

Neighborhood and Planning Services Melissa Wittstruck, Assistant Planner Inga Note, Senior Traffic Planning Engineer Plan Commission February 26, 2020



Introduction

 Grand Boulevard Transportation and Land Use Study launched in September 2019, with public kickoff meetings in October. Comstock, Rockwood, and Manito-Cannon Hill Neighborhood Councils support the study, which is partially funded by Traffic Calming dollars.

Elements of the study include:

- REVIEW: Traffic patterns and safety on Grand Blvd.
- DEVELOP: Understanding of bicycle and pedestrian needs.
- EVALUATE: Concepts of lane reduction, bike lanes, wider sidewalks, and green infrastructure. Analyze current land use and market data.
- STUDY: Land use boundaries with Comprehensive Plan goals in mind.



Project Area Boundaries

Generally, Grand Boulevard south of 29th Avenue.

- Transportation analysis focused on core of the business district on Grand between 29th and 34th.
- Land use analysis subarea is bounded by 27th Avenue, 39th Avenue, Latawah, and Arthur Streets.



Summary: Kickoff Meetings October 21 -22



What were people talking about?



People Talked About Safety and Streetscape

Safety was identified as a critical concern – especially for school-aged children and senior residents

- Children crossing Grand overall and particularly "The Crossing " at Grand Blvd and 33rd Ave.
- Older shoppers crossing at 30th Ave and Grand Blvd.

Desire for traffic calming/design/ pedestrian amenities:

- Cars are too fast on Grand Blvd
- Bus travel and access challenges north of 29th Ave

Desires and concerns about Streetscape and Amenities

- Desire for tree lined streets
- Extend bike lanes to the end of Grand (High Drive/42nd)
- Center lane is an important component on Grand





Snapshot: Online Survey



Where do you work? 90.00% 80.00% 70.00% 60.00% 50.00% 40.00% Responses 30.00% 20.00% 10.00% 0.00% Inside the Grand In Spokane, but outside Outside the City of Boulevard Planning the Grand Boulevard Spokane. Area. Planning Area.

What are the most important assets that the Grand Boulevard planning area currently offers? Please select up to three.



What are the most pressing issues in the Grand Boulevard Planning Area? Please select up to three.



DRAFT Market Analysis Spokane Grand Boulevard



Leland Consulting Group February 2020

Introduction

This market analysis is part of a larger Grand Boulevard Transportation and Land Use Study being undertaken by the City of Spokane to evaluate Grand Boulevard along a Study Area extending from 27th to 39th Avenues.

Much of that effort is devoted to exploring opportunities for transportation, safety, and aesthetic improvements to that stretch of Grand Boulevard, potentially including changes to streetscaping, bike/ped amenities, traffic engineering, etc.

This market analysis component is included to evaluate the area's redevelopment potential and study how private sector changes to the built environment might best complement any transportation infrastructure recommendations to further Comprehensive Plan goals.

The report, in fact, provides evidence for favorable market conditions, with ample residential and retail demand to support infill development in the Study Area.

Existing land use policy for the area appears to be well-suited to accommodate desirable development forms (although could perhaps be better promoted).

Finally, the contemplated investments in street improvements should help attract developer and property owner interest in redevelopment – leading by example in moving towards a vision of a more vibrant, resident- and business-friendly street.

Study Area Land Use Designations

A zoom in to the half-mile Study Area shows a relatively narrow corridor of commercial and institutional (primarily school-related) uses surrounded by low density residential neighborhoods.

Some medium-high density residential uses are also found interspersed, limited to areas fronting or within a block of either Grand or 30th Avenue. These are limited to older (typically 70s-construction) apartments and the occasional multi-unit building amid lots simply being used for single-family residences – the predominant pattern along the upzoned portions of 29th and 30th Avenues. These areas represent capacity for increased residential density in theory, but redevelopment is likely to be fragmented and opportunistic, depending on prevailing market conditions and land purchase prices.

Source: Spokane County Assessor, City of Spokane, and Leland Consulting Group

Market Analysis | Spokane Grand Boulevard



Study Area Employment Profile

Establishments within the Study Area employed just over 1,000 workers as of 2017.

Study Area jobs are almost exclusively within service industries, with 37% working in retail and 22% in food service and accommodations (mostly restaurants). Another 17% work in the healthcare industry.

There is currently a mismatch between the Study Area jobs and residents, in that its daytime workforce population tends to work in lower-wage industries, while area residents tend to have higher-paying jobs.

This presents a challenge to creating at least the possibility of a *live-work* environment. That is, without some housing that is more affordable to Grand Boulevard employees, they will always have to commute in from outside – worsening traffic and wasting time. Conversely, without some higher-paying jobs in the Study Area, local residents will always have to commute outside for work.





Conclusions & Strategic Considerations

The Grand Boulevard Study Area lies within a market context of favorable income demographics and modest but steady residential growth.

Together with the significant undersupply of retail south of I-90, this creates an environment of healthy residential and retail demand for the Market Area, with a diminishing supply of land to satisfy that demand.

The estimated residential and retail Market Area demand is more than adequate to support unsubsidized redevelopment of the limited supply of vacant zoned parcels in the Study Area.

• At conservative capture rates, we estimate approximately 130 to 270 new multifamily units (primarily rental) could be absorbed in the Study Area, along with approximately 70,000 to 100,000 SF of neighborhood-serving retail space.

Unless the Manito Shopping Center decides to embark on a major redevelopment, near-term (0-5 year) infill activity will likely be limited to a handful of relatively small infill sites in the Study Area.

Given the existing suburban auto-oriented development pattern in the Study Area, there is much to be gained in terms of quality of life and safety by making street improvements and adding ped-friendly amenities.

Opportunistically adding increased residential density and reconfiguring existing retail to help define street edges and forge walk/bike connections would both help to further that goal.

Conclusions & Strategic Considerations (continued)

Existing zoning along Grand Boulevard is relatively generous in terms of densities, relative to what developers (either retail or residential) are likely to consider for the area, suggesting that local policy is not a significant constraint to redevelopment here.

The three largest available sites are formerly commercial/retail uses fronting Grand Boulevard. Because of the limited retail supply in the Market Area relative to its population and spending power, conversion of those sites to retail would be simpler for developers and would serve an evident local need.

- However, redevelopment as multifamily residential of one or more of the sites would offer advantages of providing additional activation to the street and providing new spending support for existing retail and dining on Grand.
- Redevelopment of any sort on the Albertson's site (though more expensive than adaptive re-use) would allow for better configuration of buildings relative to the street front.

Because of its higher income profile, no major development incentives are available in the Study Area, leaving developers to rely mainly on an unsubsidized profit calculus to drive land assembly and rehab or scrape/rebuild decisions.

- Adding new units to low- and middle-income areas is an obvious and direct route to combatting the city's growing housing affordability problem; however, the creation of new residential inventory *anywhere* in the city will actually help shift the supply/demand equation in favor greater affordability.
- While the Study Area may not need profit-boosting incentives to the same extent as other Spokane neighborhoods, the combination of incentives plus infrastructure investment can be a strong motivating signal to otherwise recalcitrant property owners.
- Expanding the City's MFTE program, in particular, to cover all Spokane neighborhoods could help spur opportunistic infill development in the Study Area -- promoting greater housing diversity, adding needed supply units, and helping to reshape Grand Boulevard in concert with transportation and streetscape improvements.

Grand Boulevard Analysis

49.5

49.5

Q

Find address, parcel, ...

12

12

12

Recommendation for one southbound through lane

1

611

11 12 1

Grand Boulevard Concepts: 29th – 32nd Avenue

Existing Grand Blvd 29th - 32nd



Grand Boulevard Concepts: 29th – 32nd Avenue

Short Term Grand Blvd 29th - 32nd



Work within existing curb lines

Future Grand Blvd 29th - 32nd



Bring curb lines in and add landscaping, trees

Grand Boulevard Street Concepts



Grand Boulevard Design Concept for Open House

Safety, Travel Options, and Streetscape



What's Happening Now? What's Next?

Now

Community Open House - February 27, 2020 2:00 – 8:00 p.m.,

St Mark's Lutheran Church, 316 E 24th

- Interactive stations focused on Grand Boulevard transportation concepts.
- Opportunity to review Draft Market Analysis of existing land use and potential.



Next

- Refine Grand Boulevard concepts and study components based on feedback from February Community Open House.
- Breakdown recommendations into short, medium, and long term build alternatives with estimated costs.
- Present final transportation and land use study to City Council and community.



Stay Involved!



Email <u>grandboulevardplan@spokanecity.org</u> to join the email distribution list for updates or to send your comments and questions

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