



Downtown Plan Update Steering Committee Meeting #4 Notes

Date: June 26, 2020 1:00 P.M.

Webinar Meeting

Meeting Participants

- **Steering Committee Members Present:**

Lars Gilberts, University District; Ginger Ewing, Terrain; Melissa Huggins, Spokane Arts; Chuck Horgan, Design Review Board; Patty Tully, Inland Empire Bartenders Association; Fawn Schott, Volunteers of America; Char Kay, Washington State Dept. of Transportation; Meg Winchester, Visit Spokane; Doug Yost, Centennial Real Estate; Gordon Hester, Kiemle Hagood; Alan Chatham, Riverside Neighborhood Council; Sue Horton, Wheatland Bank; Bill Simer, Eide Bailly.

- **Others Present:**

Jackie Caro, Terrain; Betsy Cowles, Cowles Company; Karl Otterstrom, Spokane Transit Authority; Katherine Miller, City of Spokane Integrated Capital Management.

- **Project Staff Present:**

Andrew Rolwes and Mark Richard, Downtown Spokane Partnership; Jeff Arango, Lesley Bain, and Daniel Harris, Framework; Nate Gwinn and Dean Gunderson, City of Spokane Planning.

Overview – Jeff kicked off the meeting. Nate stated the project is at a midpoint of the process, and mentioned an introductory statement regarding public safety and homelessness, topics which are not on today's agenda but could be part of future meetings as part of this process.

Draft Plan Presentation – Jeff provided a summary of the public participation and feedback received on the draft plan preparation so far. He highlighted community desire, including a safe experience Downtown. He gave an overview of each goal and strategy. Proposed focus areas in the draft address connections across gaps. Jeff addressed some specific streets and proposed concepts, including amenities such as new and improved public spaces and related strategies there such as activity programming, and improving parking and transit for employees. He highlighted opportunity sites such as the Rookery Block advancing multiple goals together, emphasized the necessity of leadership and collaboration with partners, and suggested improved management of off-street parking. All of the goals aim toward the vibrancy of Downtown, street level, businesses, cultural uses and activity and helping all of them thrive.

Session 1: Streets and Public Spaces – Discussion

1. Feedback on Plan priorities and major elements that should be added or substantially modified:

- Design of City Line station on Sprague should be represented on the Fox Theater block rendering.
- Better sidewalks is mentioned twice on vision wall comments from Workshop #1. Consider updates to engaging place to do business or feature creative energy.
- Consider expanding the Downtown boundary beyond hospitals, spreading the focus out further. The rationale behind that is to allow hospitals maximum flexibility to serve the community by allowing the Downtown General (DTG) zone in these areas. Invite further discussion at a separate meeting to see if there is collective direction.
- Number and location of bike/scooter lanes considered factors such as available space, connectivity, projects currently in the planning stage, and traffic volume.
- Open to additional strategies for affordable housing besides maintaining Multi-Family Tax Exemption. Project team has heard interest in additional kinds of housing options Downtown, and there are a number of ways that could be reflected in the plan.
- Adding more safe area for scooters is a huge asset for bike lanes protected by parked cars.

- Consider adding sites along Monroe and Public Facilities District land as opportunity sites.
- 2. For an overall direction in strategy, would it be more impactful to have a short list of a few major improvements, or several smaller improvements?
 - Smaller, more attainable projects might be better in the current environment with limited available funding. These enable better distribution throughout Downtown. Opportunistic, temporary, low-cost options are possible, such as temporary or intermittent travel lane closures, and additional light projections. Regulatory changes adopted in other cities to make them easier, such as not requiring a street use permit for putting chairs and tables out, or festival permit to allow easier activation of alleys than a single-use permit.
 - There is a grant for temporary improvements through Smart Growth America. The City and Spokane Arts have applied for it.
- 3. Minor projects - strategic actions for implementation:
 - Intentional implementation of public art throughout Downtown.
 - Lighting needs attention near railroad viaducts and in south Downtown generally to spur smaller improvements at a later time.
 - Closing off streets or lanes to expand outdoor dining on streets where traffic falls in the summer. Very low volume streets have used temporary barriers, this could support recovery of Downtown.
 - Activation of sidewalks and crosswalks. The draft plan includes artistic crosswalks and other measures of activation.
 - Infrastructure for sound, lighting, and power for events where street closures are anticipated.
- 4. How well does the proposal acknowledge identified community priorities, such as vibrant public sidewalks and spaces, as well as safe, multimodal transportation and wayfinding?
 - For sidewalk dining, state liquor control measures have evolved over years to allow additional flexibility. The Plan could highlight streamlining requirements for sidewalk cafes and Parklets.
 - Spokane Transit Authority – Karl gave a summary of work impacting Downtown in the future. It includes new stations for the City Line and other construction in the STA Moving Forward plan.
 - Upgrades to platforms and other infrastructure will support more regional connections to Downtown and serve the Plaza more efficiently.
 - STA and the City are considering future improvements to Route 4 line streets near the Monroe St Bridge, such as potential lane reconfiguration to accommodate northbound buses on N Monroe St with less impact to area traffic.
 - The Cheney Line is being phased in.
 - The Division Connects study will explore bus rapid transit on Division Line, which intersects the City Line, and alternative endpoints in the Downtown such as the University District, Plaza, or nearby hospitals.
 - City of Spokane – Katherine provided an overview of Downtown projects in the 2021-2026 6-Year Street Program. Street projects in the program were selected based on as much overlap with the City Line as possible, and represent a short-term portion of a broader plan. Katherine indicated that the Spokane Downtown Plan Update process could give input on priorities for the selected projects, or could identify a preference for focusing on one of the project corridors over another. Full rebuild projects have the most impact because they are able to affect sidewalks. They begin with a scoping process that looks at existing planning documents approved by the City as a starting point for intent to help guide what the project scope will be.

Session 2: Live and Work, Arts Culture History, Well Managed – Discussion

1. What should be redeveloped or preserved in the described focus areas? What future land uses or urban form are most important to achieve vision and goals? Areas described on the strategy map:
 - a) Theater, b) West End, c) Depot District, d) East End
 - The draft proposed potential focus areas rather than formal districts. A few years ago, the DSP conducted a district naming and branding study in the Downtown area. At the end of the discussion stakeholders decided to bring it into the Downtown Plan Update process. Beyond the suggestions for district names, the study would be a helpful reference

document for the work here for historic characteristics of districts within the Downtown, values, and current conditions. The conversation included a question about whether Spokane is big enough for 4 or 5 districts. In order to be successfully applied, district names need buy-in from businesses.

2. How will the public and private sectors contribute to maintain and develop active uses in neighborhood-scale gathering spaces, and target neglected spaces?
 - o Help property owners understand benefits of activating public spaces. Public/private funding partnerships for activation predictably and regularly (not only one day per week), as seen in Seattle and Portland. This may help change the character of Spokane's plazas and be more sustainable than past models.
 - o Activation is better when it involves the private sector in some way, such as featuring vending within the public space.
3. How appropriately do strategies respond to demand for commuter, residential, and short-term parking?
 - o Draft plan includes support for incentives that would make parking structures viable and preservation of arterials. It draws from the examples of solutions used in other cities that can help make development possible. Such examples enable less expensive financing solutions for off-street parking development and additional revenue for streetscape improvements.
 - o Concentrating parking in structures would focus the interface of all modes in specific areas and leave other areas open for more active uses.
 - o The development and management of parking and transit could be better coordinated. Other markets utilize parking supply along transit routes and coordinate parking and transit software applications.
4. How does an art and theater district build upon current efforts by Spokane Arts and Terrain?
 - o Past efforts like the Davenport District experienced challenges in sustaining smaller districts. A broader goal is to activate to support cultural spaces Downtown; activate broadly and support cultural organizations, venues, theaters, and make sure they stay in the Downtown long-term.
5. Review the proposed opportunity sites:
 - o The group discussed interest in encouraging one of the surface parking lots to become a mini-park for the area near Main Ave and Browne St, near the location of opportunity site 1 identified on the map. The challenge in activation when creating new public spaces was acknowledged. Dog park/seating space are contemplated in the area, as well as alley activation, beautification, and shared parking across alleys. Other sites near the Browne St lot could be found with willing property owners. Sites nearby are unimproved gravel or are larger sites that could be easily activated with new neighboring development. It might be better to indicate the area is appropriate for open space and not specify a single site.
 - o Recognize opportunity for City to acquire sites for public spaces and enter into agreements with neighbors to program those spaces. After agreements are in place, also recognize the need for funding that needs to come from somewhere for activation.

Final Questions –

1. What effects has the pandemic had on your home or business and Downtown?
2. What else is on your mind?
 - o Consider a future where office demand is greatly diminished, and what could be done to facilitate repurposing that space for residential use.
 - o Recognize the profound impact and devastating extent of the pandemic on cultural uses, and the potential spillover effect on other uses and activities. Address ways to ensure cultural spaces are preserved in the Downtown instead of getting forced out and closing.

Spokane Downtown Plan Steering Committee Meeting for June 26, 2020

Introductory Statement

RE: Highlighting Public Safety and Human Services Concentration Issues and Solutions

The Downtown Plan serves as a sub-area plan of Spokane's Comprehensive Plan. Its purpose is to provide direction and guidance to develop, operate, and maintain public and private activity Downtown. Participants in the Downtown Plan Update process have identified **public safety** and the concentration of **human services** providers Downtown as primary concerns. The City currently addresses much of these immediate concerns in other efforts. The City intends the Downtown Plan to be aligned with and supportive of those efforts, and to make those connection points as they arise in this process.

To devote its valuable meeting time to updated policy in the Downtown Plan, the steering committee is encouraged to continue its intentional focus on the implications of these implications on guidance toward development, but not to devote time in this process toward new policy in these subject areas, which is more appropriately addressed through the solutions described below.

- **Public Safety:** The City's Comprehensive Plan outlines a vision and values for social health (Chapter 10). These items espouse safety and community-oriented policing at their foundation. The Spokane Police Department currently deploys a community policing model, particularly in Downtown.
- **Human Services:** Meanwhile, Comprehensive Plan goals call for regionally equitable sharing of service delivery and special needs temporary housing, such as emergency shelters, homeless shelters, and transitional housing (Chapter 6, Chapter 10).

Solutions:

1. As a subarea plan, the Downtown Plan must align and build upon the Comprehensive Plan policy and other adopted plans and procedures.
2. Downtown is the region's center where there is a role for centrally located activity. However, with respect to the concentration of homeless services, the City and its regional partners have recently adopted a new approach to ending homelessness. This approach acknowledges that connecting individuals with services in their own communities has better outcomes than sending individuals to other locations they are not familiar with to access services. The Downtown Plan draft points to and supports those efforts.
3. The Downtown Plan has a vital role in describing unique needs for the application of principles for crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). This type of policy is addressed in previous plans and an update will provide helpful guidance for design and construction, in a manner that emphasizes social interaction and territorial reinforcement, over the next ten years. The Spokane Police Department currently offers CPTED analysis to developers and this is often coordinated through the Downtown Spokane Partnership. This is also a CPTED component within the City's Downtown Design Guidelines, used by the Design Review Board in review for projects Downtown that exceed a certain size threshold.
4. Although not expected to be addressed in new policy as part of the Downtown Plan Update, police strategy discussions can occur at the regular meetings between the Downtown Spokane

Partnership and Spokane Policy Department, at BID board meetings, and other formats to have more in-depth discussions with additional community members as desired.

In summary, the City works closely with its partners on community policing matters related to demographics, behaviors, the economy, construction methods, and other issues Downtown will face in the next decade. The draft Plan acknowledges the public input received and Comprehensive Plan policy related to social health, including community policing and equitable distribution of homeless services across the region. It will focus on updates to CPTED principles, but community policing and concentration of the provision of human services continue to be addressed appropriately in other existing processes and documents.



SPOKANE DOWNTOWN PLAN

JUNE 2020

INITIAL DRAFT

PROJECT OVERVIEW

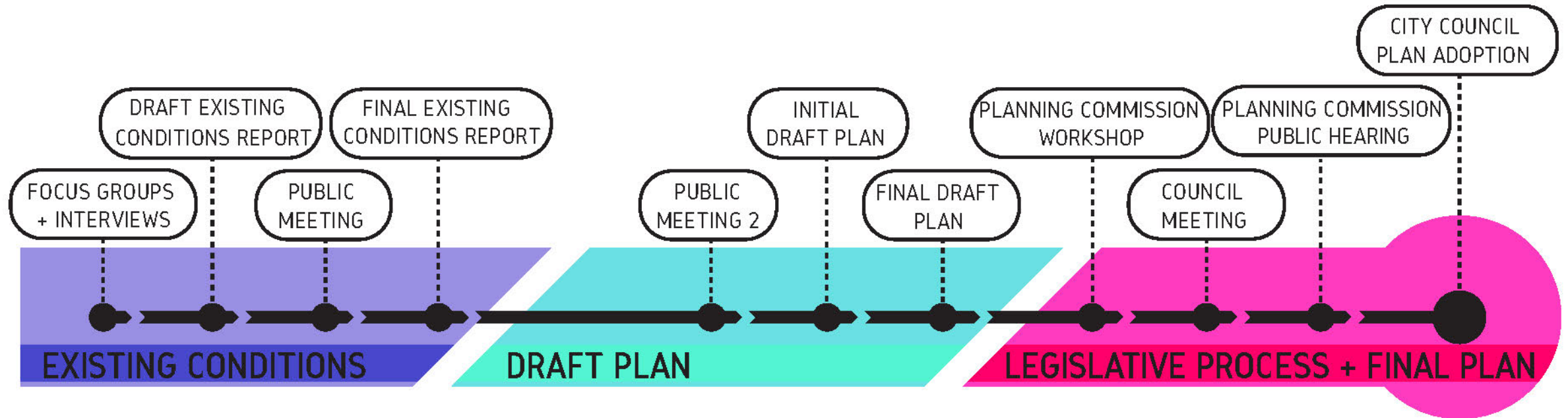
- 1 10-Year Plan:** Create a new 10-year plan for Downtown including specific strategies and actions.
- 2 Community Engagement:** Engage the community to create an updated vision for Downtown.
- 3 New Plan Document:** Develop a user-friendly downtown plan that is graphically-oriented and easy to navigate.
- 4 Existing Conditions:** Assess existing conditions and develop concepts, strategies and actions that address current challenges and opportunities.

WHO WE ARE



framework

TIMELINE

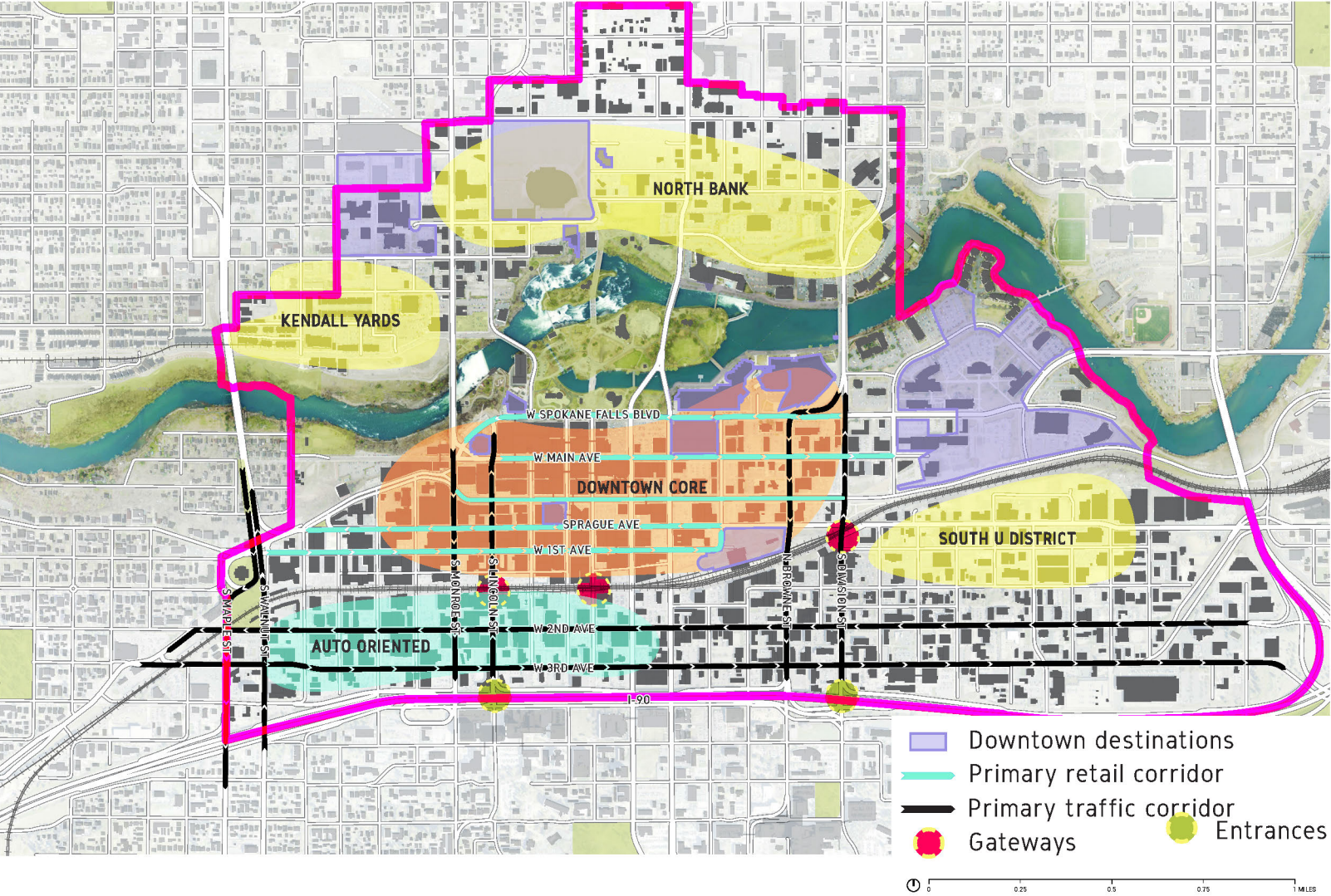


ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

- 1 Focus group meetings
- 2 Public workshop #1 | October 2019
- 3 Online survey #1 | fall 2019: 600 responses
- 4 Public workshop #2 | February 2020
- 5 Online survey #2 | winter 2020
- 6 Project steering + technical advisory committee meetings | 5 meetings planned
- 7 Public workshop #3 | summer 2020
- 8 Legislative adoption process (pending)

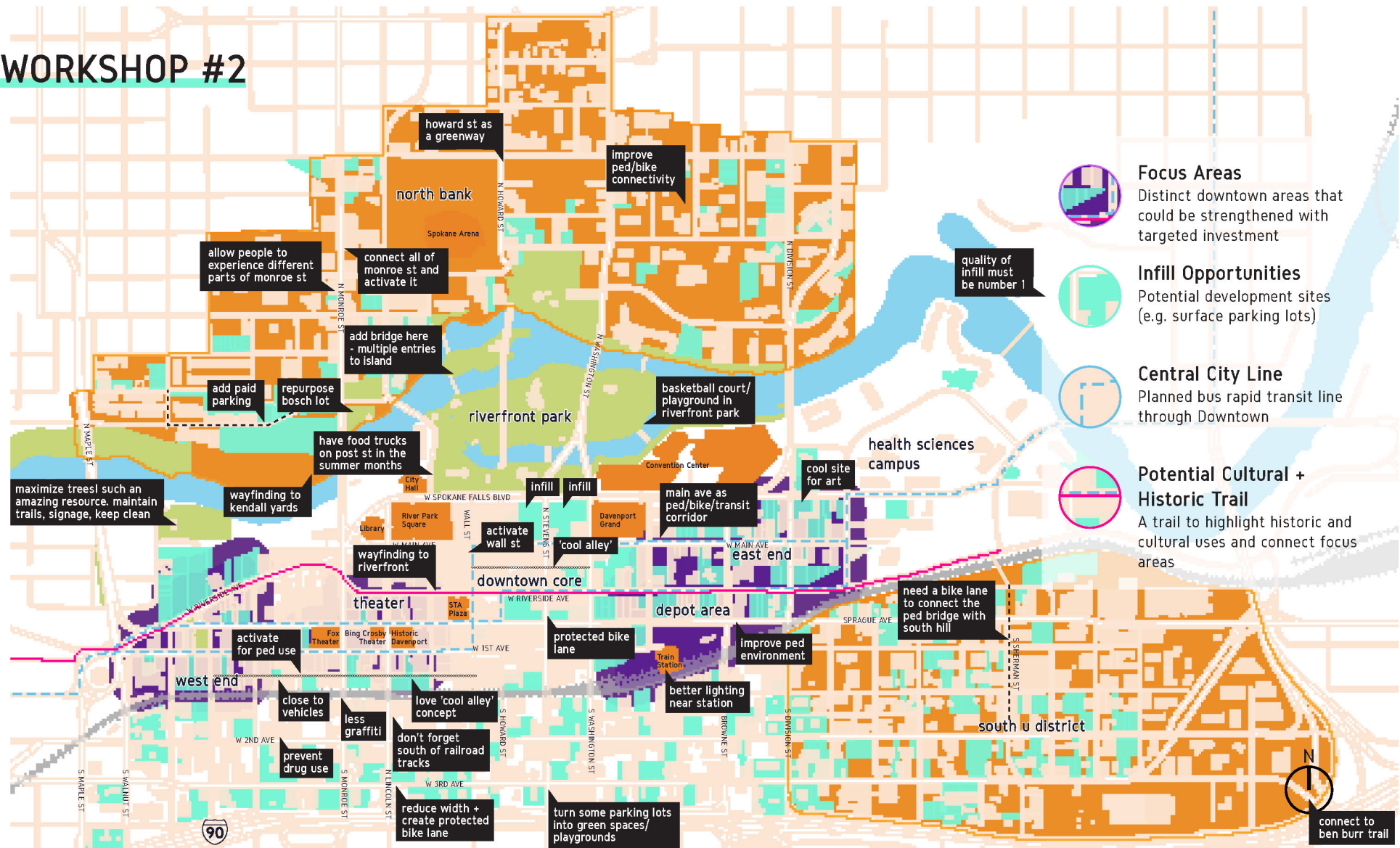


CONTEXT DIAGRAM



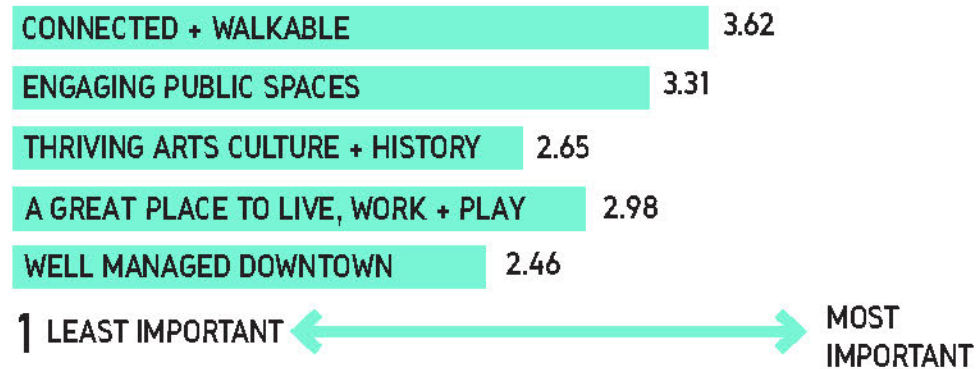
WHAT WE HEARD

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #2



WHAT WE HEARD

PUBLIC SURVEY #2



PRIORITIES FOR THE DOWNTOWN PLAN	RESPONSE RATE
Homelessness	66.3%
Public Safety	57.1%
Streets + Public Spaces	48.1%
Transportation + Mobility	33.2%
Housing	29.0%
More To Do	27.3%
Quality of Life for Residents	21.2%
Employment	11.9%

DOWNTOWN'S GREATEST ASSETS	RESPONSE RATE
Spokane River + Falls	83.2%
Riverfront Park	74%
Walkability	45.3%
Shopping + Dining	38.2%
History	32.6%
Buildings	32.2%
Things to Do	23.3%
Character	18.5%
Easy Transportation Access	11.9%

WHAT WE HEARD

A network of safe, protected bike facilities

Better sidewalks, and a safer, more comfortable pedestrian realm

Wayfinding and signage particularly for pedestrian and transit routes

Affordable housing and equitable development

More conveniently located grocery stores Downtown

Alleys with year-round activation

Dense, mixed use development

Housing for a wide range of income levels

More green and open space with wildlife habitat

Fewer cars downtown

No surface parking lots

Improved transit service and infrastructure

Better regional rail access with more convenient departure times

More dining options including food trucks and carts

Improved homeless services with public hygiene facilities

A safe and vibrant family destination with new attractions

Better sidewalks, and a safer, more comfortable pedestrian realm

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



GOALS

● A CONNECTED + WALKABLE DOWNTOWN

- CW1** Energize streets and Alleys Downtown as active pedestrian- and bike-friendly connections
- CW2** Capitalize on the City Line and transit network
- CW3** Reduce surface parking and consolidate parking in garages
- CW4** Implement a wayfinding program for Downtown

● THRIVING ARTS, CULTURE + HISTORY

- ACH1** Highlight history, arts and culture in Downtown
- ACH2** Establish an arts and theater district to energize a unique historic district, attract patrons and support performing arts venues
- ACH3** Create a public market with an art focus open year-round as a downtown attraction and incubator for small businesses, local produce and goods

● A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK + PLAY

- LW1** Accelerate residential development Downtown
- LW2** Enhance residential amenities like public spaces and services Downtown
- LW3** Improve parking + transit for Downtown employees

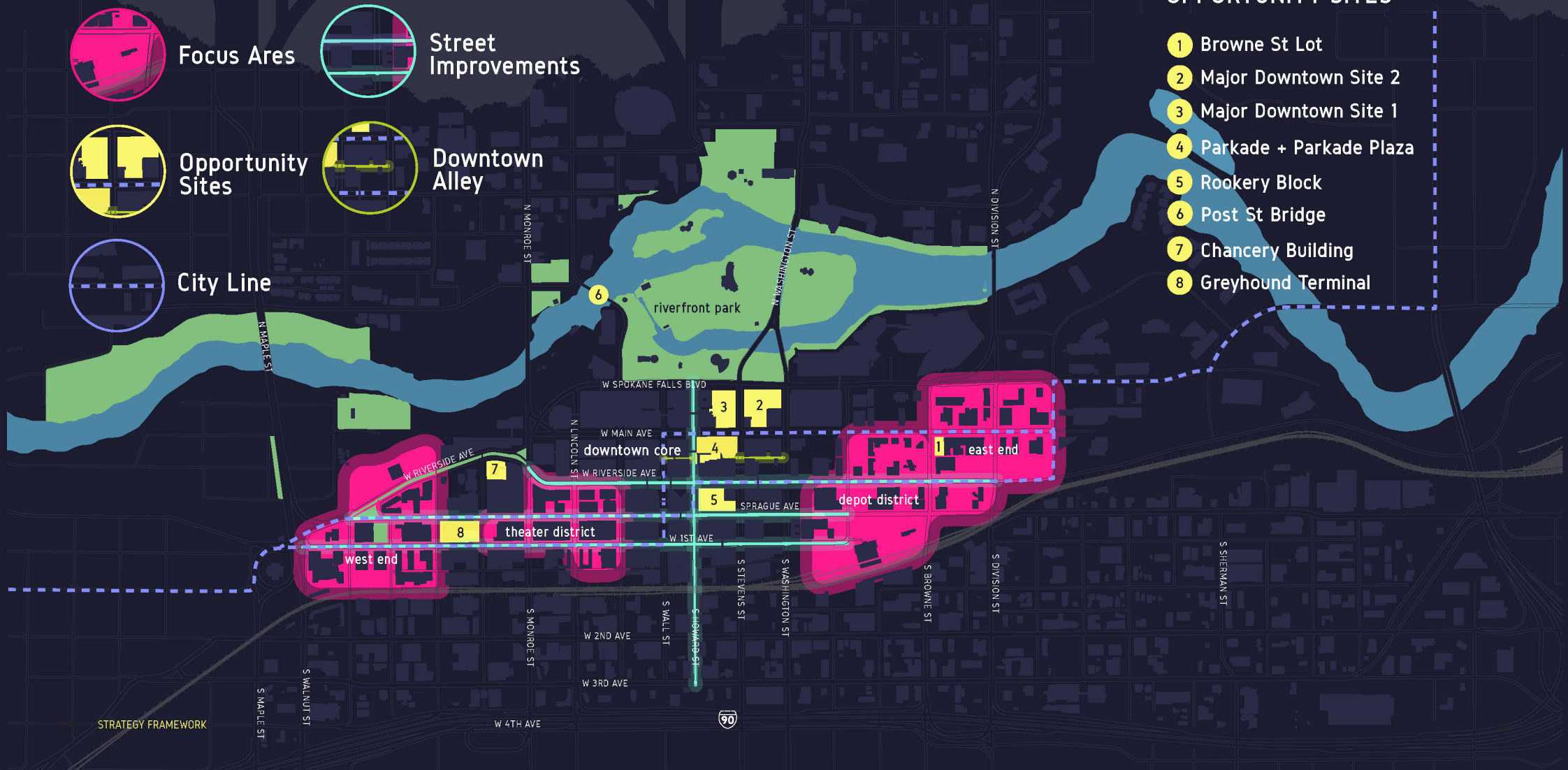
● WELCOMING + ENGAGING PUBLIC SPACES FOR ALL

- PS1** Protect, expand, and improve public space in strategic locations
- PS2** Program and activate public spaces Downtown

● A WELL MANAGED DOWNTOWN FOR ALL

- WM1** Cultivate leadership, strengthen community partnerships, and expand organizational capacity for Downtown Management
- WM2** Leverage parking management to improve Downtown and enhance the Parking Benefit District
- WM3** Develop new promotions and marketing campaign to attract businesses

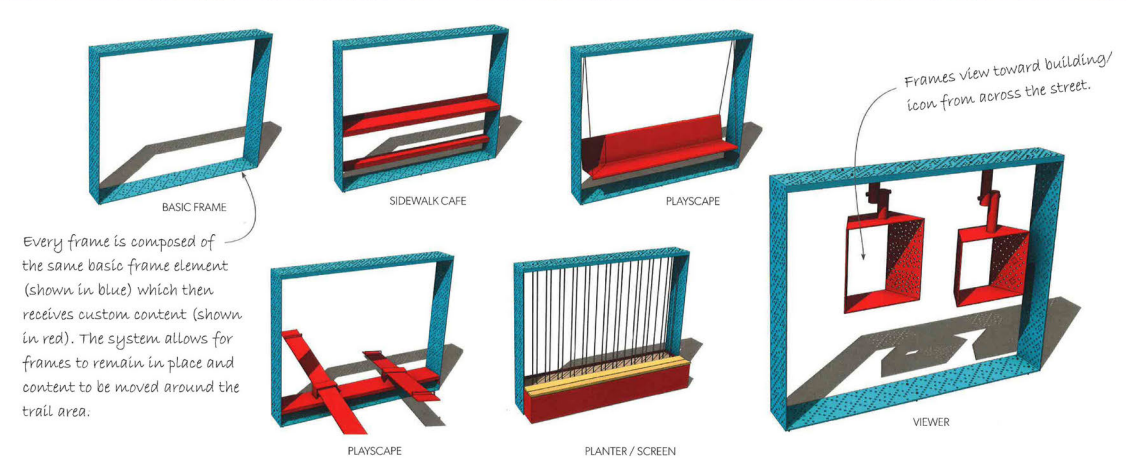
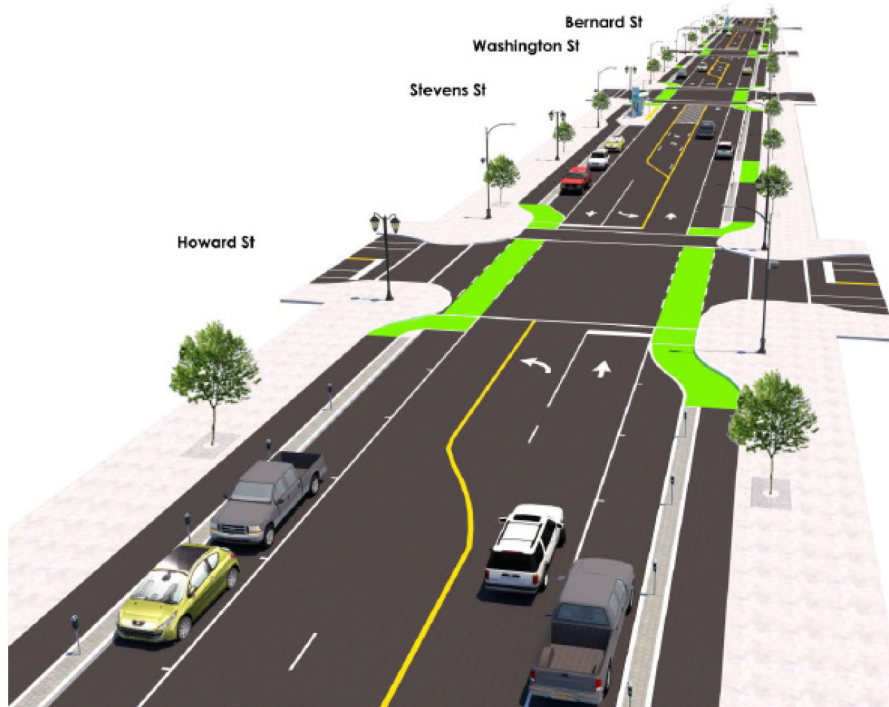
STRATEGY FRAMEWORK



RIVERSIDE



Riverside Ave



STREETS

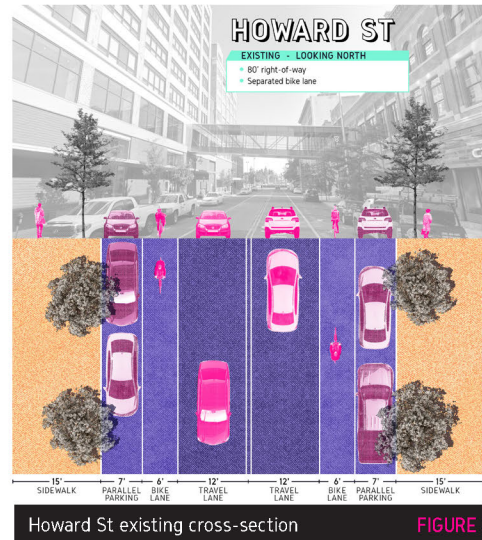


FIGURE 7

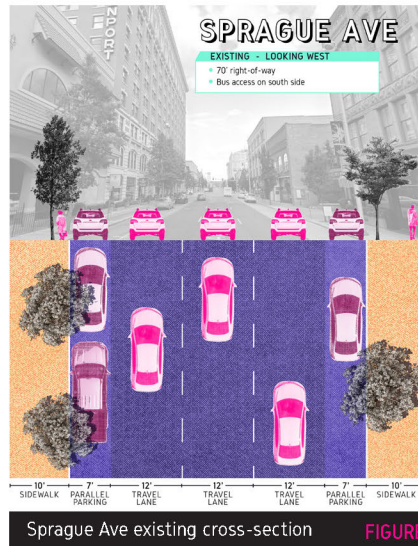


FIGURE 8

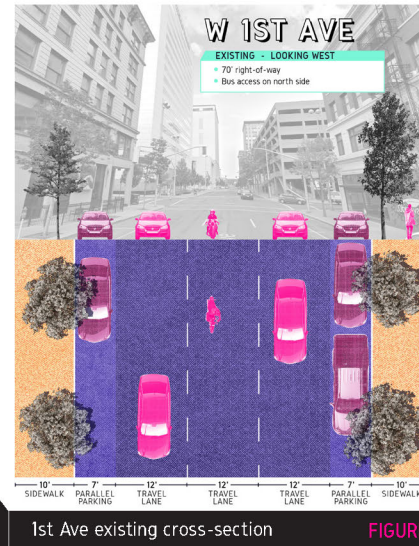
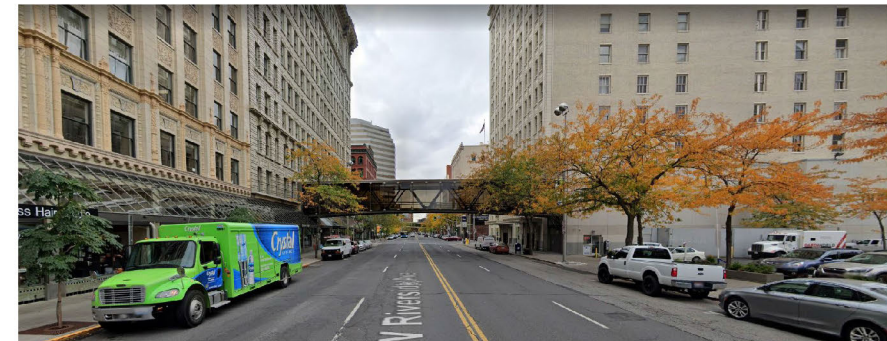


FIGURE 9



W Main Ave looking east near N Wall St



W Riverside Ave looking west near N Stevens Street



Sprague Ave and N Lincoln St looking west

STREETS

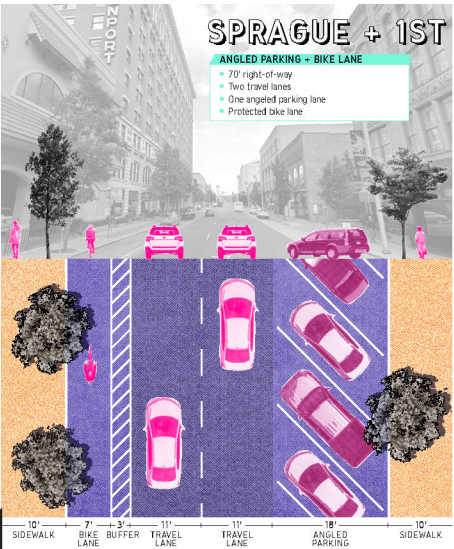
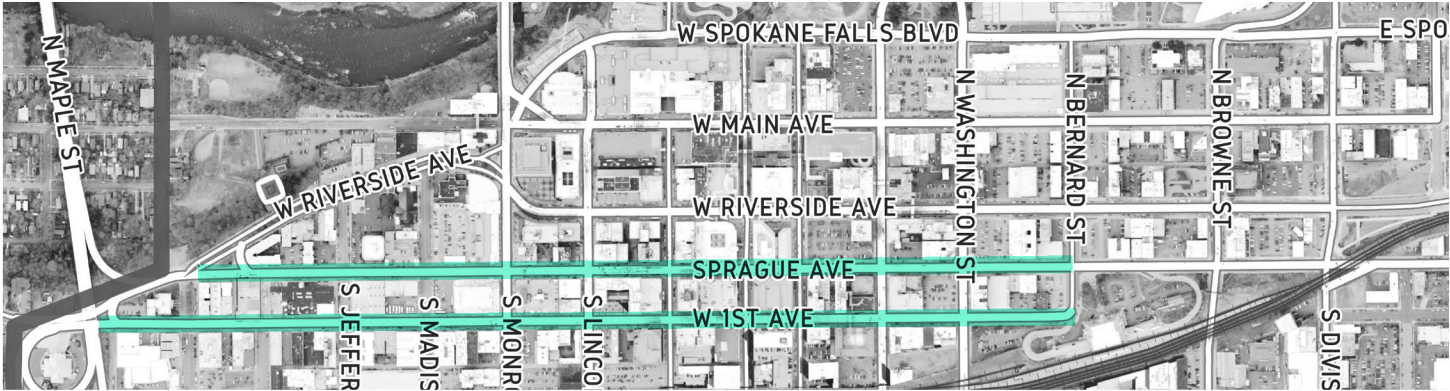


FIGURE 11 Protected bike lane with angle parking

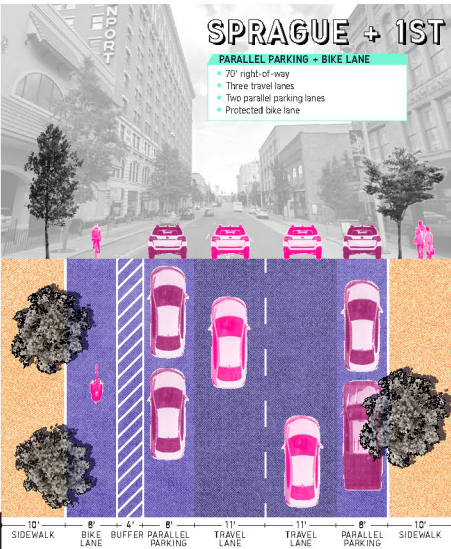


FIGURE 12 Protected bike lane with parallel parking

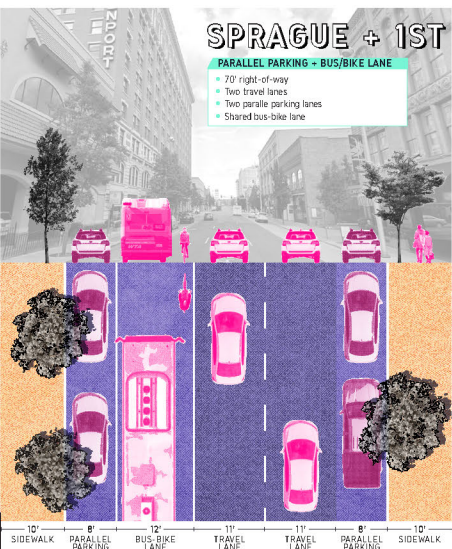


FIGURE 10 Shared bus/bike lane concept



FIGURE 13 Cross-section of the long-term vision for the reconfiguration of Sprague Ave, prioritizing active transportation and public space.

STREETS

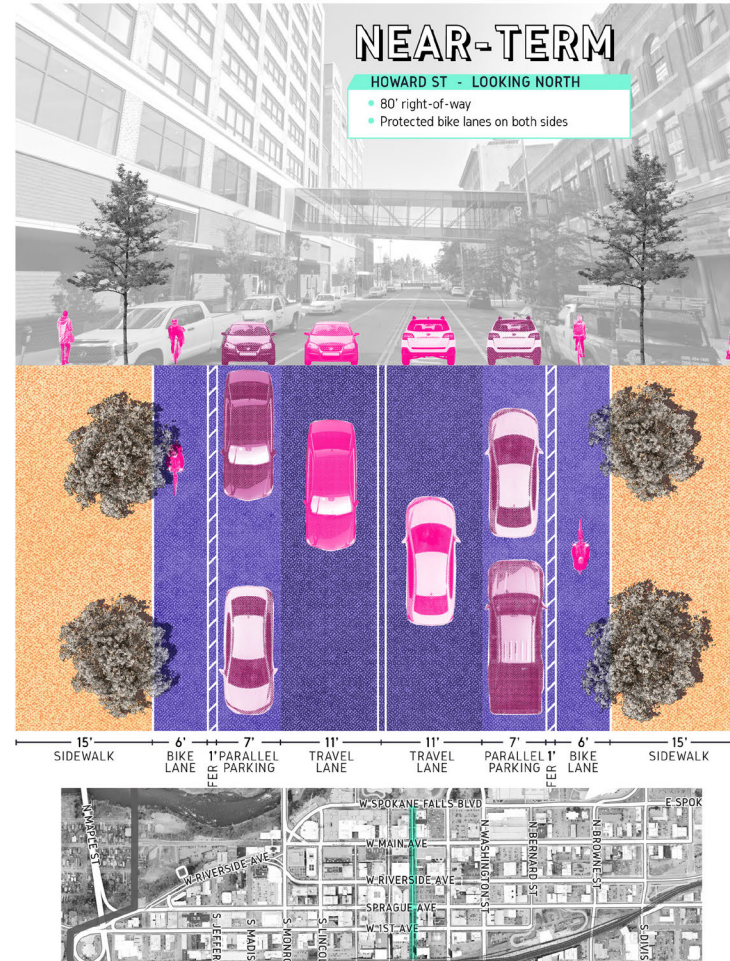


FIGURE 18

Cross section of proposed near term improvements on Howard Street with the addition of bike lanes.

SPRAGUE EXISTING



SPRAGUE CONCEPT



projection installation
ex: movies from 1930s
when theater was built

theater garden
parklet

celebrate historic
architecture with
uplighting

parallel
parking

travel
lanes

parallel parking
and theater
drop-off

shared transit and
artline corridor
with bus stop

PARKADE PLAZA EXISTING



PARKADE PLAZA CONCEPT



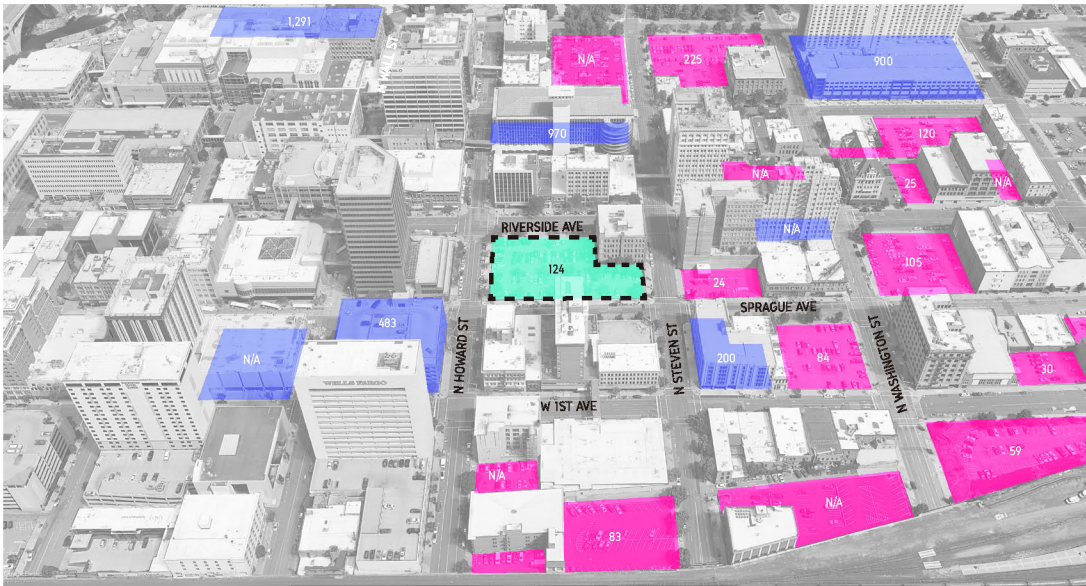
DOWNTOWN ALLEY EXISTING



DOWNTOWN ALLEY CONCEPT

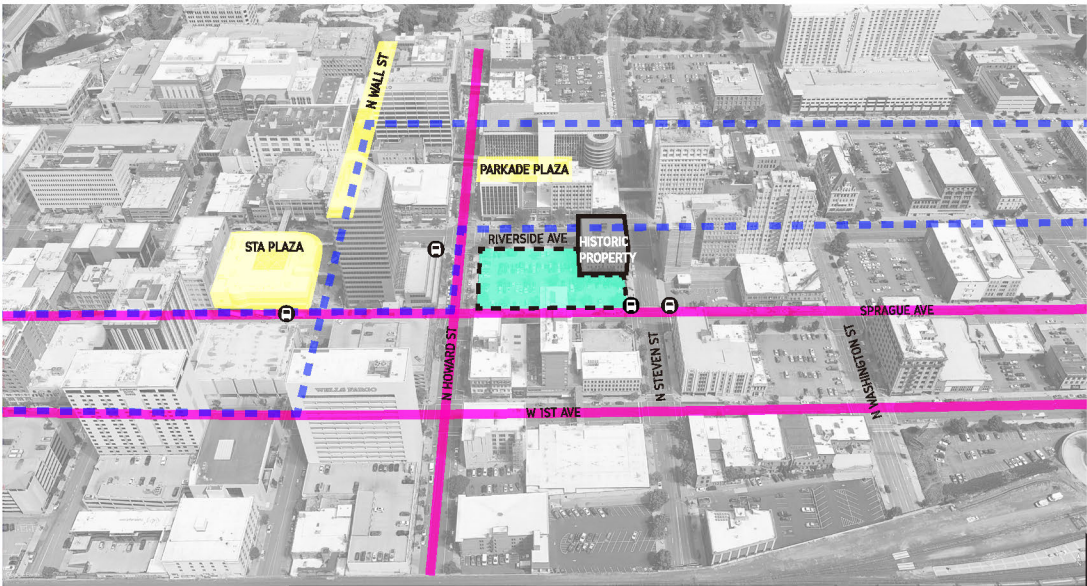


ROOKERY BLOCK CONTEXT



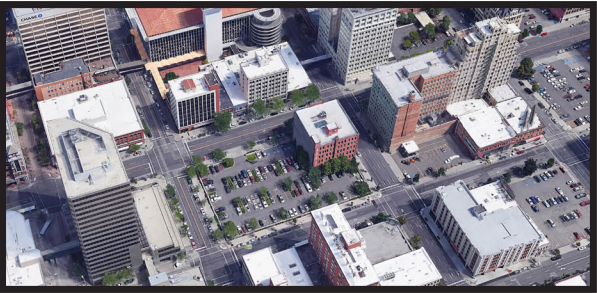
- ROOKERY BLOCK
- SURFACE LOT
- PARKING GARAGE

FIGURE 23 | Parking in the vicinity of the Rookery Block with the number of spaces in each garage or parking lot, where available.



- ROOKERY BLOCK
- PUBLIC SPACES
- BIKE IMPROVEMENTS
- CITY LINE

FIGURE 22 | Context of the Rookery Block with bicycle and pedestrian street improvements, transit investments, and public spaces that could be activated shown



ROOKERY BLOCK CONCEPT

