

May 12, 2025

Melissa Owen, Planner
City of Spokane
808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
Spokane, WA 99201

RE: Latah Glen Long Plat, Type III Application **Project Narrative**

Dear Melissa,

The intent of this Narrative is to frame the programming of our subdivision and present our project's consistency with City policies, regulations, and those criteria for approvals which align with the City of Spokane's Land Development Code.

Background

On 5/1/2025, the Applicant met with City of Spokane staff for a Pre-Development Conference regarding the Latah Glen Long plat on parcel 25364.0001. As discussed in the meeting, the project is for a 142-lot subdivision over 39.29 acres, with 14 open space tracts. The open space with common areas within the project will amount to approximately 13 acres, which accounts for approximately 28% of the project area. The zoning designation of our parcel lies in the Residential Single Family (R1) zone. The Comprehensive Plan Designation is Residential Low, which works perfectly with our single-family residential programming with the conservation of open space respective to trees, steep slopes, and associated ecological functions.

Access

The project proposes access off S Inland Empire Way for its primary access, and S Marshall Rd for secondary access. The project proposes public roads throughout, internally as Latham St, Saratoga Ave, Kingston St, Walden St, Albany Ave, Hudson St, and Hartford St. A 33-foot-wide roadway width is detailed within our plans, shown in our Public Road Section on our Preliminary Plat exhibit. The East Empire way road section, which provides primary access, is proposed as a 27' road within a 60' ROW. Our internal road sections are also proposed as public, with a 33' road section inside of a 54' ROW, with sidewalks included on both sides of the road (except for the small stretch of road along upper Saratoga Ave on the west side against the slope). In addition to the sidewalks within the plan, there is 10' asphalt path planned on the north side of Saratoga Ave. This path will connect down to the southern boundary of the plat at the southernmost point of Hartford.

Utilities

Dry utilities are proposed within a 10' easement adjacent to the sidewalk, on the lot side of the sidewalk. Water and sewer are proposed to be served by the City of Spokane, and will be under the road. Will serve letters for all wet and dry utilities will be provided in the preliminary plat application.

General Information

The below items relate to City Code and detail project programming and scope in support of Type III Long Plat Applications:

1. *Statement of development objectives. For example, include building square footage and approximate number of residential units (if applicable).*

The Latah Glen Single-Family Residential Development falls within the targeted 4-10 dwelling units per acre density range for the R1 zoning district. Our project proposes 4.63 DU/acre. The minimum lot size in this zone is 1,200 sf; the typical lot size for *this* project is between 4,000 and 7,000 sf. The project meets all performance standards and setback requirements, etc., with development objectives focused on working with the natural environment, topography, vegetation, and vistas.

Describe design goals, site opportunities and constraints, site character, architectural character, and how the project fits within the local context.

Design goals:

- **Meet the minimum net density requirements of 4 units per acre, with a balance towards larger lot sizes in order to maintain the character of the neighborhood, and surrounding area.**
- **Provide primary vehicle access from S Inland Empire Way.**
- **Provide secondary vehicle access to/from S. Marshall Road**
- **Include interconnected system of sidewalks and trails connecting to and within the project (along Latham St, Saratoga Ave, Kingston St, Walden St, Albany Ave, Hudson St, and Hartford St.) up in and around the site to the Fish Lake Trail.**
- **Preserve existing trees and vegetation where possible, especially along slopes in the south and west perimeter of the site creating an increased sense of exposure with a panorama of treelines. The existing trees along the north and east will also be preserved to aid in buffering to S HWY 195, as well as to the development to the north.**

Site Character, Opportunities and Constraints:

The neighborhood is isolated from the overall City roadway system by US 195 to the northeast, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad Right-of-Way to the east southeast, and steep slopes along with west and south perimeter of the site.

The BNSF Right-of-Way currently allows for limited access to some of the properties south of the site via S inland Empire Way. In recent years, there had been discussion of the City extending Inland Empire Way to the south-southeast.

Approximately one third of the site consists of steep slopes, largely populated with trees and other vegetation. The slopes with vegetation naturally buffer the site from the west along much of the S Marshall Road frontage, the south, and a portion of

the RV Village property to the north. We see an opportunity to retain the existing topography and vegetation as a natural buffer in these areas.

Approximately two-thirds of the site contains low to moderate slopes suitable for building. In the recent past, the area was littered with wrecked automobiles and RVs, salvaged for parts from the sites previous use as a salvage yard. Much of the site has now been graded where there was a pole building shop/garage and an attached mobile home unit/office for the auto salvage business; It has since been removed. We see an opportunity to provide housing for the Spokane community and improve area's aesthetic to be more complimentary to the existing neighborhood character.

There is a buildable area at the top of the steep slopes and adjacent to S Marshall Road in the northwest corner of the site where the Block 2 cluster of lots are located. This section is where the secondary roadway access will be located. This road will provide additional access and circulation for residents, as well as for emergency vehicles.

Neighborhood Character:

This isolated neighborhood has an established character which includes rustic, natural surroundings. This area has roadways that deviate from City Design Standards, as either they were developed with a narrower pavement section and/or they do not include sidewalks. Our project will include sidewalks.

The Fish Lake Trail intersects the public right-of-way of S Marshall Road near the southwest corner of the site. This is a major amenity to the project, and asset to the area. We see an opportunity for future residents to access these public rights-of-way as well as the S inland Empire Way public right-of-way via the interconnected system of sidewalks and pathways. The Fish Lake Trail offers an array of recreational opportunities such as hiking, bicycling. Roller blading, running, dog walks, etc.

The proposed project would replace the unsightly and incongruent character of the auto salvage yard and its refuse with a residential community, with character better suited to its naturalistic and woodsy local context.

2. *Note how the proposal addresses issues in the Comprehensive Plan and any other applicable design plans or guidelines; i.e., The Downtown Plan and Design Guidelines.*

City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan elements, goals, and/or policies:

LU1 – Citywide Land Use

Goal: Offer a harmonious blend of opportunities for living, working, recreation, education, shopping, and cultural activities by protecting natural amenities, providing coordinated, efficient, and cost-effective public facilities and utility services, carefully managing both residential and non-residential development and

design, and proactively reinforcing downtown Spokane's role as a vibrant urban center.

- **The project expands single-family living options in the City at a location less than a 5 minute drive from downtown bridging urban living with a more rural character.**
- **The project preserves vegetation within the natural contours of the site.**
- **The project will utilize and improve upon existing public infrastructure.**

LU 1.3 Single-Family Residential Areas

Protect the character of single-family residential neighborhoods by focusing higher intensity land uses in designated Centers and Corridors.

- **A more dense, multifamily living would be desired under this goal. On the other side of the coin, in the same manner, our project protects and improves upon the character of this *near center* isolated neighborhood by replacing auto salvage activities with a community that reflects the existing neighborhood aesthetic, as well as provides housing.**

LU2 – Public Realm Enhancement

LU 2.1 Public Realm Features

Encourage features that improve the appearance of development, paying attention to how projects function to encourage social interaction and relate to and enhance the surrounding urban and natural environment.

- **The project capitalizes on its unique topography and natural beauty by emphasizing pedestrian connectivity as an amenity, which encourages social interaction in this natural environment; this type of environment heightens the sense of community and optimizes opportunity for neighboring/neighborhood interaction.**

LU 3 EFFICIENT LAND USE

Goal: Promote the efficient use of land by the use of incentives, density and mixed-use development in proximity to retail businesses, public services, places of work, and transportation systems.

- **The project meets minimum net density requirements for the Residential Single-Family Zone.**

LU 3.1 Coordinated and Efficient Land Use

Encourage coordinated and efficient growth and development through infrastructure financing and construction programs, tax and regulatory incentives, and by focusing growth in areas where adequate services and facilities exist or can be economically extended.

- **The project will help efficiently expand City infrastructure through dedication of the S Inland Empire Way ROW. The Project will provide impact fees to help facilitate additional service capacity which increase for police, fire and parks. And, most importantly for this section of the LU Code, will improve City tax revenues. The Project will provide tax revenue for the City to enhance public safety services and other City objectives through property taxes, and systemic economic growth via new community development. In addition, there are no health, safety and environmental problems with the development. The Project contains no potentially hazardous areas, no streams, ponds or wetlands, no identified unstable rock formation or landslide areas, and no unstable soils. Regarding S Inland Empire Way and the wetland buffer - this section of the ROW is to be an improvement for the City, and is only subject to the wetland buffer at this access point. Finally, there are no areas of critical concern or interest on the Property. This Property is a prime candidate for residential development.**

LU 4.4 Connections

Form a well-connected network which provides safe, direct and convenient access for all users, including pedestrians, bicycles, and automobiles, through site design for new development and redevelopment.

- **The project includes a reserved area for potential dedication and expansion of the S Inland Empire Way ROW. And, as underscored above and throughout, will connect pedestrians to the highly valued Fish Lake Trail, which is a City recreational amenity supporting bicycle mobility and circulation.**

LU 5 DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

Goal: Promote development in a manner that is attractive, complementary, and compatible with other land uses.

- **Though currently vacant, the proposed project would replace the previous use of an auto parts salvage yard with a single-family development that compliments the neighborhood character. This neighborhood will be complimentary to the surrounding wooded landscape, with trees preserved where possible, most notably lining the boundary of the site as a buffer and framing the development.**

LU 5.4 Natural Features and Habitat Protection

Ensure development is accomplished in a manner that protects significant natural features and wildlife habitat.

- **The proposed project retains steep slope, naturally treed areas in lieu of a built landscape buffer wherever possible.**

H 1 HOUSING CHOICE AND DIVERSITY

Goal: Provide opportunities for a variety of housing types that is safe and

affordable for all income levels to meet the diverse housing needs of current and future residents.

- **The project represents a median target market, for needed housing, that increases housing stock diversity in the City of Spokane.**

3. *Describe any departures from design standards and note how the proposed alternatives are equal to or better than standard*

None

4. *Description of Design Evolution. Describe what design alternatives have been explored, why choices have been made, and any limiting factors. This description can be written and/or graphic.*

The design evolution for this project began with a manufactured home park with a clubhouse area, 157 manufactured home lease spaces, and roadways in the same general configuration as our current single family home layout. Due to various factors regarding land use compatibility, aesthetics, and market conditions, the project moved to a single family detached program.

The site design went through multiple iterations in layout; there were a few early versions with internal trails in between the lots which were jettisoned in the more pushed final drafts; this was a decision leant toward allowing the sidewalks to be more accessible and pragmatic, with a focus on the connection to the greater surrounding areas, specifically the Fish Lake Trail and those accessible nature areas.

The lot sizes, frontages, setbacks and other performance standards were aimed at code compliance. Compatibility with surrounding land uses were driven by zoning regulations, which we aligned our project with.

Thank you for your time in review. The applicant respectfully requests your approval of our project upon agency review, and our future hearing.

Sincerely,



Clifton Trimble, Land Use Planner; Storhaug Engineering