files/Research/parks\\_on\\_property\\_values.pdf](http://www.actrees.org/files/Research/parks_on_property_values.pdf)) concluded after researching 30 independent analyses including one analysis done by none other than Frederick Law Olmsted’s, that the values of residential property are directly and positively impacted by their proximity to parks (up to 20%) and that tax revenues generated by additional values created. Olmsted’s study of New York’s Central Park concluded that “when aggregated, it is sufficient to pay the annual debt charges required to retire the bonds used to acquire and develop the park”. Though much of Riverfront Park is already improved for government and public uses, we believe it to be irrefutable that enhanced values would drive significant increases in taxes generated by the Park, if this restriction were to be lifted. In fact, it was Mr. Olmsted himself, the study cites, who first proposed this theory. This study opined that it was his “proximate principle” that was responsible for convincing key decision makers to fund New York’s Central Park; and he went on to prove his theory with empirical data as can be read in the research paper. This documentary evidence, the study finds, resulted in this Proximate Principle

being adopted as conventional wisdom by planners and park advocates and has resulted in subsequent studies and successful development around countless parks since.

The same assertion is held by the American Planning Association as can be reviewed in this briefing paper: (<https://www.planning.org/cityparks/briefingpapers/economicdevelopment.htm>). It quotes results from several case studies including Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta "**Atlanta:** After Centennial Olympic Park was built, adjacent condominium prices rose from \$115 to \$250 a square foot." As noted on the Centennial Olympic Park website, "Thousands of people who have made the move to downtown Atlanta have chosen Centennial Olympic Park as their front yard." [www.centennialpark.com](http://www.centennialpark.com).

Parks surrounded by high rise commercial and residential development exist across the world. The reasoning for this is likely the same; people want to live adjacent to parks and open spaces. This demand creates significant private investment and the tax revenues that follow.

Having windows and/or balconies overlooking Riverfront Park will improve the overall safety of the park. Just as is the case with good planning that calls for mixed use street level spaces, "**eyes on the street policing**" derived from dense high-rise development will deter crime and nuisance behaviors because people anticipate they are being watched. Conversely, restricting these parcels in such a way that they continue to be utilized as surface parking lots or parking garages will have the opposite effect. This concept is proven best practices theory for CPTED design.

Finally, the public right of way adjacent to these parcels is wider than most, if not all, in the Downtown Core. With **Sidewalks spanning up to 40 feet** in width, we contend our forefathers already addressed visual setback and shading on Riverfront Park by redeveloping the south side of the park to include abnormally wide sidewalks.

## **Conclusion:**

In order to counter national retail trends, to attract outside companies and bright successful minds, to maximize the public investment in Riverfront Park and to catalyze economic development in the Downtown Core, it is necessary to remove shadow policies that currently restrict some of the most desirable real estate in the City along the southern border of Riverfront Park from development.

Respectfully,

Mark Richard  
President and CEO; Downtown Spokane Partnership  
509-456-0580

## **Mechanism for Allowing Greater Flexibility in Building Heights**

### **I. Options for Implementation**

- A. Existing “Plans in Lieu” Method
- B. Newly-created Special District
- C. Amend existing code for DTC-100 zone

### **II. Desired Outcomes**

- A. Replace surface parking lots with a mixture of uses
- B. Put a activity on the street
- C. Create relationships with the enhanced park

### **III. Principles**

#### **A. Unique Place**

Create a positive, highly identifiable environment in the area bounded by Main Street, the Spokane River and Riverfront Park, Lincoln Street, and Washington Street that will draw people to a wide range of public and private destinations.

#### **B. Integrated Development**

Guide the redevelopment of properties along the south side of Spokane Fall Boulevard in order to result in a seamless integration with the enhanced park, so that entire area is a lively and ever-changing part of downtown.

#### **C. Active Streetscapes**

Ensure a lively and activated streetscape through both management of public spaces and activation by commercial uses that embrace the public realm.

#### **D. Varied Building Forms**

Promote flexibility in building location, form, height, and massing. Avoid creating a continuous “wall” effect fronting the park.

#### **E. Economic Development**

Attract types of development and uses that can reinforce activities and spaces associated with the park and residents who can monitor and populate the area.

#### **F. Howard Street Corridor**

Preserve significant amounts of sunlight throughout the year on the highly important Howard Street corridor through the park

## **IV. Development Standards**

- A. Floors occupied exclusively by residential use may be allowed to extend above the underlying height limit under certain conditions as indicated below.
- B. Floor plates above 100 feet shall be no larger than 14,000 sf
- C. The long dimension of building floors above 100 feet shall be perpendicular to Spokane Falls Blvd.
- D. Towers above 100 feet shall be spaced apart no less than 70 feet (roughly the same as a north/south street cross section).
- E. Active retail uses (shops, personal services, and food services) shall occupy no less than 60% of the street frontage. Corporate offices, banks, and financial institutions do not qualify as retail. Such uses shall have entrances directly on the public sidewalk.

## **V. Design Review & Guidelines**

Because this a departure from the original intent of the underlying zone and due to the proximity of Riverside Park, development in this area should receive extra attention through the City's design review process. In this review, a number of expectations will need to be demonstrated by proposed buildings:

- A. Architectural detail at the ground level that supports people walking, lingering, eating, and socializing. This should include elements such as moveable tables and chairs, pedestrian-scaled lighting, pedestrian-scaled signs, generous windows that open out to the park with possibly roll-up or sliding sections, canopies, and artwork.
- B. Enhancements to the existing sidewalk areas to ensure that they feel welcoming, usable, visually interesting, and usable to all members of the public. Ways of extending character-giving aspects of the park should be provided in this wide sidewalk area. For example, places for live music and temporary art could be provided.
- C. Upper stories of buildings should be articulated with architectural "sculpting" such as decks, balconies, projecting bays, recesses, offsets, changes in materials and color, roof gardens, upper levels setbacks. Flat, featureless, rectilinear forms are to be avoided.
- D. In order to reflect the importance of a gateway effect, the corners of buildings should be given special treatment such as public spaces, distinctive architectural expressions, major entrances, dramatic lighting, and unique landscape design.
- E. At the initial stage of review, the Design Review Board should express its priorities and not merely react to already-designed proposals. The process between the DRB and the applicant shall be a collaborative one. Adherence to the principles listed previously shall inform the review.

## Working Outline Draft 6/20/2017

The following document was originally discussed at the third meeting of the Working Group on June 13. Additional edits, shown in tracked changes, have been made by staff in response to discussion at that meeting and after additional research into the topic.

## Mechanism for Allowing Greater Flexibility in Building Heights

### I. Options for Implementation

- A. Existing "Plans in Lieu" Method.
- B. Newly-created Special District.
- C. Amend existing code for DTC-100 zone.

The working group feels that Option C is the most effective solution available. Amendments to the DTC-100 zone would need to be consistent with the Downtown Plan, which identifies properties within the DTC-100 as catalytic opportunity sites.

### II. Desired Outcomes

- A. Create opportunities within the DTC-100 zone for mixed-use redevelopment and incentives for residential development to occur in an economically viable manner.
- B. Put activity on the street.
- C. Create relationships with the enhanced park.
- D. Consider and mitigate development impacts to light, air, vistas and shade to the park, especially along the Howard Street Promenade within Riverfront Park, while allowing more flexibility in development standards.

**Deleted:** Replace surface parking lots with a mixture of uses

**Deleted:** the

**Deleted:** of surface parking lots across from Spokane Falls Blvd

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**Deleted:** impacts

### III. Principles

#### A. Unique Place

Create a positive, highly identifiable environment in the area bounded by Main Street, the Spokane River and Riverfront Park, Lincoln Street, and Washington Street that will draw people to a wide range of public and private destinations.

#### B. Integrated Development

Guide the redevelopment of properties along the south side of Spokane Falls Boulevard in order to result in a seamless integration with the enhanced park, so that the entire area is a lively and ever-changing part of downtown.

#### C. Active Streetscapes

Ensure a lively and activated streetscape through both management of public spaces and activation by commercial and residential uses that embrace the public realm.

#### D. Varied Building Forms

Promote flexibility in building location, form, height, and massing. Avoid creating a continuous “wall” effect fronting the park.

#### E. Economic Development

Attract types of development and uses that can reinforce activities and spaces associated with the park and residents who can monitor and populate the area.

#### F. Howard Street Corridor

Preserve significant amounts of sunlight throughout the year on the highly important Howard Street corridor through the park.

### IV. Development Standards (Conceptual)<sup>1</sup>

The following development standards would necessitate code amendments to SMC 17C.124.220.

A. Floors occupied exclusively by residential, live/work, and/or hotel uses may be allowed as a bonus to extend above the underlying height limit under certain conditions as indicated below.

**Deleted:**

B. If residential and hotel uses are located in the 100 foot building base, an equal area of non-residential uses may be permitted above 100 ft, provided all other requirements of the bonus height provisions have been met.

C. Floor plates above 100 feet shall be no larger than 14,000 sf (or as may be determined from the subsequent public process).

**Commented [A1]:** The Working Group discussed the floor plate standards applicable to the north bank (145 feet maximum diagonal) but on further calculation that standard was found to be more restrictive than this original number. Thus, no change has been made here.

D. The long dimension of building floors above 100 feet shall be perpendicular to Spokane Falls Blvd.

E. Towers above 100 feet shall be spaced apart no less than 50 to 70 feet (roughly the same as a north/south street cross section) or as may be determined from the subsequent public process.

F. Active retail (shops, personal services, and food services) or residential uses shall occupy no less than 50% of the street frontage. Corporate offices, banks, and financial institutions do not qualify as retail. Such uses shall have entrances directly on the public sidewalk.

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### V. Design Review & Guidelines

Because of the relationship of properties in the DTC-100 Zone to significant public open spaces, such as Riverfront Park, development should receive extra attention through the

**Deleted:** this a departure from the original intent of the underlying zone and due to the proximity of Riverside

**Deleted:** in this area of these catalytic opportunity sites

<sup>1</sup> All numbers included in these standards are conceptual in nature and subject to future study and discussion.

City's design review process. In this review, a number of expectations will need to be demonstrated by proposed buildings:

- A. Architectural detail at the ground level that supports people walking, lingering, eating, and socializing. This should include elements such as moveable tables and chairs, pedestrian-scaled lighting, pedestrian-scaled signs, generous windows that open out to the park with possibly roll-up or sliding sections, canopies, and artwork.
- B. Enhancements to the existing sidewalk areas to ensure that they feel welcoming, usable, visually interesting, and usable to all members of the public. Ways of extending character-giving aspects of the park should be provided in this wide sidewalk area. For example, places for live music and temporary art could be provided.
- C. Upper stories of buildings should be articulated with architectural "sculpting" such as decks, balconies, projecting bays, recesses, offsets, changes in materials and color, roof gardens, upper levels setbacks. Flat, featureless, rectilinear forms are to be avoided.
- D. In order to reflect the importance of a gateway effect, the corners of buildings should be given special treatment such as public spaces, distinctive architectural expressions, major entrances, dramatic lighting, and unique landscape design.
- E. At the initial stage of review, the Design Review Board should express its priorities and not merely react to already-designed proposals. The process between the DRB and the applicant shall be a collaborative one. Adherence to the principles listed previously shall inform the review.

F. Any towers above 100 feet should be placed so as to give consideration to sunlight, air, views, and vistas, especially on the Howard Street Promenade within Riverfront Park.

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## **VI. Additional Code Recommendations**

A. Replace the existing image in SMC 17C.124.220.E.1 with the updated image presented to the working group.

B. Correct noted inconsistencies in the language in SMC 17C.124.220.

## **VII. Recommendation for Future Action<sup>2</sup>**

A. Plan for coordinated streetscape improvements along Spokane Falls Boulevard.

B. Consider the elimination of the DTC-100 zone within the scope of the Downtown Plan Update.

<sup>2</sup> Outside the scope of the Working Group discussion.

C. Review of Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines, including a study of height and massing standards, as part of the Downtown Plan Update scope, or as a subsequent strategic action , assuming adequate budget and time.

**Deleted:** Study of height and massing as part of Downtown Plan Update

**Deleted:** <#>Additional items from Working Group . . . \*

## **APPENDIX D**



## BUILDING HEIGHTS ALONG SPOKANE FALLS BOULEVARD

### Plan Commission Working Group

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## Agenda: Meeting 1

Tuesday, May 16, 2017, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

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Welcome	Todd Beyreuther	1:00 – 1:05
Working Group Member Introductions	All	1:05 – 1:15
Project Goals	Lisa Key	1:15 – 1:20
<i>Riverfront Park Now</i>	Chris Wright or Garrett Jones	1:20 – 1:30
<i>Fast Forward Spokane: Downtown Plan Policy Review &amp; Development Standards</i> (Spokane Municipal Code 17C.124)	Lisa Key	1:30 – 1:45
Shading Models	Lisa Key / Planning Staff	2:00 – 2:10
Working Group Discussion	Todd Beyreuther	2:10 – 2:45
Public Comment	Attendees	2:45 – 2:50
Site Visit – Walking Tour	Todd Beyreuther	2:50 Depart
Adjourn	All	3:30

Members of the public are invited to attend the meeting, but public discussion is limited to three minutes per person and at the time indicated in the agenda above.

### Project Webpage:

<https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/building-heights-on-spokane-falls-boulevard/>

### Project Contact:

Tirrell Black, Associate Planner

[tblack@spokanecity.org](mailto:tblack@spokanecity.org)

509.625.6185



## BUILDING HEIGHTS ALONG SPOKANE FALLS BOULEVARD

### Plan Commission Working Group

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## Agenda: Meeting 2

Tuesday, June 6, 2017, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM, City Hall, Conference Room 5A

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Welcome	Todd Beyreuther	1:00 – 1:05
Working Group Member Introductions	All	1:05 – 1:15
Project Goals, Recap Last Meeting	Lisa Key	1:15 – 1:20
Draft Principles	Mark Hinshaw, Walker Macy	1:20 – 1:30
Alternatives Analysis	Mark Hinshaw, Walker Macy	1:30 – 2:00
Property Owner – Alternatives for Building Placement and Use(s)	David Peterson, G&B Mark Richard, DSP	2:00 – 2:30
Working Group Discussion Goals to add? Questions to investigate?	Todd Beyreuther	2:30 – 3:00
Adjourn	All	3:00

Members of the public are invited to attend the meeting, but discussion is limited to members of the working group.

### Project Webpage:

<https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/building-heights-on-spokane-falls-boulevard/>

### Project Contact:

Tirrell Black, Associate Planner

[tblack@spokanecity.org](mailto:tblack@spokanecity.org)

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## BUILDING HEIGHTS ALONG SPOKANE FALLS BOULEVARD

Plan Commission Working Group

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### Agenda: Meeting 3

Tuesday, June 13, 2017, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM, City Hall, Conference Room 5A

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Welcome	Todd Beyreuther	1:00 – 1:05
Project Goals, Meeting 2 Recap	Lisa Key	1:05 – 1:15
Conceptual Direction / Discussion	Mark Hinshaw, Walker Macy	1:15 – 2:55
Public Comment	Todd Beyreuther	2:55 -3:00
Adjourn	All	3:00

Members of the public are invited to attend the meeting, but public discussion is limited to three minutes per person and at the time indicated in the agenda above.

**Project Webpage:**

<https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/building-heights-on-spokane-falls-boulevard/>

**Project Contact:**

Tirrell Black, Associate Planner

[tblack@spokanecity.org](mailto:tblack@spokanecity.org)

509.625.6185



## BUILDING HEIGHTS ALONG SPOKANE FALLS BOULEVARD

Plan Commission Working Group

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### Agenda: Meeting 4

Tuesday, June 27, 2017, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM, City Hall, Conference Room 5A

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<b>Welcome</b>	Chris Batten	1:00 – 1:05
<b>Project Goals, Recap of process to date</b>	Lisa Key	1:05 – 1:15
<b>Review Outline “Allowing Flexibility in Building Height” / Discussion</b>	Chris Batten / All	1:15 – 2:45
<b>Additional Policies for Consideration in Downtown Plan Update / Discussion</b>	Chris Batten / All	2:45 – 2:55
<b>Public Comment</b>	Chris Batten	2:55 -3:00
<b>Adjourn</b>	All	3:00

Members of the public are invited to attend the meeting, but public discussion is limited to three minutes per person and at the time indicated in the agenda above.

#### **Project Webpage:**

<https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/building-heights-on-spokane-falls-boulevard/>

#### **Project Contact:**

Tirrell Black, Associate Planner

[tblack@spokanecity.org](mailto:tblack@spokanecity.org)

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