



Downtown Plan Update Steering Committee Meeting Notes

Date: January 30, 2020, 9:00 A.M.

Attendance:

Lori Kinnear, Spokane City Council; Doug Yost, Centennial Real Estate; Patty Tully, Inland Empire Bartenders Association; Lars Gilberts, University District; Greg Figg, Washington Dept. of Transportation; Tobby Hatley, Hospitality Association; Steve Trabun, Avista; Chuck Horgan, Design Review Board; Bill Simer, Eide Bailly; Greg Francis, Plan Commission; Alan Chatham, Riverside Neighborhood Council; Nick Mounsey, Wonder Spokane; Melissa Huggins, Spokane Arts; Meg Winchester, Visit Spokane; Dean Gunderson, City Planning; Mike Tresidder, Spokane Transit Authority; Stephanie Curran, Public Facilities District; Sue Horton, Wheatland Bank; Jackie Caro, Terrain.

Project Team:

Andrew Rolwes and Mark Richard, Downtown Spokane Partnership; Jeff Arango, Framework (by phone); Kirstin Davis, City Communications; Nate Gwinn, City Planning.

1. Recap - project status and timeline - Nate provided a brief reminder on the status of the plan update process and Downtown planning area.

2. Major accomplishments wanted in 10 years – Andrew led a discussion around the table about accomplishments the group would like to see, whether a project that would impact Downtown, something that is not happening but should, a zoning change, etc. The themes touched on specific projects and general topics, including connectivity within and surrounding Downtown, residential development, cultural events, and vitality. *A summarized list of the committee's ideas is attached.*

3. Feedback received on Vision, Goals, and Strategies – Nate reviewed the status of feedback from 7 steering committee members and passed out copies of the comment sheets received. Nate reviewed the preliminary status of the online survey which will be open January 14-February 15, 2020. The group discussed the meaning of the overall goals and strategies rating; 300 respondents so far have provided a rating of about 4 out of 5 from the preliminary results. The group asked that a couple big points from the survey be brought forward to the committee. The group then began discussing the Thriving Arts, Culture and History goals and strategies at length. Some discussion occurred on the goals and strategies for A Great Place to Live + Work, A Well-Managed Downtown for All, and concluded with Welcoming + Engaging Public Spaces. *A summarized list of comments is attached, combined with the summary of written comment.*

4. Review committee homework assignments – Andrew briefly requested the group attend and reach out to networks about the public meeting on February 5, 2020, from 6-8 p.m. at Wonder Spokane. Andrew will provide the group with event information to share.

5. Next steering committee meeting – A poll will be sent to the group for a meeting time in the next few weeks. Content for future review and discussion will include results of the public meeting and survey.

A comment summary follows, beginning on the next page.



Combined Summarized Comments
from comment sheets, January 8-27, and meeting on January 30, 2020

Major Accomplishments Wanted in 10 Years (suggested strategies)

Housing

- Mid-income, affordable, family/2-3 BR housing (incentivize to offset construction costs).

Utilities/Services

- Construction of public restrooms. (In areas outside Riverfront Park.)
- Create a Riverwalk district in managed land above dams, long-term.
- Undergrounded utility infrastructure (already occurring, incremental).
- Moving substation to Post & 3rd – 3-5 years, creative sight-obscuring wall.
- Increase number of green/open spaces Downtown, seating places.
- Increase locations of trash receptacles.

Culture

- Downtown should be filled, active, connected: More activation/events, more vibrancy, marketing events and facilitation.
- Weaving in art and culture to activate public safety to contribute to connectivity and other plan goals, health, housing, public safety.
- Funding to cover municipal costs for event management, security, clean-up.

Economic Development

- Encourage development on vacant surface lots and blighted sites-Jensen-Byrd, Midas (investments like East Sprague reconstruction).
- Mix of uses beyond daytime offices (incentivizing the cultural uses/things outside the norm that create economic development); vibrancy after 5 p.m., after 9 p.m. (programming).
- More economic development around Riverfront Park; revisit height and shading discussion on the south edge of the park.

Land Use

- Steam Plant block additional development/expansion at future vacated substation site.
- Achieving intended uses in gap areas.
- Thoughtful placement of additional parking supply to avoid dead space in the heart of Downtown.

Transportation

- Stronger connections to universities from the Downtown core. More north-south connections and good east-west connection from Browne's Addition to the universities through Downtown.
- Better physical and psychological connectivity across river, railroad, U-District for comfort and safety, interconnectedness, in addition to vehicular connectivity.

- Better use/culture shift of transportation mode share, shift in perception on alternatives to the automobile (marketing to Spokane residents what city currently has for Downtown access; other strategies for employees and events).
- Lower the cost of visiting Downtown with more parking options (parking 1st hour free; variable priced parking during events; Bellevue employs time of use parking-paid weekdays, free weekends).
- Need a comprehensive traffic plan for all forms of transportation.
- Anticipate demands of future, additional residents/visitors.
- Right-sized streets so drivers are aware, slow down, and know there is retail.
- Welcoming south edge, similar to beautiful appearance from north; 4th-3rd-2nd Ave should feel like you're Downtown; more comfortable connections for commuters to surrounding neighborhoods like Browne's Addition, lower South Hill.

Draft Vision

Written comments:

- *Statements not true at present should be aspirational/future tense. (Gilberts)*
- *Walkability + other forms of travel.*
- *Perhaps "adjacent" to the Spokane River, not "centered." (Francis)*
- *Slightly modify 5th sentence: "Downtown's live, work, and play energy draws in new businesses, residents and opportunities for education, recreation, and cultural activities." (Yost)*

January 30, 2020 meeting comments:

- The Vision statement seems lengthy to a committee member. Other members disagreed. The group may discuss whether something more focused would be beneficial.

Goals and Strategies - Generally

Written comments:

- *Need to include strategies for outside Downtown core. (Gilberts)*
- *A goal should reflect that Spokane is a great place to own or operate a business. There should be a goal that addresses an "Economically Vibrant Downtown." (Francis)*
- *Need to anticipate transportation electrification and charging stations. (Trabun)*
- *Identify Opportunity Sites for the next ten years. (Trabun)*
- *The strategies need a robust implementation plan. (Hatley)*
- *Improved internet connectivity where there are gaps Downtown and older buildings without access to fiber. (Francis)*
- *The approach from the south, including the underpass and 2nd-3rd Avenues, needs discussion. (Tully)*

January 30, 2020 meeting comments:

- Missing economic plan to drive vitality to make all the other parts of the plan happen.
- Survey seems to reflect we could do more to help some people see themselves in these strategies.
- Need to reflect mixture of uses for business and places to live in goals.

Connected + Walkable Downtown

Written comments:

- *Strategies should address how to really connect different areas. (Gilberts)*
- *The strategies should provide additional seating areas as a means to improve walkability so people exploring Downtown have a place to rest. (Francis)*
- *Create a Downtown public development authority would fit better under 'A Well-Managed Downtown for All.' (Francis)*
- *Acknowledge that there is a difference between 'energizing,' or adding activity on currently vacant street frontages, and right-sizing streets, because not all streets are wrong-sized. Need a comprehensive understanding of current/future conditions in order to determine the overall effect of resizing or energizing roadways. (Yost)*
- *Develop a comprehensive parking plan before reducing surface parking and consolidating parking in garages. (Yost)*

Welcoming + Engaging Public Spaces

Written comments:

- *More strategies for all, free/civic events. (Gilberts)*
- *Homeless services are not concentrated and should not be. (Trabun)*
- *In managing concentration of homeless services, remember people who require homeless services, and the issue of access and connectivity to those services. (Francis)*
- *Create a greener Downtown to address areas that lack trees. (Francis)*

January 30, 2020 meeting comments:

- Provide services that support people experiencing homelessness in a dignified way, e.g. access to bathrooms
- The purpose of activation is to improve perception of safety.
- Do not extrapolate the homelessness situation we have currently out ten years. The City is implementing strategies such as building and will continue to build housing at a level appropriate to cause homelessness to decline.
- More activation equals more safety. People feel safer with art, events and activation.
- Need to address regulation of parklets and "streateries;" Parklets and sidewalk cafes would help make this happen but the permitting requirements are so cumbersome that business owners are not using them.
- A committee member suggested distributing homeless services across the region, close to where people become homeless so that services are not all concentrated in south Downtown.

Thriving Arts, Culture + History

Written comments:

- *Neighborhood markets currently exist, e.g. Kendall Yards, Perry. (Trabun) The new market should not jeopardize the existing neighborhood markets and will need a different approach so as not to suffer the same fate of the previous Downtown markets. (Yost)*
- *Focus of public market should be broader than art. (Francis)*

January 30, 2020 meeting comments:

- Take the art out of the public market – should be open to cultural events besides art.

- A Downtown/city in general has an arts focus or supports art and culture.
- Supporting historic venues only leaves out opportunities for growth. This should be about preserving and incentivizing existing and new venues. This all relates to economic development.
- In Seattle, a public development authority has been formed to support cultural venues that have been displaced in Seattle due to the increase in property values. Review the CAP (Creation, Activation and Preservation of cultural space) report strategies for City of Seattle for more information.
- “Preserve and incentivize new and existing cultural spaces.”
- The Wonder Building is an example of this. There is a battle between keeping the market we have, and maximizing economic efficiency by replacing it with market rate tenants. Incentivize property owners to help keep cultural venues.
- Connect these strategies to and fund the City’s Innovation Alleyways program for revitalization.
- Regarding the Spokane Cultural Trail, the alignment takes advantage of the City Line, and directs people off of the trail to venues at points north and south of the trail.
- Emphasize existing cultural assets and existing buildings. Expand character area boundaries and reconsider triggers for Design Review Board review.
- Design of buildings should reflect identity, character.
- Be sensitive to preserving iconic buildings, areas.
- A committee member urged care with expansion of historic districts and some low-quality historic buildings/buildings in poor condition. For example, Chancery building; it would be better if a tall mixed-use apartment building replaced it.
- Need to embrace tribal community and history through additional events, programming, and activity, as well as other communities (e.g. LGBTQ).
- Incentivize arts and cultural activities Downtown, things that activate the community.

A Great Place to Live + Work

Written comments:

- *Adding “...and Play” in the goal heading recognizes retail/entertainment role in attracting housing, business. Add a bullet point for shopping and dining. (Yost)*
- *Activate alleyways. (Trabun)*
- *Address cost and “time of use” strategy impacts to parking. (Trabun)*

January 30, 2020 meeting comments:

- Committee members have spoken pretty extensively on including “Play” in the strategies. We should be able to add that.
- Be careful of the word accelerate, what does it mean? Need many options: ownership, income. Accelerate variety of options. A diversity of housing options – apartments and condos – to provide rental and ownership options.
- Add the term mixed-use to the strategies.
- Talk about the infrastructure and amenities needed to support residential growth? Grocery stores, improved sidewalks, events, plazas, etc. help foster residential growth. Create a public development authority to help the private sector make things like this happen.

- More activity to draw people out of their offices. Office employees leave if there is a food truck event or a something going on at the mall but stay otherwise. Employees are at the park every day when the weather is nice.
- Create more places for everyone. More activity would dilute the impact of people who are loitering by making them one or a few among many.
- Increasing housing is critical to increasing activation. An example of an organization that has fostered this is Boise's Capital City Development Corporation which has made parking development a function for residential development.

A Well-Managed Downtown for All

Written comments:

- *Rename the goal heading to reflect the desired outcome: active, vibrant, programmed (Gilberts)*
- *Add "residents, customers" to the strategy of attracting businesses, acknowledging and supporting the reference to all people in the goal heading. (Francis)*

January 30, 2020 meeting comments:

- Balance pedestrians and other travel modes. A committee member stressed the need to ensure the major arterials are preserved into and out of Downtown so that everyone can get access to Downtown.
- Economic vibrancy for all, does that fit here?

Challenges

Written comments:

- *Reurbanization: Reverse inner-city decline through coordinated development of where people live, shop, play, hang out, get around.*
- *Overcome negative perceptions of Downtown.*
- *Attract people/business, compete with less expensive locations.*
- *Lack of entertainment/food district.*
- *Perception and some real safety issues around homelessness.*
- *High-speed internet outside core*
- *Low regional median income*

Opportunities

Written comments:

- *Enhance and increase fun!*
- *More and larger events in Riverfront Park, convention center, theaters, etc.*
- *Access (transit), activities, and marketing.*
- *Creating a Downtown public development authority.*
- *High-tech and education convergence in the University District.*
- *Internet connectivity.*
- *Still relatively affordable compared to other metros.*

Wi-Fi: COS Guest
Pr375eUe

Spokane Downtown Plan Update

Steering Committee Meeting
January 30, 2020

Nathan Gwinn, Assistant Planner II,
City of Spokane



Jeff Arango, Framework



Andrew Rolwes, Vice President,
Downtown Spokane Partnership

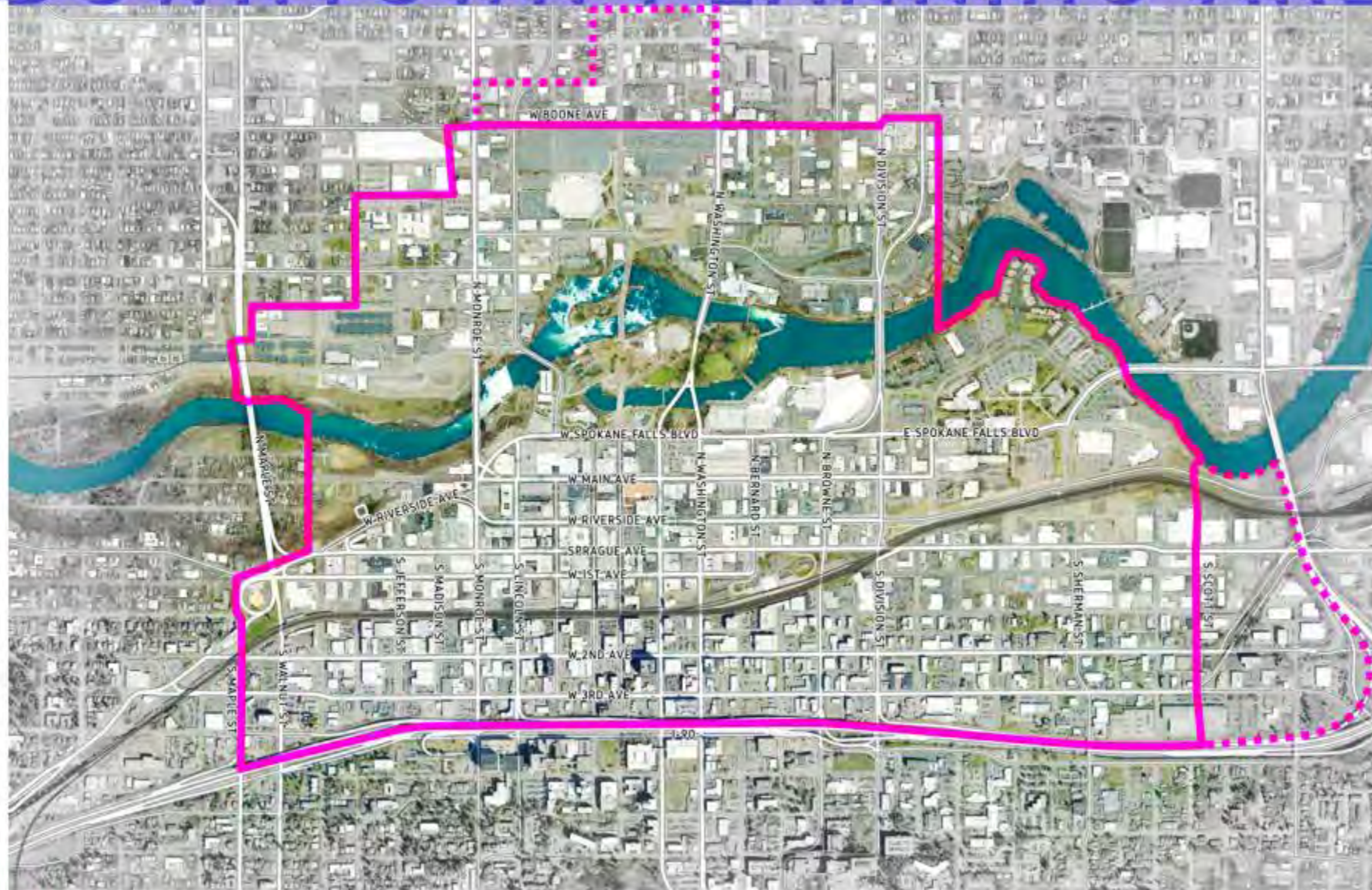


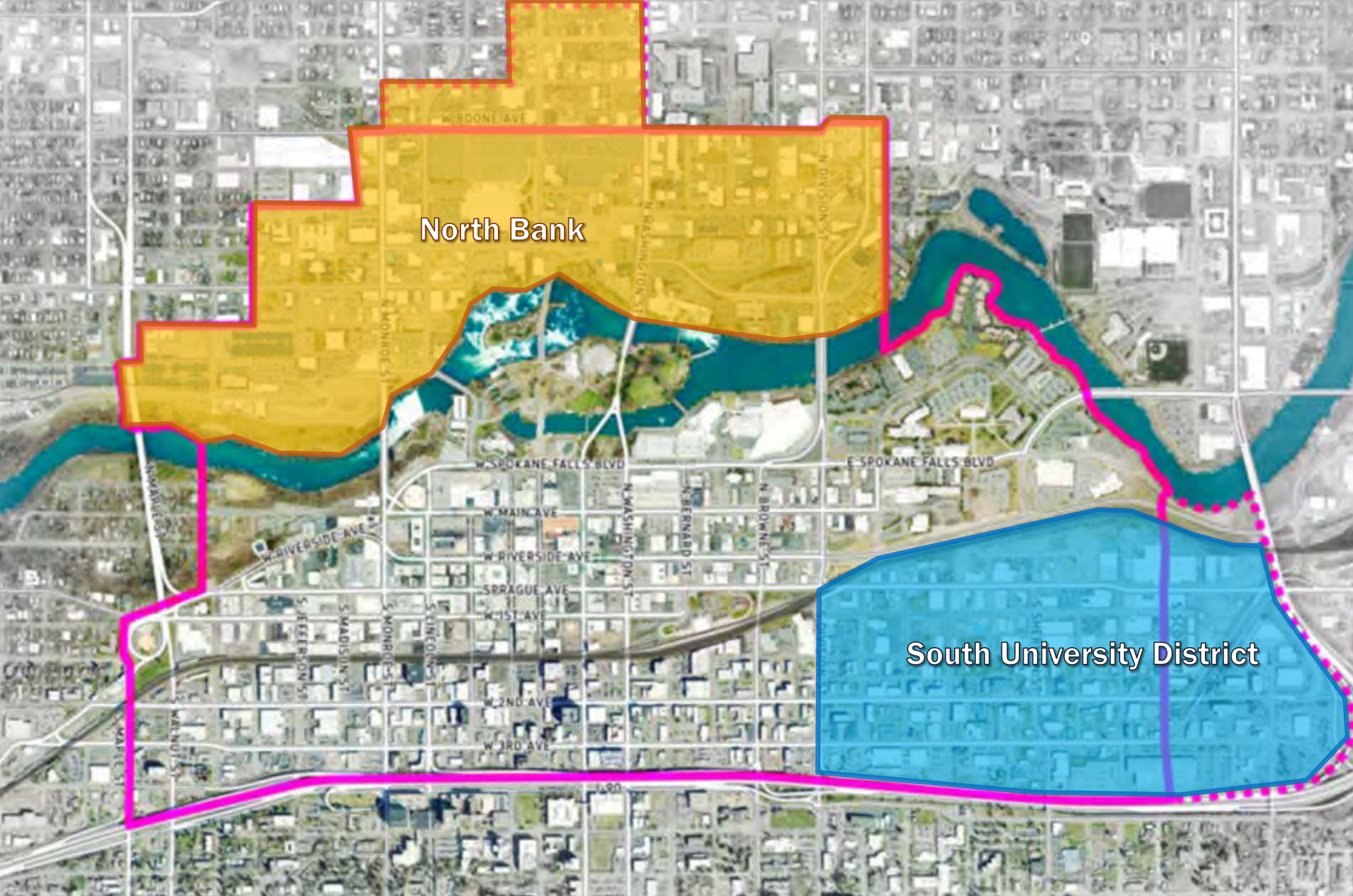
Overview

- Recap – project status
- Major Accomplishments
- Feedback on Draft:
 - Vision
 - Goals
 - Strategies
- Homework Assignments
- Next meetings
 - Public workshop February 5, 2020

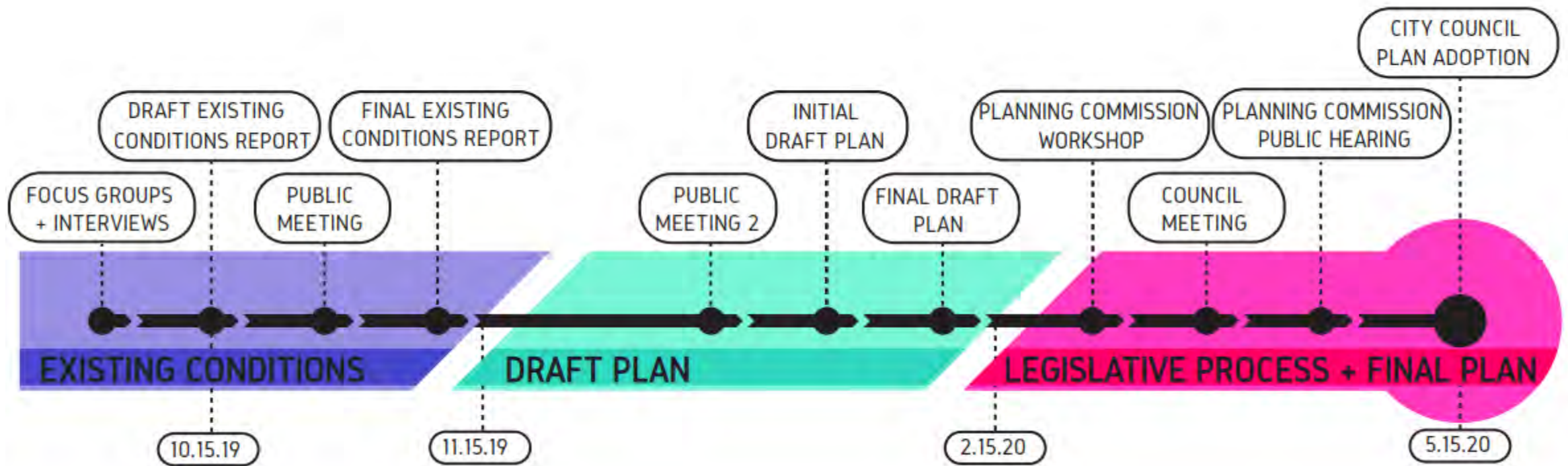


DOWNTOWN PLANNING AREA





Project Timeline





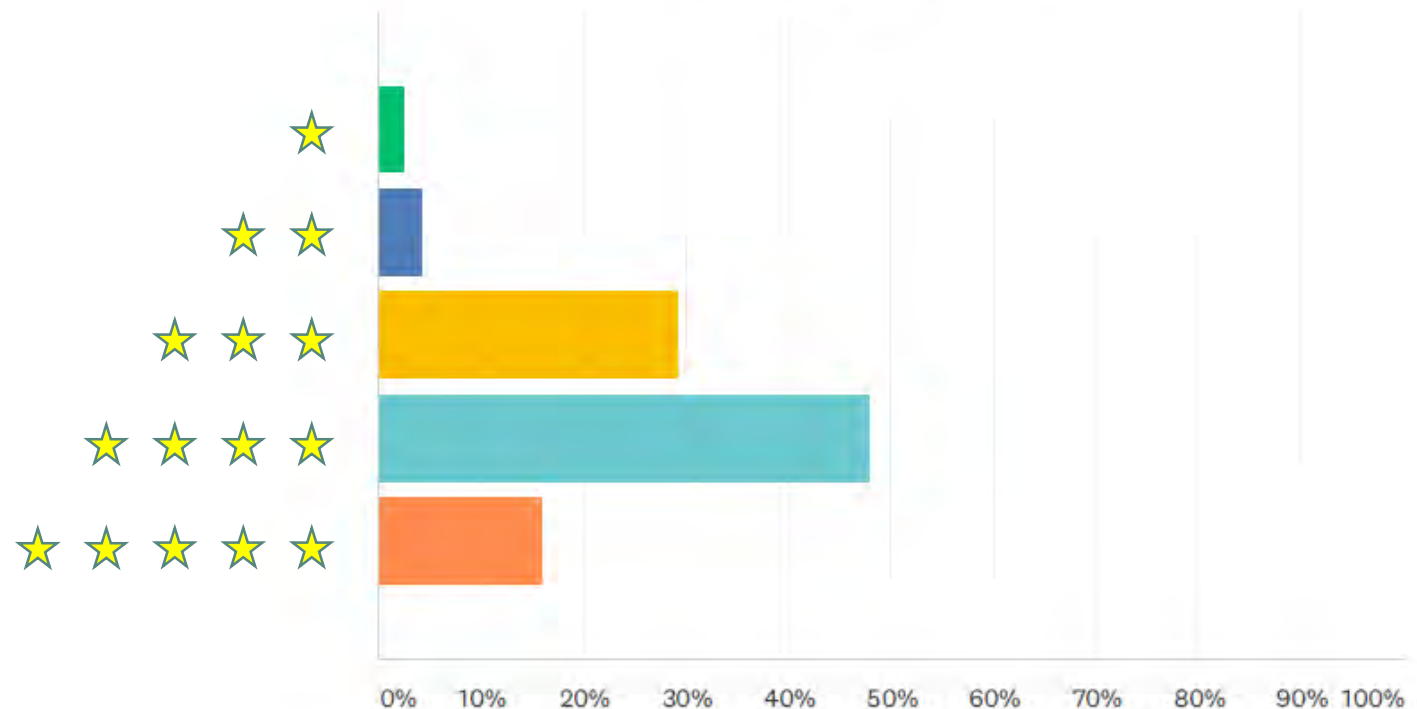
Major Accomplishments Wanted

Survey in Progress

- Rank and give feedback on Draft Strategies
 - Survey open January 14 - February 15, 2020

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being excellent, how do you rate the draft strategies overall?

Answered: 313 Skipped: 7



Steering Committee Feedback

- Draft Vision Statement
- Draft Goals + Strategies
 - Connected + Walkable Downtown
 - Welcoming + Engaging Public Spaces for All
 - Thriving Arts, Culture + History
 - A Great Place to Live + Work
 - A Well Managed Downtown for All

DRAFT 2020 VISION

Downtown Spokane is the cultural and economic heart of the Inland Northwest, drawing people from the region, the nation, and around the world. Centered on the Spokane River, the spectacular falls, and the signature Riverfront Park, the urban fabric is walkable and full of interest and distinctive character. Downtown feels safe, comfortable, and welcoming for people of all communities and backgrounds. The history of Spokane shines through in its irreplaceable architecture and the stories of railroads and industry. Downtown Spokane continues to draw new residents and businesses with opportunities for education, recreation and cultural activities. As everyone's neighborhood, Downtown Spokane is a great source of pride and is poised to capture the opportunities of the future.

GOALS + STRATEGIES

GOAL: CONNECTED + WALKABLE DOWNTOWN

- Right size streets and create pedestrian- and bike-friendly connections downtown
- Implement a wayfinding program
- Capitalize on the Central City Line
- Reduce surface parking and consolidate parking in garages
- Create a Downtown Public Development Authority for infill development, parking, partnerships and other issues.

GOALS + STRATEGIES

GOAL: WELCOMING + ENGAGING PUBLIC SPACES

- Program and activate public spaces Downtown
- Manage the concentration of homeless services

GOAL: THRIVING ARTS, CULTURE + HISTORY

- Develop a historic and cultural walking trail through Downtown
- Establish an arts and theater district to support historic venues
- Create a public market with an arts focus

GOALS + STRATEGIES |

GOAL: A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE + WORK

- Accelerate residential development Downtown
- Enhance residential amenities like public spaces and schools
- Improve parking and transit options for Downtown employees

GOAL: A WELL MANAGED DOWNTOWN FOR ALL

- Leverage parking management to improve Downtown and enhance parking benefit district
- Develop new promotions and marketing campaign to attract downtown businesses

Upcoming Meetings

- Public Workshop #2 (February 5, 2020)
- Steering Committee
 - February
 - March
 - April



My.SpokaneCity.org/projects
SpokaneDowntownPlan.org

SURVEY

Survey responses are requested by February 15, 2020. Fill the survey out here, complete the survey by phone at (509) 625-6500 or visit spokanedowntownplan.org to take the survey online. Please see the reverse side of this document for descriptions of goals and supporting strategies.

- 1 Do you (check all that apply)
- ☐

 Live in Downtown Spokane
- ☐

 Work in Downtown Spokane
- ☐

 Visit Downtown Spokane
- ☐

 Own property in Downtown Spokane

2 Please rank the draft goals and their supporting strategies described on the reverse from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important).

 Connected + Walkable Downtown

 Welcoming + Engaging Public Spaces

 Thriving Arts, Culture + History

 Great Place to Live + Work

 A Well Managed Downtown for All

3 Why do you believe the goal ranked 1 is most important?

4 Why do you believe the goal ranked 5 is least important?

5 How would you rate the strategies overall on a scale from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent)?

1

2

3

4

5

6 Is there anything you would like to add?

Return your survey by mail or in person at:

OR

Snap a photo and email to:

Attn: Planning Services Dept.

808 W Spokane Falls Blvd

Spokane, WA 99201

info@spokanedowntownplan.org

JOIN US AT OUR NEXT
PUBLIC WORKSHOP:

FEBRUARY 5, 2020
6PM - 8PM

WONDER SPOKANE
835 N POST ST, SPOKANE

SPOKANE DOWNTOWN PLAN



DRAFT 2020 VISION

Downtown Spokane is the cultural and economic heart of the Inland Northwest, drawing people from the region, the nation, and around the world. Centered on the Spokane River, the spectacular falls, and the signature Riverfront Park, the urban fabric is walkable and full of interest and distinctive character. Downtown feels safe, comfortable, and welcoming for people of all communities and backgrounds. The history of Spokane shines through in its irreplaceable architecture and the stories of railroads and industry. Downtown Spokane continues to draw new residents and businesses with opportunities for education, recreation and cultural activities. As everyone's neighborhood, Downtown Spokane is a great source of pride and is poised to capture the opportunities of the future.





GOALS + STRATEGIES

GOAL: CONNECTED + WALKABLE DOWNTOWN

- Right size streets and create pedestrian- and bike-friendly connections downtown
- Implement a wayfinding program
- Capitalize on the Central City Line
- Reduce surface parking and consolidate parking in garages
- Create a Downtown Public Development Authority for infill development, parking, partnerships and other issues.

GOAL: WELCOMING + ENGAGING PUBLIC SPACES

- Program and activate public spaces Downtown
- Manage the concentration of homeless services

GOAL: THRIVING ARTS, CULTURE + HISTORY

- Develop a historic and cultural walking trail through Downtown
- Establish an arts and theater district to support historic venues
- Create a public market with an arts focus

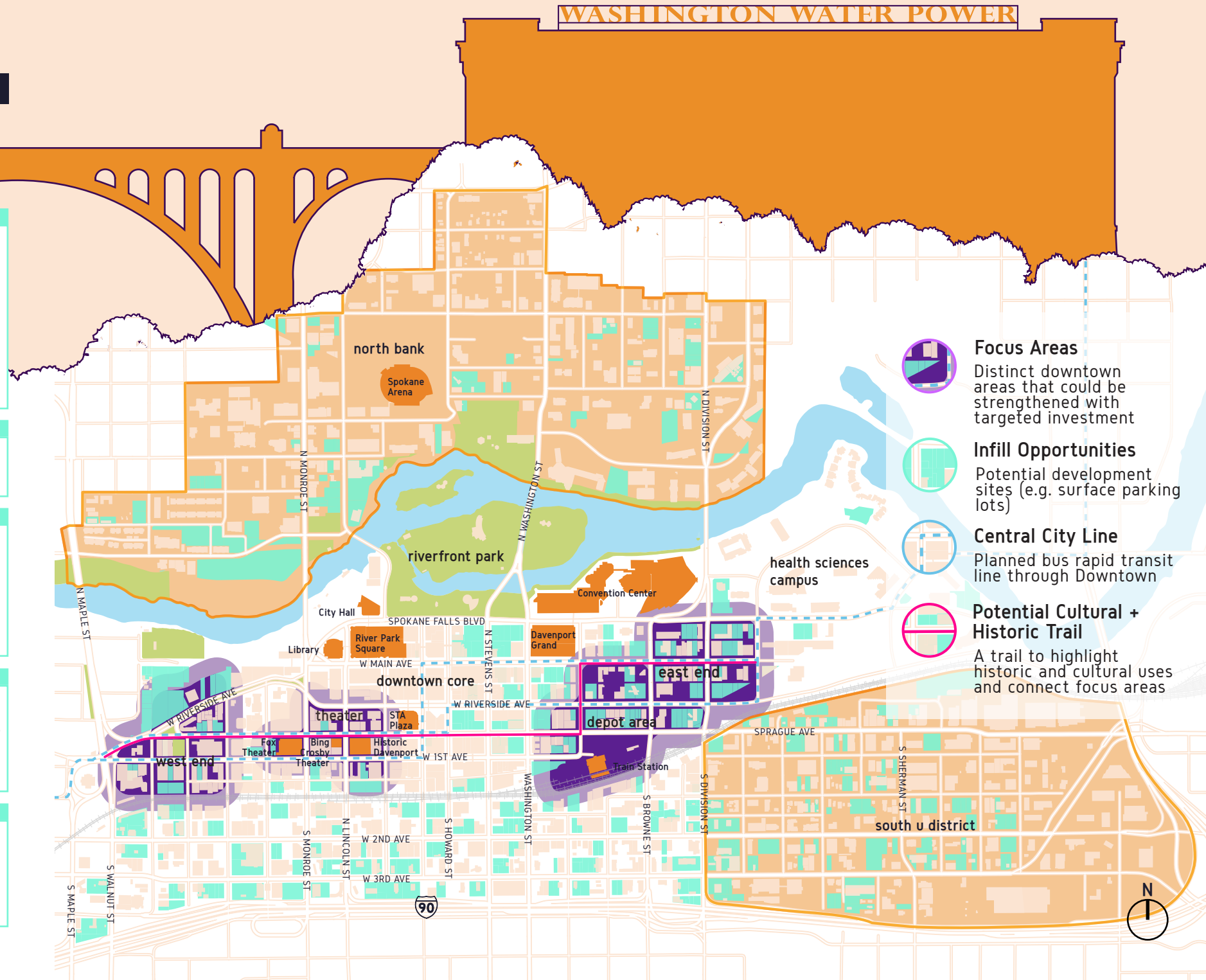
GOAL: A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE + WORK

- Accelerate residential development Downtown
- Enhance residential amenities like public spaces and schools
- Improve parking and transit options for Downtown employees

GOAL: A WELL MANAGED DOWNTOWN FOR ALL

- Leverage parking management to improve Downtown and enhance parking benefit district
- Develop new promotions and marketing campaign to attract downtown businesses

1/14/2020



Focus Areas

Distinct downtown areas that could be strengthened with targeted investment



Infill Opportunities

Potential development sites (e.g. surface parking lots)



Central City Line

Planned bus rapid transit line through Downtown



Potential Cultural + Historic Trail

A trail to highlight historic and cultural uses and connect focus areas