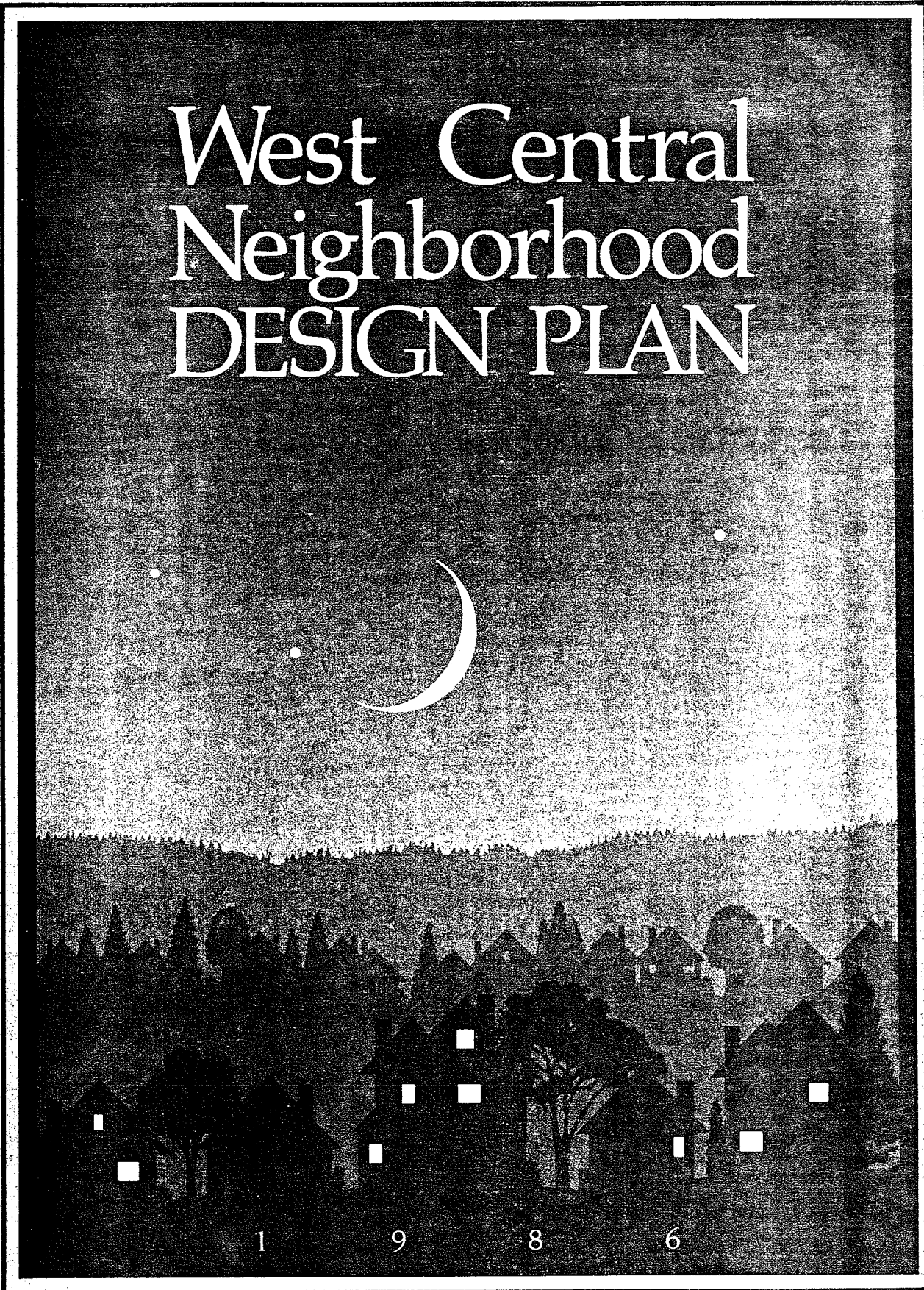


West Central Neighborhood DESIGN PLAN



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Bill Bell / Planning Dept.

**We plan today so that we may
recognize tomorrow when it arrives . . .
and in that recognition,
feel good with what we have done.**





Acknowledgments and Credits

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Preface

Planning is nothing more than working to increase probability of desired future events. In this, the West Central Neighborhood Design Plan, the people of the West Central Neighborhood attempt to add certainty that the neighborhood "evolves" along desirable patterns. The Design Plan prescribes the form of future growth and recommends public improvements to enhance the neighborhood as a place to live, work and play.

This Design Plan is a "tool" for decision-making. The City Council, City boards and commissions, and City officials should utilize the Plan as the primary source of guidance to make determinations on private development proposals or public capital improvements. This guidance is in the form of policies which prescribe improvements in land use, circulation, community facilities, design and housing.

The Plan is also a source of information to the private sector about public expectations for private development. It provides background information about the development environment and expresses the intent and application of public policy in great detail. Along with the Zoning Ordinance and other development regulations, the Plan should be referred to by property owners and developers in the formulation of development plans.

To the Neighborhood, incorporation of the Design Plan into the City's Comprehensive Plan provides a measure of assurance that the neighborhood will grow in an orderly manner with relative invulnerability to unanticipated development, a major source of community conflict. The Plan injects the Neighborhood's interests into the dynamics of City development.

West Central, as an inner-city neighborhood, is a valuable community asset that warrants careful treatment under the stewardship of public policy and regulation. The West Central Neighborhood Design Plan provides both the detailed policy and basis for regulation necessary to meet this obligation.



How To Use This Plan

The West Central Design Plan consists of four main sections: Plan Summary, Neighborhood Profile, Neighborhood Plan Elements, and Implementation.

The Summary section provides an overview of the plan's development and the most significant policy guidance. This section should meet the informational needs of readers who only have a "casual" interest in the neighborhood's future.

The Profile section which follows provides a more detailed look at the neighborhood from its beginnings to the current situation. In particular, it provides insight into the formulation of policies in the Plan Elements section. People who wish to understand the neighborhood in both physical and social terms will find help in this section.

The Plan Elements section contains the proposals, stated as policies, for improving the neighborhood. Land use, circulation, community facilities, housing, and design are the plan elements which are addressed. The plan elements are divided into major activity categories and further organized to provide policy guidance by topics which identify issues or needs. Each policy is followed by a discussion paragraph which provides further detail on the purpose or application of the policy. These discussions are intended to be read as part of the policy statement. Property and business owners, residents, investors, developers, public officials and decision-making bodies should utilize this section for guidance on development.

The final chapter, Implementation discusses the activities, including public regulation and capital improvements, which will direct the neighborhood towards large-scale revitalization. Mechanisms to control land use, density, intensity, and site development are presented at the beginning of this section to highlight provisions of the City's Zoning, Shoreline Use, and Environmental Policy ordinances which apply to West Central. A map of neighborhood zoning is included. A second map indicates the Shorelines boundary and other potential environmental constraints which could further restrict development of neighborhood properties. The Chapter also discusses historic preservation activities which relate to many of the policies for neighborhood design, character, and appearance. The Implementation chapter will be of interest to anyone with a long-term development interest in the Neighborhood and of necessity to those with imminent plans for development.

The preparation of this document was funded with a Community Development Block Grant from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, under the provisions of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1977, as amended.



Table of Contents

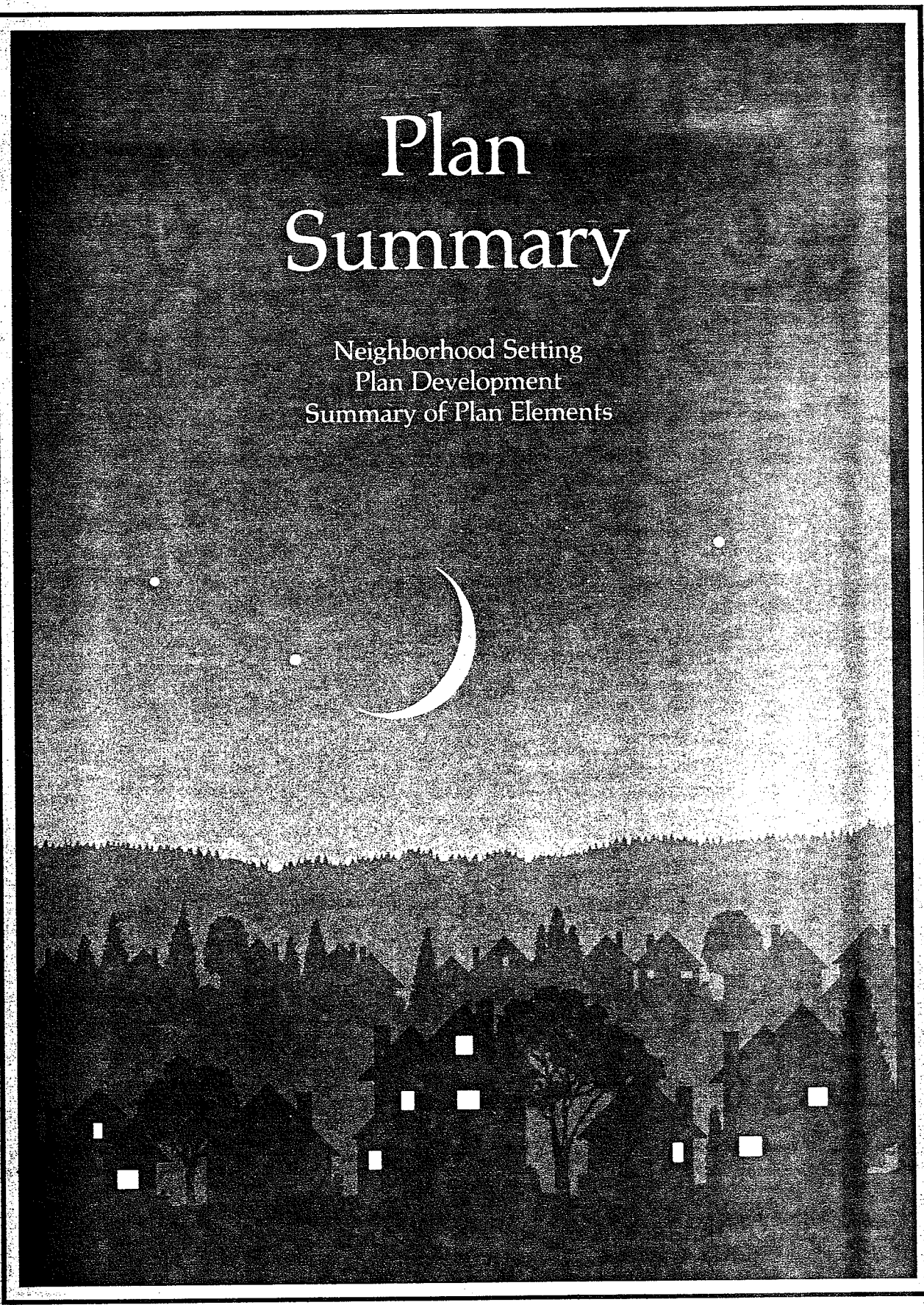
Acknowledgments and Credits	i
Preface	ii
How to Use this Plan	iii
Plan Summary	
Neighborhood Setting.	2
Plan Development.	3
Summary of Plan Elements.	4
Neighborhood Profile	8
Neighborhood Plan Elements	
Land Use	
Overview	19
Residential Policies	20
Commercial Policies.	24
Mixed Use Policies	26
Circulation	
Overview	31
Vehicle Policies	31
Pedestrian/Bicycle Policies.	36
Transit Policies	42
Community Facilities	
Overview	47
Community Facilities Policies.	48
Housing	
Overview	56
Housing Policies	56
Design	
Overview	62
Character Feature Policies	62
Design Integrity Policies.	65
Neighborhood Design Concept.	67
Implementation	
Overview	70
Zoning Regulations	71
Project Compliance	71
Zoning	71
Zoning Agreements & Plans-in-Lieu.	72
Shoreline Use Regulations.	73
Historic Districts	74
Historic Preservation Regulations & Procedures	74
Shoreline Use Regulations, Environmental Concerns, Floodplain Regulations.	75

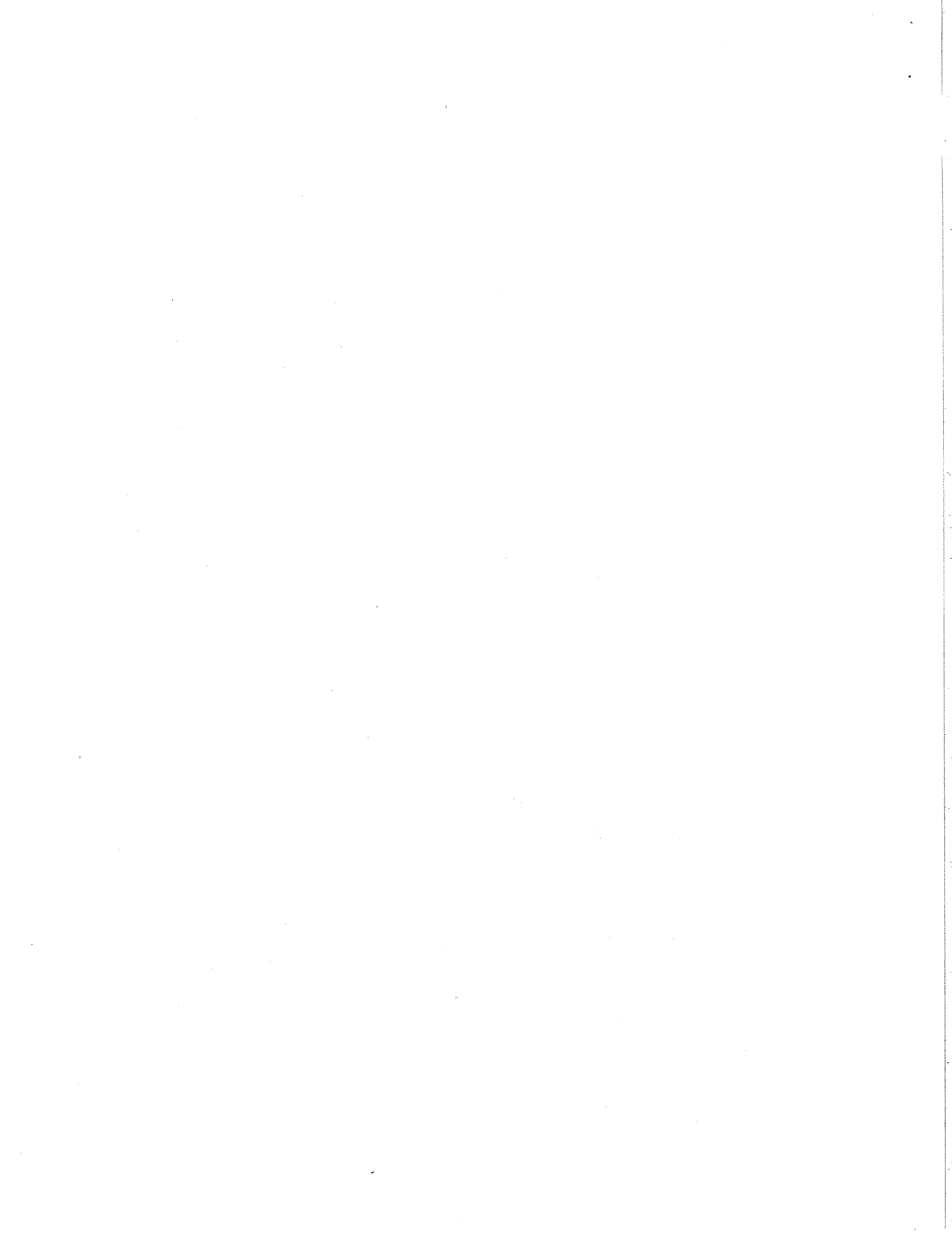
List of Figures

	<u>Page No.</u>
Figure 1 Land Use Plan	29
Figure 2 Circulation	45
Figure 3 Community Facilities.	54
Figure 4 Housing	60
Figure 5 Neighborhood Design Concept	68
Figure 6 Zoning.	76

Plan Summary

Neighborhood Setting
Plan Development
Summary of Plan Elements

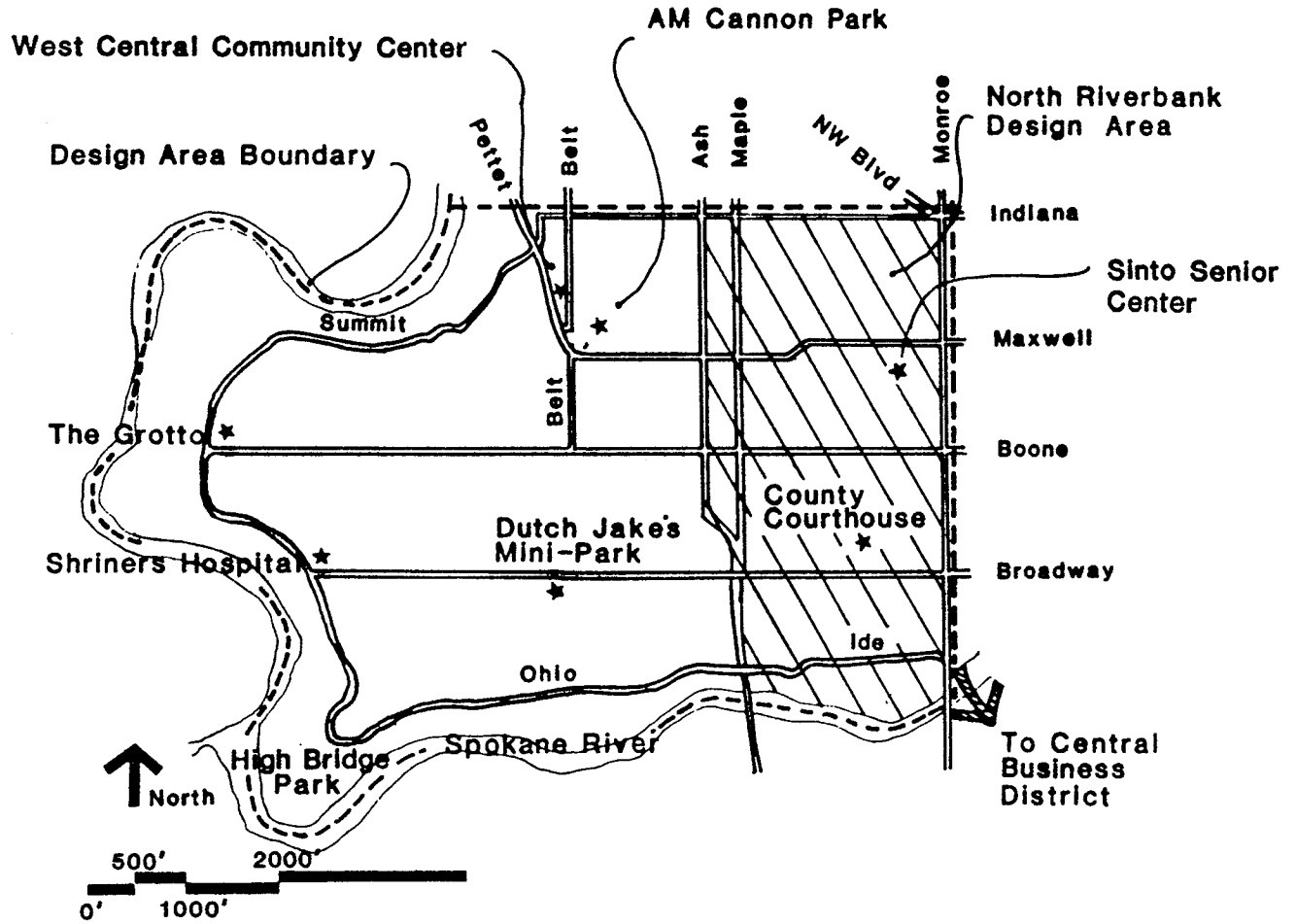




Neighborhood Setting

West Central is one of Spokane's oldest, inner-city neighborhoods, with its origin dating back to the late 1880's. West Central is bounded on the south and west by the Spokane River, on the east by Monroe Street and on the north by Indiana Avenue. The neighborhood is conveniently located only a few blocks from Spokane's Central Business District and is across the river from Peaceful Valley.

West Central neighborhood is noted for several outstanding community features including the County Courthouse and The Grotto. Though primarily a residential neighborhood, it also has several commercial areas, and a small light industrial district. The eastern one-third of the neighborhood, between Ash and Monroe, also lies within the North Riverbank Design Area.



Neighborhood Setting Map

Plan Development

West Central was one of the City's first neighborhoods to get formally involved in detailed urban design planning. In 1978 members of the Neighborhood Steering Committee were appointed to the citizens' task force overseeing the North Riverbank Urban Design Study, a project which included the eastern one-third of West Central. As urban design activity in the City evolved into a formal program area within the Department of Community Development, West Central looked forward to its chance to complete a design plan for the entire Neighborhood. The Steering Committee committed CD funds for a Phase I policy plan in the 1981 program year, and work on the plan commenced that fall. The City Plan Commission appointed a 12-member task force comprised of neighborhood and citywide interests to guide preparation of the plan.

The West Central policy plan work program included three consultant service contracts to address housing, industrial development and design issues. The West Central Housing Market Analysis, prepared by Haworth and Anderson Inc. of Spokane, is a primary basis for task force recommendations for residential land use and zoning and strategies for home rehabilitation. A stronger neighborhood economy and increased local employment opportunities were the focus of the Industrial Potential Study, an economic analysis of underutilized industrial and heavy commercial property in the neighborhood conducted by Research Economics (Spokane). An overall conceptual neighborhood design which integrates the neighborhood's functional elements and accentuates its positive sensory elements was prepared by Jongejan, Gerrard, McNeal of Bellevue, Washington and incorporated into the plan as a framework for future development.

The Design Plan Task Force and CD Steering Committee hosted several neighborhood workshops and meetings in 1982 - 1984 and surveyed all neighborhood residences and businesses via a mail-out questionnaire to solicit ideas from the public. From this information, a profile of existing conditions, and technical analysis by City staff, the Task Force prepared its recommendations for neighborhood improvement as the first draft of this Plan. The Task Force draft plan was submitted to the City Plan Commission on June 11, 1986. Following public hearing, the CPC transmitted a revised draft plan to the City Council for adoption. The Council also considered public comments on the draft plan in public hearing. On August 18, 1986 the Council adopted The West Central Neighborhood Design Plan as an official element of the City's Comprehensive Plan.



Summary of Plan Elements

The West Central Neighborhood Design Plan provides direction for the neighborhood's entry into its second hundred years. The Plan consists of policy statements which guide public and private development in pursuit of a quality, inner-city neighborhood environment. This guidance is provided in five major categories of neighborhood improvement:

Land Use The Land Use policies are the basis for the designation of zone districts throughout the neighborhood, i.e., these policies guide zoning decisions on how land may be used by owners. This plan covers the area west of Ash St.; the area east of Ash St. is covered by the plans and regulations of the North Riverbank Design Area.

West of Ash Street, the Design Plan promotes a primarily residential environment, with an emphasis on revitalizing the lower-density district in the west center of the neighborhood and on maintaining the high quality of the single family districts in the west and northwest. An area of medium density residential use along College Ave. creates a transition to a mixed-use district of residential/office use on vacant railroad land at the neighborhood's south end. A large district of developing high density residential use in the heart of the neighborhood is encouraged to continue.

Low-rise office development is accommodated along the west side of Ash St. and in two mixed use districts. Local business needs are directed to concentrations of use at three designated Neighborhood Shopping Districts. More intensive commercial/warehouse use is mixed with office use in a "commercial park" proposed for old industrial land along the abandoned Sinto St. rail spur.

Circulation Policies for vehicular circulation propose limited, new arterial facilities in the southern portion of West Central and encourage general improvements to arterial streetscapes to further enhance travelled routes and adjacent developments. Street and alley paving is specified for all unimproved local access routes to benefit air quality, facilitate circulation and reduce maintenance costs. Local access streets and alleys that are not required for public circulation are identified as possible properties for public or private redevelopment. A westward extension of Northriver Drive around the south and west boundaries of the neighborhood is specified to increase motorists' access to views of the river valley.

Pedestrian/bicycle policies address circulation between activity nodes within the neighborhood, as well as travel to designations in areas on West Central's periphery. Although a fully improved system of sidewalks is cited as the primary pedestrian facility, specialized routes and grade-separated improvements are also proposed. This chapter also promotes safety, aesthetics and convenience in the design of all pedestrian improvements. Public transit is promoted as an increasingly important means of transportation for neighborhood residents. The plan identifies changes in routes and facilities that will be necessary to respond to the increases in land use intensity and population density that are encouraged by the Plan. An array of bus stop facilities that contribute to rider safety and comfort is presented as a cost-effective alternative to full-enclosure shelters.



Community, Facilities

Neighborhood residents' access to active and passive recreational activity is promoted by the Plan. Improvements to neighborhood parks, mini-parks, and playgrounds are identified, including the expansion of A.M. Cannon Park to nearly triple its current size. Public acquisition of riverfront lands and development for passive recreation within a "naturalized" environment is the neighborhood's major open space interest.

Opportunities to enjoy views within the neighborhood are promoted to increase visual access to the amenity of the river valley and other features of the cityscape.

The Plan recognizes the contributions that the West Central Community Center and Sinto Senior Center make to the economic and social revitalization of the neighborhood. Expansion of these facilities is tied to periodic analysis of needs, costs and service benefits. A short-range priority is to physically integrate the Community Center site with A.M. Cannon Park.

Housing The deteriorating quality of West Central's housing supply is the most significant detriment to the Neighborhood's living environment. The Housing Element addresses the Neighborhood's most pressing housing issues by encouraging new construction and rehabilitation of housing units. Some Housing Policies support physical improvements through public and private investment, while others encourage public actions such as changes in development regulations to effect improvement.

The Hearing Policies also attempt to balance the need to meet the special group housing requirements for special client groups against the Neighborhood's concern about the proliferation of these facilities in West Central.

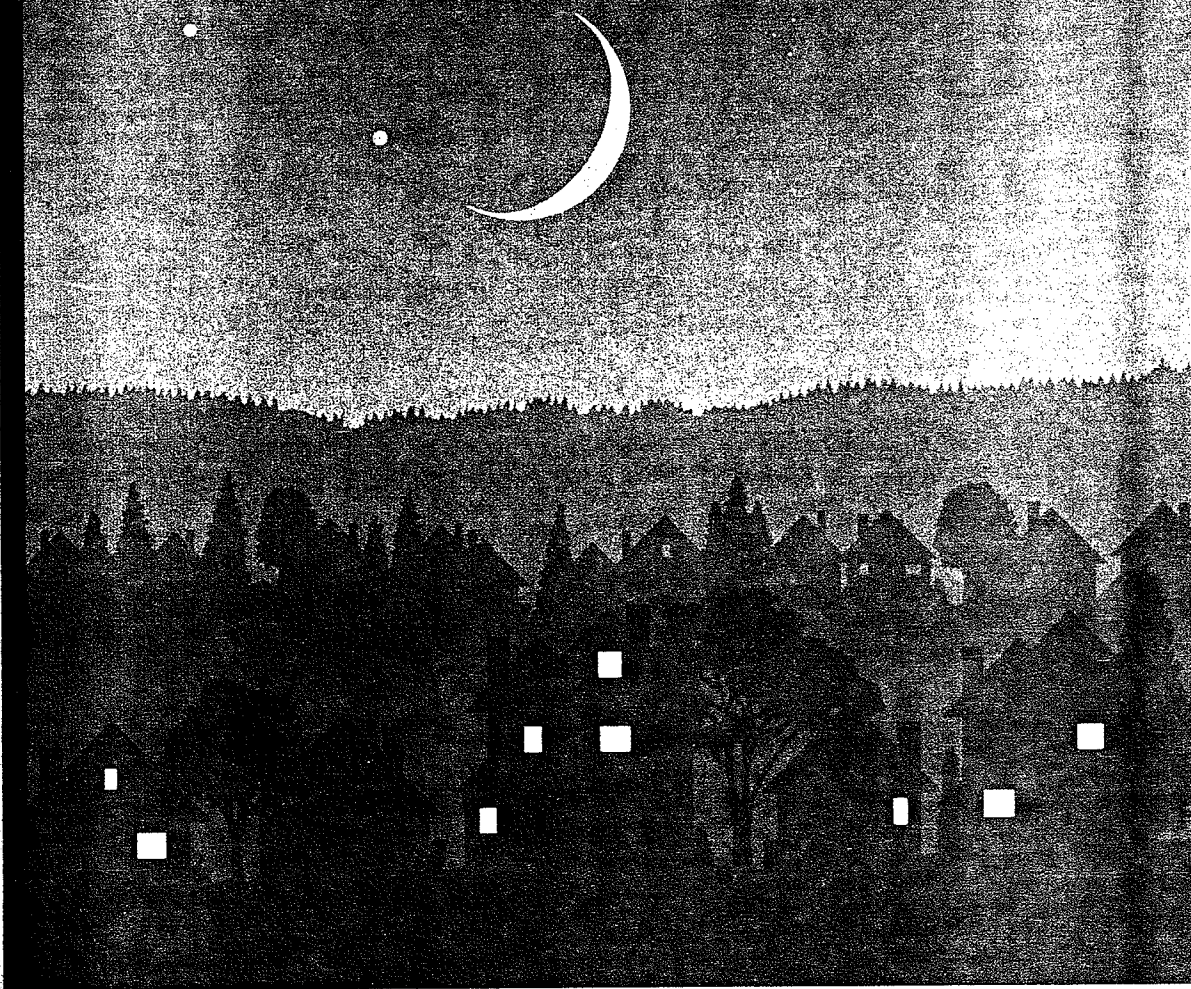
Design The Design Element "composes" the physical development of the neighborhood to enhance human experience. It plans the functional relationship between land use, circulation, and community facilities to insure that these "parts" of urban development best serve neighborhood purposes. Typically, the desire is to organize these parts in the interests of health and safety, but factors of facility and convenience also influence the plan. The Design also promotes aesthetic quality . . . visual harmony, textural interest, and amenities which influence behavior and perceptions. Many Design policies pertain to the visual character of development, to both image and identity.

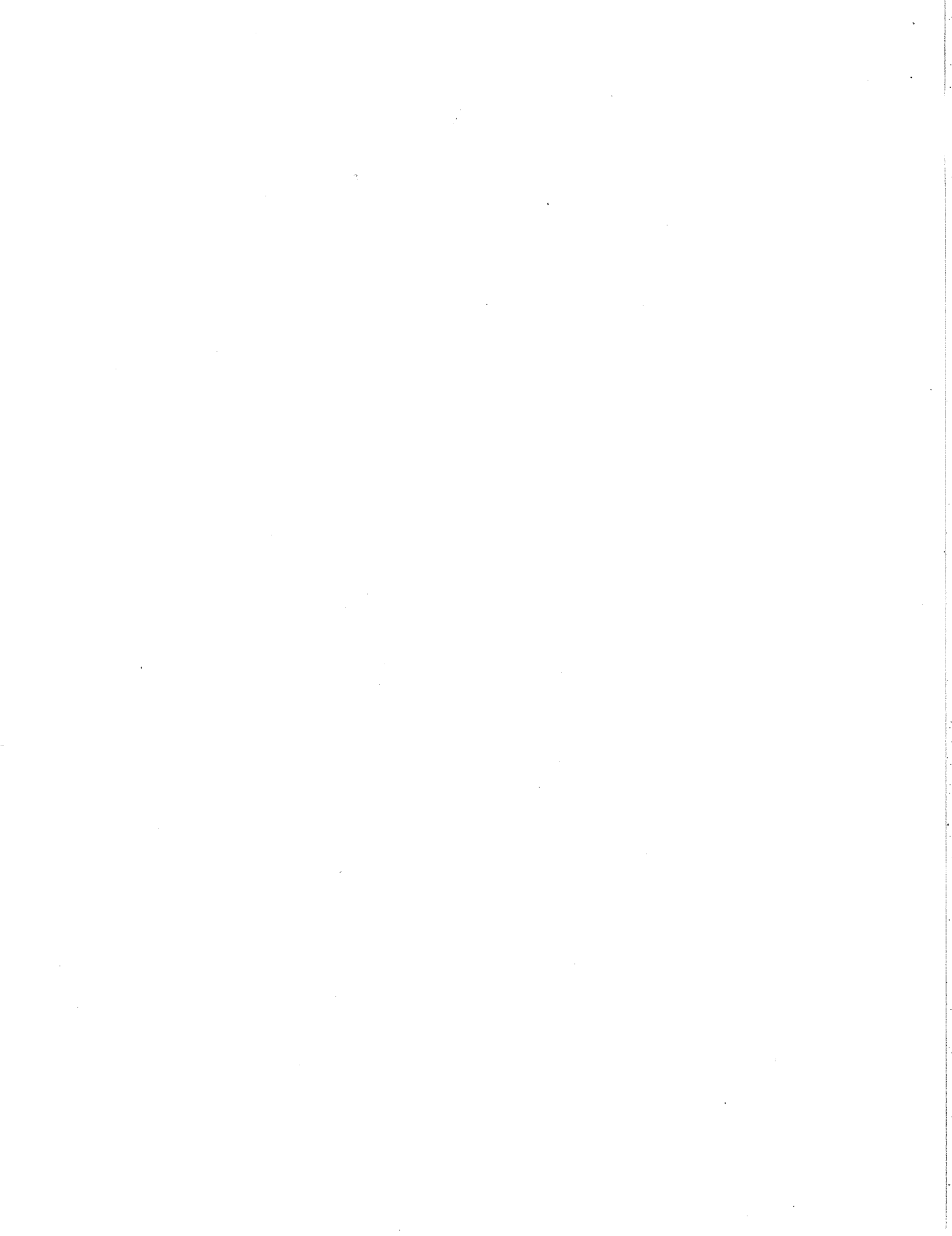
The integration of function and aesthetics is pursued in the sections on "Design Integrity Policies" and "Neighborhood Design Concept". The Design Integrity policies are site-specific and address the need for new development to occur with sensitivity to landforms, vegetation, surrounding properties, and the neighborhood context. The Neighborhood Design Concept is included to provide a framework for developing the component elements of the Design Plan. It is a graphic depiction of the integral relationships between these planning elements, promoting comprehensive neighborhood revitalization rather than piecemeal redevelopment. The Design Concept emphasizes the amenities of the Neighborhood to utilize these assets as the foundations of an enhanced urban environment.



Neighborhood Profile

History
Historic Antecedents
Existing Land Use
Current Zoning
Existing Circulation
Existing Community Facilities
Character and Appearance



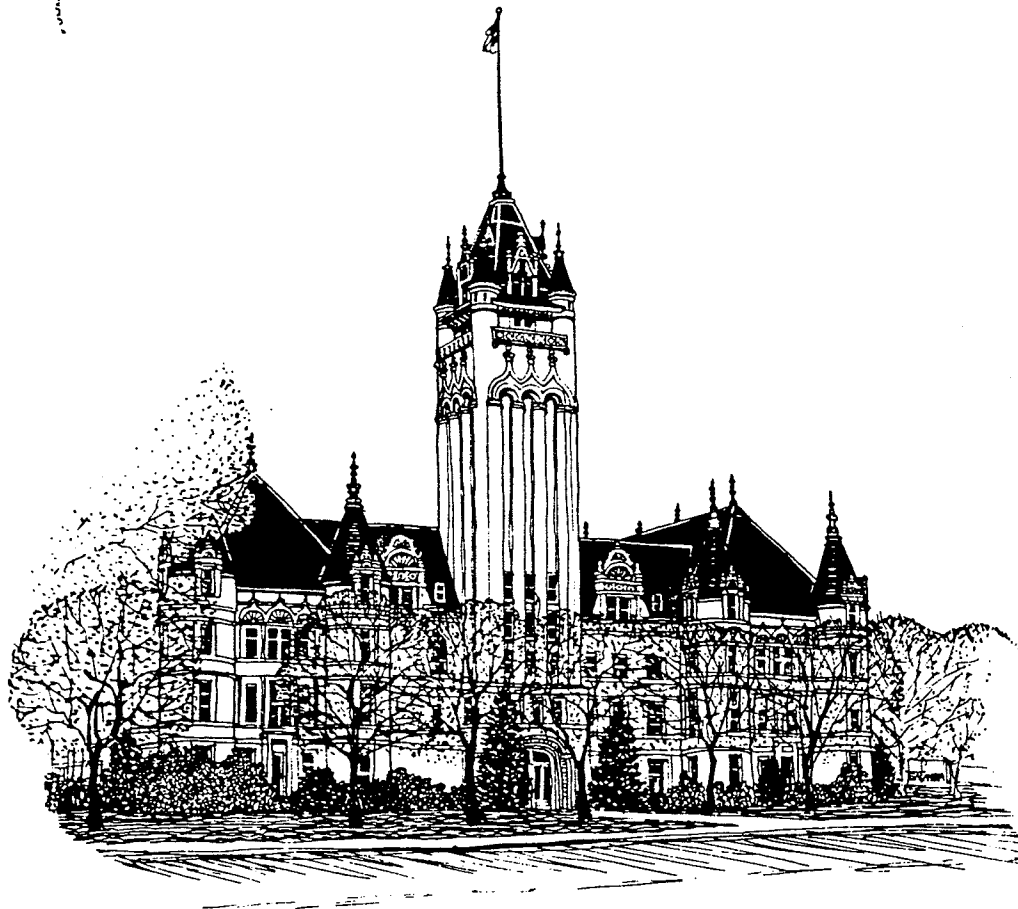


History

The West Central Neighborhood's proximity to the Spokane River and downtown promoted its development in the early part of the City's history. In the 1880s railroads dominated the neighborhood's initial development with major facilities in the vicinity of present-day Cochran and Ide. In the late 1880s religious organizations actively built churches and started Spokane College in the southern portion of the neighborhood. By 1909 several businesses and some industry had located in the area. Western Soap Company concluded its history of over 70 years at Sinto and Ash when its facilities were destroyed by fire in 1981.

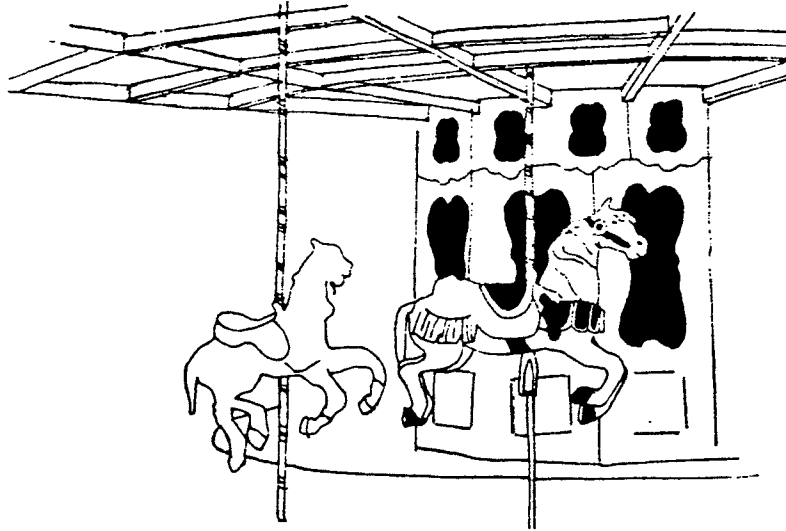
The neighborhood's pre-1900 history is still represented by structures throughout the neighborhood. Concentrations of these old buildings stand along the west side of Monroe just north of the bridge, in the vicinity of the Sinto rail spur west of Ash, and along Broadway west of its intersection with Ash. Many turn-of-the-century homes dot the neighborhood.

Three developments in the neighborhood's early history have contributed to the City's functional and cultural base. The Spokane County Courthouse, now the center of an expanding county government complex, was constructed in 1895. Its outstanding French Renaissance architecture lists it on the National Register of Historic Structures. Natatorium Park occupied the large "bench" of land along the



Spokane County Courthouse

river at the neighborhood's west end from the early 1880s to its closure in 1968. The park's 1909 Loeff carousel, a cherished public entertainment, was saved from Nat's demolition and relocated to its current Riverfront Park setting in 1975. The Shriners' Hospital for Crippled Children, built in 1937 on Summit Blvd. at Broadway, continues to provide medical care services to the region.




Loeff Carousel

Historic Antecedents to the Neighborhood's Present Form

West Central's early development was not spared the Spokane River's influence on the growth of the pioneer city. Until the first bridge crossed the river in 1881, the only transportation link to the north bank was a small ferry in the vicinity of Hangman Creek. In 1888 a cable car connection to Ingersoll's Park, a popular picnic area, traversed the river on the new wooden Monroe Street bridge and traveled through West Central on Boone Avenue. Later a second cable car line was added along Broadway Avenue, also serving the park which had been named Twickenham and then renamed Natatorium. Boone and Broadway Avenues, both designated arterials, continue as main transportation routes to the west end of the neighborhood. After the failure of several wooden or steel structures, the bridge connection to the north bank at Monroe Street was stabilized with the completion of the present concrete structure in 1912.

The Union Pacific Railroad, determined to show the City that steel was a suitable bridge material, constructed steel spans across the river at the Hangman Creek confluence (the "High Bridge") and at Monroe Street in 1914. UP purchased the Spokane College property to site operational facilities for the new rail line. Both steel bridges remained in service until the early 1970s when railroad operations were consolidated along a new route on the south side of the river. This relocation of UP trackage produced the largest vacant land ownership in the neighborhood today, a 57.6 acre parcel stretching along the top of the north bank from Monroe to Summit.



The early railroads played a role in the development of other portions of the neighborhood. Great Northern brought its main line through town on a route just south of Bridge Avenue, which paralleled the UP line along Ohio. One high steel trestle crossed the river downstream from the UP "High Bridge" and another crossed adjacent to the Post Street bridge to the main depot on Havermale Island. These trestles and trackage were also demolished as a part of rail trackage consolidations in the early 1970s. Some of the surplus GN land (BN by the time of abandonment) between Adams and Monroe was subsequently sold to Spokane County to add to the Spokane County Courthouse complex site. Another GN parcel on Cedar at Ide is the site of the new Washington State Court of Appeals building.

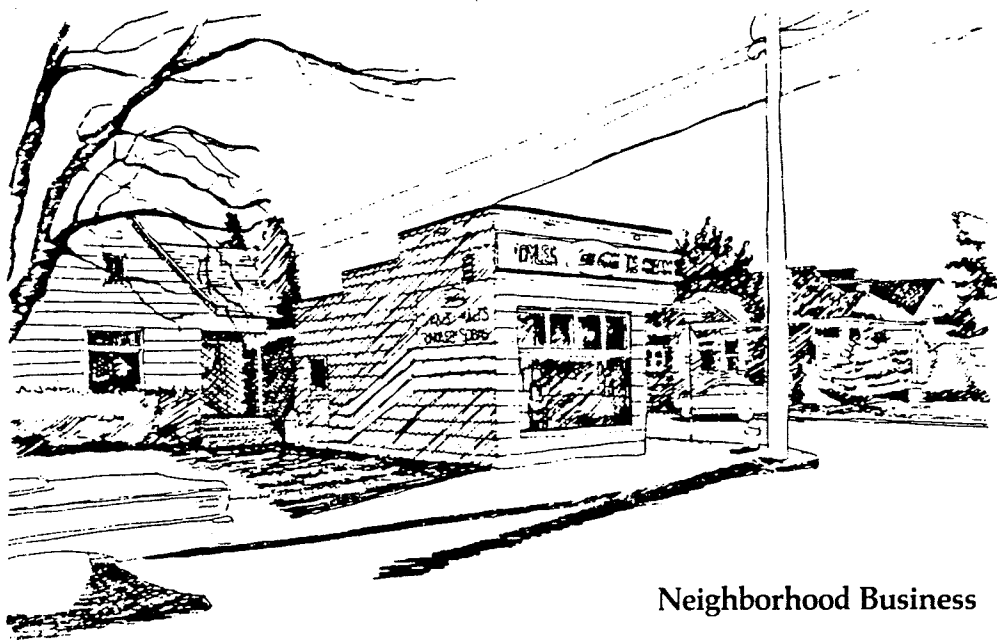
The Sinto Street rail spur, now served by UP but owned by BN, west of Howard Street was constructed as a branch line down the Spokane River valley past Nine Mile. Its route through the neighborhood, now terminating at Belt Street, can be followed along the terrace of land above Pettet and Downriver Drives. This spur is flanked by heavy commercial/light industrial uses from Monroe Street west to Belt Street, and some of these businesses still utilize rail service. BN, however has applied to the ICC for abandonment of the spur, presenting an opportunity for redevelopment of several large land parcels.

In 1881, eight years before statehood, the territorial legislature transferred the county seat from Cheney to Spokane. In 1895 County government took up residency in the new Courthouse on Broadway. Public transit has had a presence at its current site north of the Courthouse since 1900 when the Washington Water Power Street Railway System, a consolidation of five privately held operations, built a two-story brick car barn at Boone and Adams. Between 1931 and 1936 the company phased out the streetcars in favor of motor buses and continued to expand facilities on the site. In November 1984 the current public transit operator, Spokane Transit Authority, broke ground on a new multi-million dollar operations and maintenance facility, which required the demolition of all existing structures on the Boone Avenue site. The new operations will also expand to largely vacant land north of Boone. The area bounded by Monroe, Cedar, Ide and the Sinto rail spur is now dominated by County government buildings and Spokane Transit Authority facilities. Recent redevelopment activity in the residential area to the west of the Courthouse has been dominated by the conversion of homes to private office uses associated with government activities.

As early as the 1930s, City officials considered another north-south river crossing for vehicles downstream from Monroe Street. Initially the planned route was aligned to Oak Street, but ultimately the design evolved to the Maple Street bridge aligned to the Maple/Ash couplet on the north bank. The project's completion in 1957 provided a major route through the northwest part of town, created a new corridor of commercial uses, and defined residential subareas on either side of the couplet.

Existing Land Use

West Central is a predominantly residential neighborhood with nonresidential uses in the southeast corner and stretched along major transportation corridors. Low density residential use occupies most land in the western half of the neighborhood and along its northern edge. Higher density residential use, in the form of new



Neighborhood Business

apartments and home conversions, predominates at the center of the neighborhood, the area bounded by Chestnut, Sharp, Adams, and Bridge. The County government complex and STA facilities consume most land in the southeast corner, and vacant railroad land sits along the neighborhood's entire southern edge. General commercial uses front on Monroe, community businesses are sited along Maple and Ash, and neighborhood businesses occupy dispersed sites on Broadway and Boone.

Current Zoning

West Central's pattern of zone districts reflects its inner-city history. Residential zones predominate, and zoning generally allows more intensive development in the eastern and southern portions of the neighborhood, which are closer to the Central Business District, and along the long-established Monroe and Maple/Ash high volume traffic routes. Light industrial zones flank the Sinto rail spur and cover the railroad properties along Ohio.

The R1 and R2 low-density residential zones, allowing single-family homes and duplexes, cover the intermittent private ownership and major public ownership along the riverbank below Ohio and Summit, an area planned exclusively for public open space. These zones also apply to the residential area in the neighborhood's northwest corner.

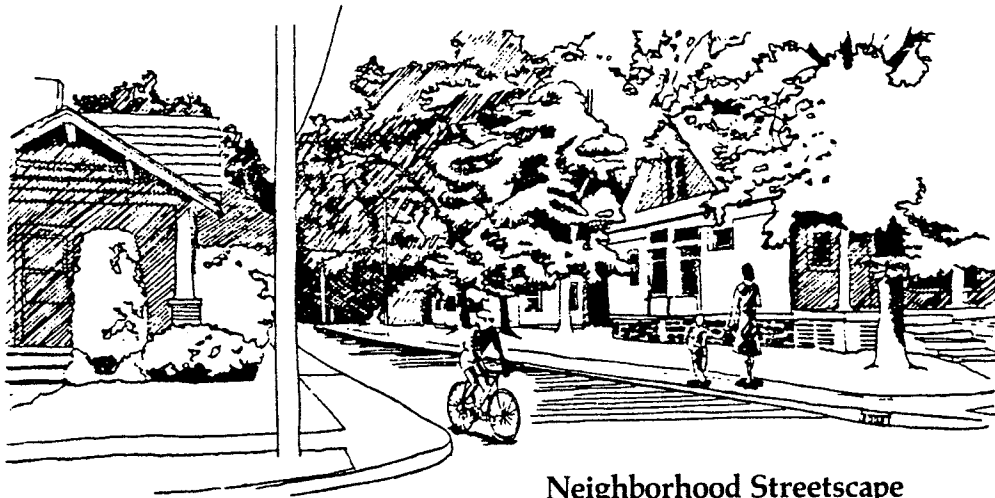
R3 and R4 zoning to accommodate medium and high-density apartment development occurs in the northeast and central portions of the neighborhood. The only residential/office zoning, allowing higher density multi-family and offices, is the large R0-ID zone district abutting the Courthouse/STA area on the west.

The eastern third of the neighborhood, between Ash and Monroe, is within the North Riverbank Design Area and regulated entirely by D (design) zones. B2-1D and B2-D zones control development along the Maple/Ash and Monroe commercial corridors, along the riverbank and in the County government center. The only C1 commercial zone is the C1-1D district covering the northern portion of the County complex and the STA site. An M1-1D low-rise office/light industrial zone lies generally between Boone and the Sinto rail spur, adjacent to the STA site on the northwest. The northern portion of the Design Area, generally between the rail spur and Indiana, is zoned R2-D to revitalize and maintain this predominantly low-density residential subarea.

Four B1 Neighborhood Business zones are located at dispersed locations west of Chestnut. Two of these small districts include neighborhood scale grocery stores which are the only grocery stores in the neighborhood.


Existing Circulation

For its present development West Central is well-served by arterials for vehicular circulation and by local streets for access to property. Monroe Street and the Maple/Ash couplet are the only north-south arterials, but they are adequate for the current volumes of through traffic between downtown and the north/northwest



Neighborhood Streetscape

areas of the City. East-west arterial service is provided at good intervals through the neighborhood on Broadway, Boone, Maxwell/Pettet and Indiana. All developed property in the neighborhood is well accessed by local streets. However, there are no maintained streets through the large undeveloped railroad properties between Bridge and Ohio, and much of Ohio Street and Summit Blvd. adjacent to this land is unpaved. The other two areas still lacking paved streets are the "Lower Crossing" residential pocket and parts of the industrial district along the Sinto rail spur.



Pedestrian circulation is generally safe and convenient in the residential areas of the neighborhood on the established system of sidewalks which accompanies the grid street pattern. The major discontinuities in this system occur within the industrial area along the Sinto rail spur, on the perimeter of the large vacant railroad property, along much of Summit Blvd. and on Pettet Drive and residential streets in the vicinity of the Community Center. Throughout the neighborhood the age of sidewalk improvements is manifest in widespread deterioration. The greatest potential for car-pedestrian accidents occurs where primary pedestrian routes cross arterials, in the vicinity of Holmes and Bryant Schools, and where Cannon, Dutch Jake's and Skeet-So-Mish Parks are adjacent to arterials.

While there are limited improvements dedicated to enhancing bicycling in the neighborhood, bicyclists can travel through West Central on several arterials which accommodate bicycles safely. Pettet Drive and Summit Blvd. are also important streets for the scenic vistas of the river valley they provide recreational riders. A separated bicycle/jogging asphalt path runs a short distance adjacent to Summit Blvd. between Bridge and Ohio. Bike route signs direct cyclists along the Pettet/Summit route and also in both directions on Maxwell Avenue. A route on Belt from Pettet to Northwest Blvd. is signed near Belt's intersection with these arterials. The Sinto rail spur trackage, proposed for removal under abandonment proceedings, poses a problem for bicyclists traveling the Maple-Ash, Boone, or Monroe arterial routes.

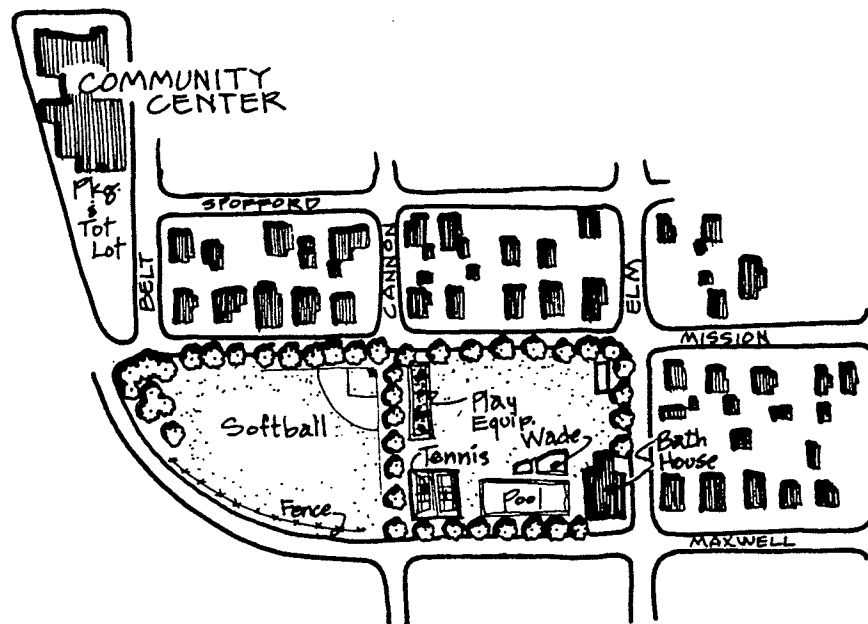
The neighborhood is well served by public transit on three regular bus routes which provide access to buses within three blocks of almost all neighborhood homes and businesses. Buses operate on short interval headways for convenient travel between neighborhood locations and downtown. There are no permanent bus shelters along these routes, but STA is pursuing shelter construction at two north Monroe locations, at Belt and Mission by the Community Center, and at Broadway and "A" Street near the Shriners' Hospital.

Existing Community Facilities

West Central Neighborhood enjoys many community facilities which contribute to an attractive living environment. The major City investments are in A. M. Cannon Park and swimming pool, extensive ownership along the north bank of the river including the north portion of High Bridge Park, and the new West Central Community Center (WCCC), one of only three such facilities in the City. Dutch Jake's and Skeet-So-Mish mini-parks are smaller public investments which meet important neighborhood recreation needs.

A.M. Cannon Park is one of the City's most heavily used neighborhood parks. the park's recently renovated swimming pool/wading pool facilities contribute to the park's attractiveness to children and families, and the softball diamond is used by teams from all over the City. Much of the children's play apparatus is antiquated. The park grounds exhibit severe soil compaction with associated turf and drainage problems, testaments to the park's heavy use.

Dutch Jake's and Skeet-So-Mish mini-parks were developed with neighborhood Community Development funds in the late 1970's. Dutch Jake's, sitting on three lots in the southern part of the neighborhood, has play apparatus for small children, a basketball court for older youth, and picnic tables. Skeet-So-Mish is on a smaller interior block site in the NE part of the neighborhood and includes play apparatus for smaller children.



Existing Cannon Park

Character and Appearance

Much of West Central's character is a reflection of the neighborhood's past. Homes have classic features, including one or two stories, hip roofs and gables, wood siding and window frames and large front porches. When the residential streets were first established, street trees were routinely planted, but since then many have died or have been removed so that the quality of tree-lined streets has been lost in most parts of the neighborhood. The change in composition of residents from owners to renters is reflected in the negligence of property and the increase in automobile congestion. It is not uncommon to see neglected houses in need of paint; refuse piled on porches and in front yards; old, dismantled cars abandoned on the street; and burnt out homes. However, at the west end of the neighborhood around Summit Boulevard lies a small pocket of well-maintained single-family homes which are reflective of the character desired for other low-density areas of the neighborhood.

The Neighborhood's southern and western perimeters are dominated by public open space. These public lands are totally undeveloped except for a deteriorated picnic shelter in High Bridge Park (north bank). There are no road or pathway improvements to provide public circulation within this riverfront area.

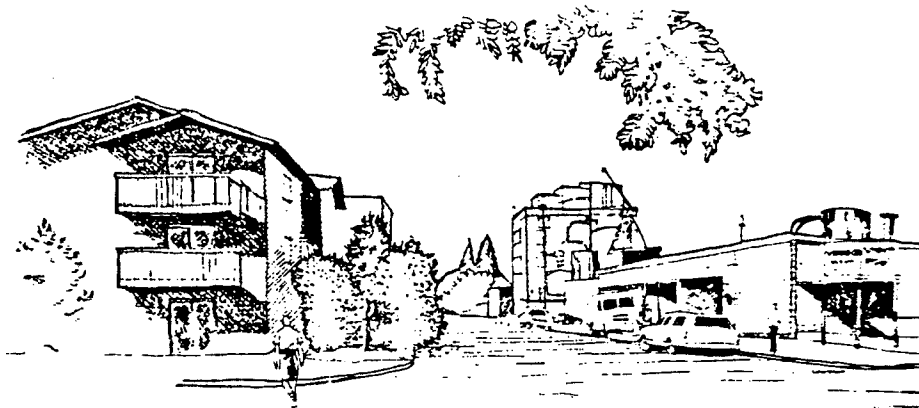
The West Central Community Center (W.C.C.C.), constructed with CDBG funds in 1981, provides recreational activities and localized delivery of social services for all age groups. Major facilities in the Center include a gymnasium (with stage), meeting rooms, day care classrooms, and office spaces. The Sinto Community provides complementary programs for the elderly but is not formally connected to the W.C.C.C.

Holmes Elementary School was replaced with a new building as a part of the 1978 School District 81 bond issue. The new school sits on a 4.3 acre site in the western part of the neighborhood. Its playground increases recreational opportunities for area families; the Neighborhood has contributed CDBG funded outdoor play equipment to augment school facilities.

Lower Crossing in the southern half of the neighborhood is separated physically from the rest of West Central by the Upland land and the high walls of the river embankment and visually by the lush vegetation which grows freely so close to the river. The homes in Lower Crossing vary in quality; most are on large lots immersed in a jungle of vegetation and have spectacular views of the river, Peaceful Valley and downtown. Conversely, downtown and Peaceful Valley also have generous views of Lower Crossing. The character is dark, dense, hidden and quiet.

At the west end of the neighborhood, the Evergreen development is a small, pleasant cluster of well-maintained homes evenly spaced on both sides of Evergreen Street. The houses vary in style from Victorian to 1950's ranch with large front lawns and street trees. The Sans Souci Mobile Home Park is an attractively organized area with small, well-tended front lawns and street trees.

The character and appearance of industrial areas in the neighborhood is also linked to the past. At the end of the nineteenth century, the land along the Sinto rail spur was established as a location for heavy commercial and light industrial uses and the area still retains a traditional light industrial character. The features that contribute to the overall appearance are large, blank buildings, unpaved streets, a high noise level, and movement of heavy equipment. No transition zones exist between this light industrial area and the residential area across the street.



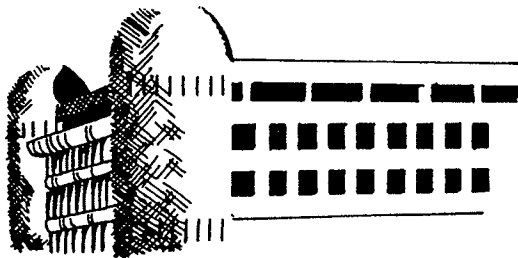
Industrial/Residential Interface

Another area of the neighborhood which owes its character to past railroad operations is the vacant Upland Industries property in the southern part of the neighborhood. This 57.6-acre parcel is a field of wild grasses and undergrowth with the abandoned railroad embankment dividing the land in half. The panoramic view from the embankment is diverse and illustrates one of the most desirable and unique aspects of Spokane, that of the downtown being in close proximity to undeveloped open space. Looking east toward the Central Business District, the skyline is a mass of downtown buildings representing the heart of the city, but looking west one sees the Spokane River winding through the floor of the valley flanked by steep, undeveloped tree-covered hillsides. Distant views are of undeveloped open space, High Bridge Park and the Riverside Park Cemetery.

The commercial areas in the neighborhood have many of the same features they had when first established in the 1800s yet in a 1980s setting. When these shopping districts were first developed, the streetcar was the major means of transportation and the streetscape reflects that. On Monroe between Bridge and Broadway, a core area of late 1800s structures still exists. These narrow brick buildings with intricately designed facades line both sides of the street with no setbacks and narrow sidewalks. Accommodations have since been made for the automobile in the form of on-street parallel parking, four traffic lanes, and large-scale signs and billboards. On Broadway past Ash a similar situation exists yet the buildings are not quite as numerous nor the traffic as heavy. Both commercial districts have some older buildings which have been attractively renovated and converted to offices and restaurants. In both areas the tightly knit quality of the streetscape has been broken down by more contemporary strip commercial development. The newer development is characterized by large parking lots, a lack of vegetation, nondistinctive buildings, and large oversized signage. The building style and site development detract from the character of the district by interrupting the continuity of the building facades and the pedestrian space.

The Maple/Ash corridor is a commercial district which was developed after the Maple Street Bridge was built. Since then this corridor has been developed as a strip development, dominated by parking lots, outsized signs, and free standing structures.

The County government area in the southeast part of the neighborhood is built around the County Courthouse, an outstanding example of French Renaissance architecture. However, the courthouse's visibility and architectural integrity are jeopardized because of recent additions to the Courthouse itself and because of haphazard development around the Courthouse in the form of nondescript government buildings (e.g. Public Health Building) and scattered parking lots.




Public Health Building



Land Use

Overview
Residential Policies
Commercial Policies
Mixed Use Policies





Overview


West Central does not have the Browne's Addition's historic charm, Peaceful Valley's historic uniqueness, nor Logan Neighborhood's social traditions . . . yet it has strong neighborhood qualities and great potential to enhance its attractiveness as a place to live, work and recreate. As a planning area, the neighborhood is fairly well defined by arterials and the Spokane River. Its early development in the City's history has established a clear identity within the community.

Travel to the intersection of Mallon and Cochran from any point on the neighborhood's periphery and the neighborhood's most severe physical problem is apparent: deteriorating housing. This problem has roots in the age and initial value of the housing stock, the changing profile of home occupancy and ownership, the influence of zoning regulations on speculative property investment, and factors stemming from the dynamics of changing land use and circulation patterns. The incidence of deteriorated and dilapidated structures is greatest in the core of the neighborhood, bounded by Ash, Maxwell, "A" Street, and Bridge, but only the area west of "A" Street has been totally immune to the problem.

Housing deterioration is, actually, the visible manifestation of a neighborhood housing profile determined by "circular" influences and effects. Historic land use and zoning patterns exert pressure on single-family properties to convert to higher-density or nonresidential use. Low-density environments become less attractive to single-family homeowners, and property maintenance is deferred in anticipation of selling for higher value use or expectation of continued intrusions by noncompatible uses which force family moves. Single-family property values decline, and conversions and rentals surface in an attempt to forestall severely depressed property values. The land use and zoning conditions which drive these changes, however, prohibit most properties from reaching values characteristic of established, stable land use districts. Unit rentals remain below the City-wide average. The marginal income realized by investors/absentee owners further limits substantial improvement of property or wholesale redevelopment. The residential environment suffers from high resident transiency, land use conflicts and deferred property maintenance, all contributing to poor housing conditions, increasing property speculation and investments in income property. The area continues to move from a single-family environment toward a mix of densities and uses. The negative impacts of land use and zoning maintain their driving force on the problem, and the cycle continues.

Other factors, such as changes in the characteristics of the population (e.g. more one-person households and single-parent families), contribute to the housing picture. However, in most cases these are secondary to the influences of land use and zoning and are more difficult to pursue as corrective measures.

Land use issues in the one-third of the neighborhood east of Ash Street were studied in detail in the North Riverbank Urban Design Study. The Land Use policies and zoning regulations adopted at the conclusion of the study in 1983 are considered to be current and appropriate to meet the needs of this area. In



particular, the plan for the area between Ash and Monroe discourages home conversions in established low-density residential districts and promotes compatible mixes of uses and better transitions between uses in more intensive districts (e.g. in the vicinity of the Courthouse).

West of Ash Street negative impacts of nonresidential uses on the predominant residential environment are limited to the industrial district along the Sinto rail spur, dispersed business uses in the neighborhood's interior and commercial uses along the west frontages of Ash Street. In some of these cases, the negative impact stems from an inappropriate location for the use, but in most cases the impacts are derivatives of site development which does not respond to the adjacent residential environment. Current zoning designations which allow development which is too intensive for the site present further potential problems in these areas.

Residential Policies

Land use policies for residential development in West Central are based largely on the analysis and recommendations presented in the West Central Housing Market Analysis, which is included as a technical supplement to the design plan. The improvement strategies suggested in this report focus on preserving the low-density character of the neighborhood while accommodating the demand for additional residential units. The intent of these strategies is to deter further deterioration of residential environments where low-density use is still viable, yet to allow medium and high-density development where existing land use, access, and other site factors warrant greater residential densities.

The residential policies direct higher density development to the central, south and southeast portions of the neighborhood, where multi-family development is facilitated by existing land use patterns, proximity to downtown or access to arterials. The northern and western portions of the neighborhood, where a single-family living environment predominates, are designated for lower density residential use. These policies support zoning revisions as identified in the Implementation chapter and housing strategies as outlined in the Housing Element.


GOAL: Maintain the predominant low-density residential character of the neighborhood; promote revitalization of single-family and two-family areas where the residential environment is declining due to deteriorating housing and increasing resident transiency; encourage higher density residential use in selected areas where redevelopment to greater densities will not detract from low-density environments.

1. Low-Density Areas

POLICY 1 Maintain exclusively single-family residential use in areas exhibiting good housing quality and high predominancy of single-family, owner-occupied homes.

Discussion

There is a strong correlation between the good condition of homes and the high percentage of resident owners (over 70%) in the western portion (generally, west of "A" Street) and northern portion (generally, north of Sharp) of the neighborhood. The western area and much of the northern area are also characterized by the highest value housing in the neighborhood at the time of construction.



The stability of values, ownership and occupancy in these single-family areas makes them a valuable asset in rejuvenating the residential neighborhood. They form the foundation upon which to prepare strategies to reverse residential deterioration. The importance of these single-family areas is further illuminated in the discussions of "targeted rehabilitation" in the Housing chapter (see page 57).

The Shriners Hospital for Crippled Children sits on a 3+ acre site at the edge of this single-family residential area, maintaining a service to the community which began in 1937. The hospital has been and continues to be a "good neighbor" to surrounding residences. Compared to the city's general, full-service hospitals, the Shriners facility is distinguished by its small scale, limited traffic generation, and distinctive architecture.

The hospital has accrued unique cultural and architectural value to the neighborhood over its 50-year history in the same location. The building is a neighborhood landmark, and its preservation is desired. Operation of the current hospital facilities and services poses no threat to the surrounding low-density residential districts, and it should be allowed to continue.

If the current buildings are retained for re-use, the proposed use and site development should be evaluated for compatibility with other uses within the low-density residential environment, i.e., they should exhibit no greater intensity of use or adverse neighborhood impact than the current hospital use. Hours of operation, traffic volumes, additional structures, site screening and buffering, parking areas, signing, lighting, and other land use factors should be evaluated to make a determination on re-use. Appropriateness and public acceptability of a proposed re-use will depend on a specific project application; however, the types of potentially appropriate uses include other medical facilities (such as clinics), professional offices, a nursing home, retirement housing, a rooming house or boardinghouse, a public or private school and any other use which is demonstrated to be compatible with low-density residential environments.

If the hospital ceases operation at this location and the building is demolished, the site should be redeveloped to single-family housing. Planned unit development is suggested to optimize single-family use on the large, single-owner site.

The area between Summit Blvd. and the river at the west end of Boone Avenue consists of a small group of homes along Evergreen Street and the Sans Souci Mobile Home Park and is also designated for single-family use. If Sans Souci redevelops to an area of conventional "stick-built" housing, the new density should not exceed that of the existing development and the structure type should remain single-family dwellings.

POLICY 2 Maintain residential environments of single-family and two-family use where existing land use patterns do not exhibit significant multi-family use and where house values, occupancy, and ownership support the viability of continued low-density use.

Discussion

There are two areas in the neighborhood where conditions are appropriate for both single-family and two-family use. The first is a large area bounded generally by "A" Street, Chestnut Street, properties along the north frontages of Sharp and properties along the south frontages of Broadway. This area is within the residential core of the neighborhood and is predominantly single-family in character. On a block basis, owner occupancy is nearly double renter occupancy. The area also encompasses the highest incidence of deteriorated structures. However, a significant number of homes have been converted to multi-family uses (some triplexes, but mostly duplexes) allowed in the R2 and R3 zones. This area is bordered on the west and north by strong single-family districts with very good housing quality. There are blocks within this area with no deteriorated structures, and good quality, single-family housing is found on nearly every block. The continued conversion of homes to two-family use and the construction of new duplex units will promote housing improvements without significantly changing the area's low-density character.

The area north of Maxwell between Elm and Ash, excluding properties fronting Ash and Maxwell, exhibits a strong single-family, owner-occupied residential character. The incidence of deteriorated structures is low in this area. Two-family use can continue to provide new living opportunities while maintaining a low-density environment.

2. Medium-Density Areas

POLICY 3 Promote transition to medium-density use, primarily in triplex structures, in areas where the low-density residential environment has deteriorated and opportunities for increased density are needed as an incentive for new residential development.





Discussion

With the imminent development of new medium-density housing on the vacant property between Bridge and Ohio, there will be new interest in the vacant and deteriorated properties north of Bridge Avenue. West of Chestnut Street (excluding lots fronting Summit Blvd.) an area one and one-half blocks deep north of Bridge Avenue is designated for continued development at medium density, primarily in triplex structures on individual platted lots. This part of the "residential core" shares many housing characteristics with the low-density area adjacent to the north (Policy 2); but is more vulnerable to transitional pressures that will grow with major new housing projects to the south. In the short term, this area will exhibit a mix of housing types: single-family homes, home conversions, and new triplexes. This will promote a blending of the new medium-density development south of Bridge with the established low-density district to the north.

POLICY 4 Allow medium-density residential use, primarily in triplex structures, along selected arterial frontages as a transition between low-density residential and nonresidential districts.

Discussion


The west frontages of Ash Street, a principal arterial, are over 50% occupied by commercial uses between Maxwell and Indiana. Further commercial development along the west side of Ash poses the threat of additional impacts to land use and circulation. Medium-density residential use is an economic alternative to strip commercial development and is consistent with the current policy for residential use along the east frontages of Maple Street, a similar situation. Medium-density residential provides a transition in land use intensity between the two-family area to the west and the business area within the Maple-Ash couplet. Triplex structures help maintain the residential scale and character exhibited by the single-family and duplex homes to the west. Access to new medium-density development may be from the east-west residential streets to avoid impacting the flow of arterial through-traffic on Ash, but development should be limited to contiguous ownerships with a side yard on Ash and in no case more than three platted lots west of Ash. The properties fronting the north side of Maxwell between Ash and Elm face an intensive mixed-use district to the south and are also encouraged for triplex development.

3. High-Density Areas (With Limited Low Rise Office)

POLICY 5 Encourage low-rise, high-density residential use in areas that have transitioned predominantly to renter-occupied, multi-family housing and have good access to arterials, shopping and other services without impacting low-density environments.

Discussion

The area bounded generally by Ash, Chestnut, Sharp and Bridge is characterized by a high percentage of multi-family rental housing. It is an area that has experienced a strong trend to high-density residential use, a pattern encouraged for many years by R4 zoning in the district.



This area is well defined by the Maple-Ash couplet on the east, the Cannon Commercial Park (see Policy 10) on the north, the mixed-use district to the south (Policy 9), and the proposed Chestnut Streetway (Pedestrian policy 18) on the west. The High-Density Residential designation provides continued growth potential for higher-density multi-family rental units in an area with good access to arterials and in proximity to public services and downtown. Development should be limited to low-rise (one to three-story) structures to maintain a compatible neighborhood scale.

POLICY 6 Within high-density residential districts, allow low-rise office use on sites which are adjacent to minor or principal arterials and which, when developed, maintain a primary orientation towards the arterial.

Discussion

Office uses have traditionally been considered "good neighbors" to multi-family uses, i.e., offices may exhibit a similar scale, intensity and character as multi-family housing, and they usually pose few conflicts with higher-density living environments. Traffic generation throughout the working day, however, distinguishes office uses from high density residential uses. The preponderance of this office traffic originates outside the neighborhood, i.e., offices serve a city-wide clientele.


Properties adjacent to minor or principal arterials are accessible to a city-wide clientele without increasing vehicular volumes on streets designed for neighborhood uses. In the high-density residential district west of Ash Street, offices may be allowed on sites adjacent to this principal arterial. The extent of office development may extend the full block west of Ash, provided that office-generated traffic is not directed further into the residential neighborhood and the office development maintains a primary orientation to Ash Street.

Commercial Policies

West of Ash Street, commercial uses occur in seven dispersed locations and along the west frontages of Ash Street. Although these commercial uses are predominantly neighborhood scale businesses, only three of the locations are within B1-Neighborhood Business zones, three are occupied by nonconforming uses in residential zones and one is in a B2-Community Business zone. "An adult foster home" sits within an isolated B1 zone at the neighborhood's west end. Business properties along the west side of Ash are predominantly in a B2 zone district.

The Commercial Policies direct further neighborhood business development to two districts along Broadway and provide opportunities for convenience shopping at two other sites. The policies further imply elimination or reclassification of business zones which are inappropriate in location or which exceed neighborhood business intensity.

These policies are based on the anticipated land use patterns and population distribution encouraged by other policies in the design plan. For example, the land use policies governing residential uses should produce a shift in the center of population to the south and east, establishing the proposed arterial intersection of Broadway and Nettleton as the appropriate site for a neighborhood shopping district within the residential core area. Other opportunities for commercial uses are covered in the Mixed-Use policies.



GOAL: Encourage commercial development which is appropriate for the predominantly residential neighborhood, providing dispersed locations for convenience shopping and centralized locations for neighborhood shopping districts to meet the daily goods and service needs of the resident population.

1. Neighborhood Business Areas

POLICY 7 Encourage development of neighborhood shopping districts within the residential core of the neighborhood at centralized locations with intersecting arterials.

Discussion

Two areas on Broadway west of Ash provide good locations for business development serving the neighborhood's daily needs for goods and services. An existing business district along Broadway between Ash and Elm is specified for infill development and redevelopment as a neighborhood shopping district within the current confines of commercial activity. This district comprises about five acres of land area, and the current development trend is for office uses in new and converted structures. If this trend to office use continues to predominate, this district should be reexamined in the future for a possible designation for exclusively low-rise office use.

A neighborhood grocery store and small hardware store on the south corners of Boone and Cochran primarily serve the residences in the western and northern portions of the neighborhood. Neighborhood business use at this location, which lacks an intersecting arterial, should be contained to existing development. "One lot at the southwest corner of Boone and Elm is designated neighborhood business to reflect the existing florist shop use."

Expansion of the existing neighborhood business use at the intersection of Broadway and Nettleton is proposed to create a 2 acre neighborhood shopping district easily accessible to residents west of Ash. New development should occur primarily southeast of the intersection, adding to the present neighborhood food store on the corner. Business expansion is contingent on improving Nettleton to a collector arterial to serve the proposed mixed-use development to the south.

POLICY 8 Allow convenience shopping facilities (one or two story, 6,000-18,000 sq. ft.) as needed at suitable sites on arterials, located at appropriate intervals to preclude strip commercial development and designed to be compatible with adjacent uses.

Discussion

Convenience shopping facilities may include any neighborhood scale business which serves the day-to-day shopping and service needs of the surrounding neighborhood, but such outlets as "mini-mart" gas stations and 24-hour drug stores are most representative of this use category. These business sites are smaller than neighborhood shopping districts, and do not require a location with a second intersecting arterial. Maple/Ash and Boone, which intersect the neighborhood fairly evenly in the north-south and east-west directions respectively, are the most appropriate arterials to accommodate these facilities with great accessibility to West Central residents. However, convenience shopping facilities should be precluded from low-density districts where the traffic, light and noise generated by 24 hour operation would adversely impact single and two-family living environments.



Mixed Use Policies

The dynamics of urbanization promote a greater diversity of land uses and a more complex land use pattern, creating a more enriched community but posing problems of incompatibility between adjacent uses. As the City matures, methods to integrate places of residence, work, and leisure in a compatible setting become more attractive to enhance the "livability" of the City. Mixed use development, that is, the combining of an array of land uses on a development site, many of which were considered incompatible under traditional planning processes, has gained great acceptability in urban settings in the last decade.

Large, vacant properties and major redevelopment sites lend themselves to mixed use development. Office and supporting commercial uses may be integrated with housing, or office and "high-tech" light industrial may be co-located on a planned site. The key to successful mixed use development, beyond the routine considerations of accessibility, infrastructure, and overall appropriateness within the context of the community, is a blending of uses of similar intensity with transitions or buffers between uses. Outside of downtown locations, mixed use projects typically incorporate common open space, shared parking, private streets and a complementary architecture for structures.

Mixed use policies for areas designated west of Ash respond to similar conditions which produced mixed use designations for two areas in the North Riverbank Design Area east of Ash. These policies "tailor" land uses, densities, and intensities to the specific development environment and may find future application to other sites as the neighborhood ages.

GOAL: Promote mixed use development of appropriate composition, scale and intensity on underdeveloped or underutilized sites where development according to a master plan will produce projects complementary to the site and the surrounding neighborhood; emphasize a mix of uses and an overall design which provide greater advantage to the residential neighborhood than traditional, homogeneous land use patterns.


1. Residential/Office Areas

POLICY 9 Encourage a mix of predominantly medium-density residential and low-rise office uses on large, undeveloped sites of opportunity where living-working-service environments can be integrated to enhance livability without adversely impacting the surrounding neighborhood; also allow limited retail and service uses which respond to the day-to-day living needs of the neighborhood population.

Discussion

West of Maple Street the one vacant site with sufficient area to accommodate mixed use development is the old railroad property between Bridge and Ohio, comprising about 50 acres of ownership split between Burlington Northern and Upland Industries. The configuration of these ownerships dictates joint development if a mixed use project is pursued by the owners.

Development parameters for this site are suggested by land use patterns of the built neighborhood to the north, limited vehicular access to the area, and the public's interest in development which is sensitive to the river valley



environment in intensity, scale and public accessibility. The residential component of the site should not exceed medium density west of Chestnut Street to maintain the character of the residential environment which dominates land use in the western portion of the neighborhood. East of Chestnut, low-rise, residential scale "garden offices" are encouraged as a transitional use between the residential uses to the west and north and the higher intensity "Riverfront Mixed Use District" in the North Riverbank Design Area to the east. A one to two-acre neighborhood shopping district may be supported at full development depending on the success of neighborhood business expansion at Broadway and Nettleton and neighborhood business development along Broadway between Elm and Ash. The new neighborhood shopping district should be confined to the eastern portion of the site and integrated with the garden offices.

Development should be limited to three-story residential structures and two-story office/commercial structures to maintain a complementary scale to the existing neighborhood. Building siting needs to provide visual corridors through the property in the north-south direction to maintain the existing perceptual link between the neighborhood's interior and the amenity of the river valley. These corridors presently exist along street rights-of-way, and the visual access provided by this traditional "grid" street pattern should be extended through the mixed use site regardless of the development's ultimate circulation system. The primary access corridor is the Chestnut Streetway (see Policy 18), which needs to be extended through the site for both visual and physical access to the river valley at Ohio Avenue.

Particular attention to the character of the existing neighborhood should be given to the form of new development along the mixed use district's north edge at Bridge Avenue. Here, the design emphasis is to integrate the mixed use project into the neighborhood, to "blend" the new with the old to maintain the visual cohesion of the neighborhood. Building architecture and orientation, design and location of parking areas, and the type and density of landscape plantings should be complementary to the residential neighborhood to the north. Design features which attempt to distinguish this site as a separate "community" independent of its neighborhood setting are to be avoided.

Vehicular access issues associated with this district are addressed in the "Circulation Element". Nettleton Street in the north-south direction and Ohio Avenue as the proposed extension of North River Drive in the east-west direction are the two primary streets identified to provide access to the site.

2. Low-Rise Office/Commercial-Warehouse (Incubator) Areas

POLICY 10 Encourage redevelopment of underutilized light-industrial/heavy commercial areas for mixed use development consisting of complementary low-rise office and "incubator" commercial-warehouse uses.

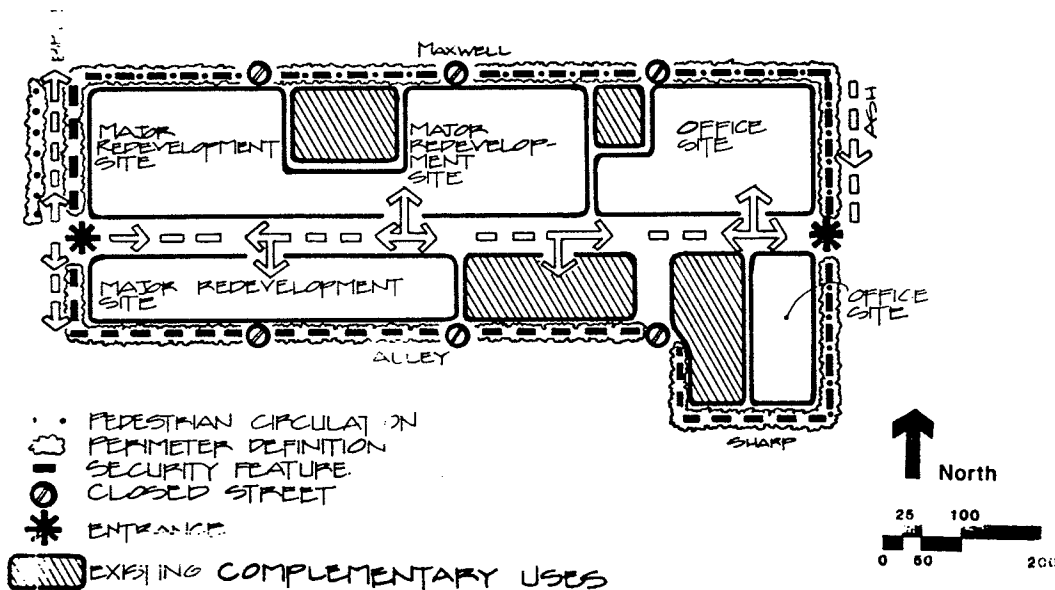
Discussion

During the City's early development, the disposition of industrial and warehouse activities was closely tied to railroad routes through town. The rail line which ran northwest through West Central and followed the river valley downstream now terminates at Belt Street and, west of Monroe, is still flanked by many of these nonresidential uses. The decline of railroads as the primary

mode of shipping goods, however, has been accompanied by a gradual demise of these intensive activities along the spur. The low-rise office/commercial-warehouse mixed use designation is an attempt to stimulate redevelopment of underutilized sites along the spur with uses that can be better integrated into the residential neighborhood. To give this mixed use area a strong identity as a redevelopment district, the neighborhood proposes that the combined site be called "Cannon Commercial Park".

The specific site for Cannon Commercial Park includes the blocks between Sinto and Maxwell from Chestnut to Ash, the half blocks between Sinto and the alley north of Sharp from Belt to Ash, and the half block between the alley north of Sharp and Sharp from Oak to Ash. The plan for the complex includes screening from the surrounding neighborhood with a heavily planted perimeter and protection by a six foot high ornamental security wall. Vehicular circulation is simplified by vacating interior streets and providing a system of private accesses within the complex. The designation for the Commercial Park follows a study by Research Economics to assess the industrial potential of the area. After studying such factors as location and current market trends, the Industrial Potential Study concludes that the area is not adequate for a full size industrial park and proposes that the commercial-warehouse (incubator) and low-rise office combination is a more appropriate and marketable land use. The incubator warehouse concept is one that has grown in popularity in recent years as a way to increase the success rate of small, fledgling light industrial and commercial businesses. The total complex is designed to be a supportive environment for new businesses and includes such features as flexible office size, central support services (typing, receptionist, bookkeeping), low overhead costs, and easy access.

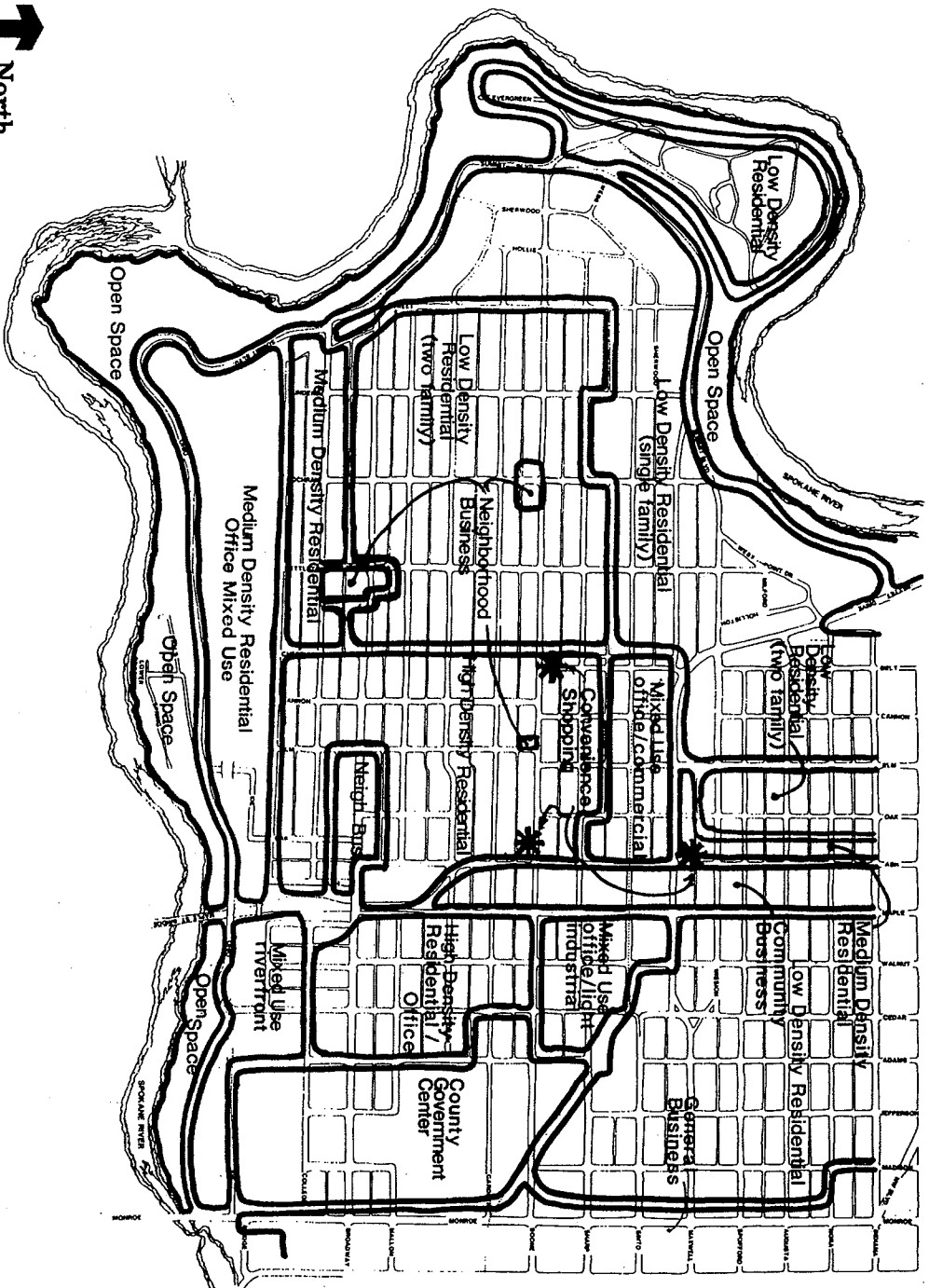
Building siting and design, perimeter development, points of access and vehicular circulation patterns should be sensitive to adjacent land uses to transform this area into a good "neighbor". Redevelopment of the area according to an approved master plan provides assurance that this objective will be met. A "diagrammatic" master plan which illustrates the design elements to achieve the desired integration is shown below.



Cannon Commercial Park "Schematic" Plan

West Central Neighborhood DESIGN PLAN

Land Use Plan




Spokane City Plan Commission

Figure 1



Circulation

Overview
Vehicle Policies
Pedestrian/Bicycle Policies
Transit Policies





Overview

West Central is a neighborhood fortunate to experience few circulation problems. The built neighborhood is well-served by arterial and local access streets, and arterial through traffic is well-directed through the neighborhood on long-established routes. The predominant low-density residential use and few high volume arterials make walking and bicycling attractive means of travel. Transit routes and headways also provide good access and service to downtown and points of connection to other routes.

The neighborhood west of the Maple-Ash couplet benefits by being outside the path of high-volume, through traffic connecting downtown and points north. Vehicular traffic in this western two-thirds of the neighborhood creates few disruptions of the residential environment and poses few threats to pedestrian and bicyclist safety. The Maple-Ash couplet, however, does experience sufficient traffic volumes to create a moderate barrier to car, foot, and bike travel between the neighborhood subareas which the couplet defines. Monroe exhibits similar volumes, albeit concentrated on one two-way facility, creating both a barrier and a well-defined boundary for the neighborhood's east edge.

Current City policies for circulation and parks identify public interest in developing "greenbelt" links between public facilities, parks and open spaces. This "systems" approach to pedestrian and bicycle circulation parallels the City's traditional planning for vehicular and transit facilities and has implications for public improvements throughout the neighborhood.

The Circulation Policies are related to policies in other elements of the design plan and cannot be applied independent of these other policies. The overall intent is to improve the various modes of transportation to better integrate the functions of "neighborhood" to enhance livability.

GOAL: Provide a safe, convenient system of car, bicycle, pedestrian and transit travel which enhances neighborhood circulation, provides improved connections to nonneighborhood destinations, and creates pleasant travel environments.

Vehicle Policies

There are no neighborhood issues associated with current arterial designations or classifications, and current long-range arterial planning does not propose any additional facilities which would jeopardize the integrity of the neighborhood. However, the lack of direct arterial access to large, undeveloped sites south of Bridge and Ide presently inhibits development of these properties. Other potential private and public projects in the neighborhood also require future changes in the street system. Some of these changes are necessary to implement development on adjacent property and others entail improvements to facilitate circulation. The Vehicle Policies are a supplementary guide to citywide planning for vehicle circulation, identifying improvements which provide better arterial and street service to the neighborhood and general public.

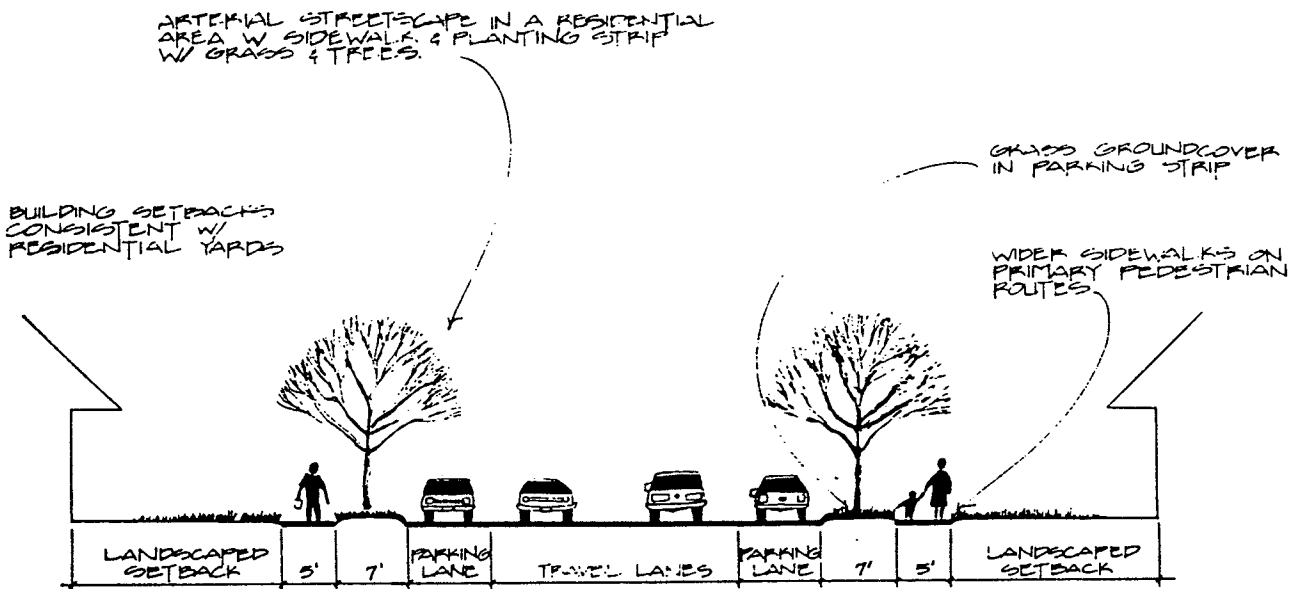
1. Arterial Policies

POLICY 11 Maintain a system of arterial streets to serve both neighborhood and citywide needs; improve arterial rights-of-way to create a streetscape character which reflects the function of the arterial and complements the environment through which it passes.

Discussion

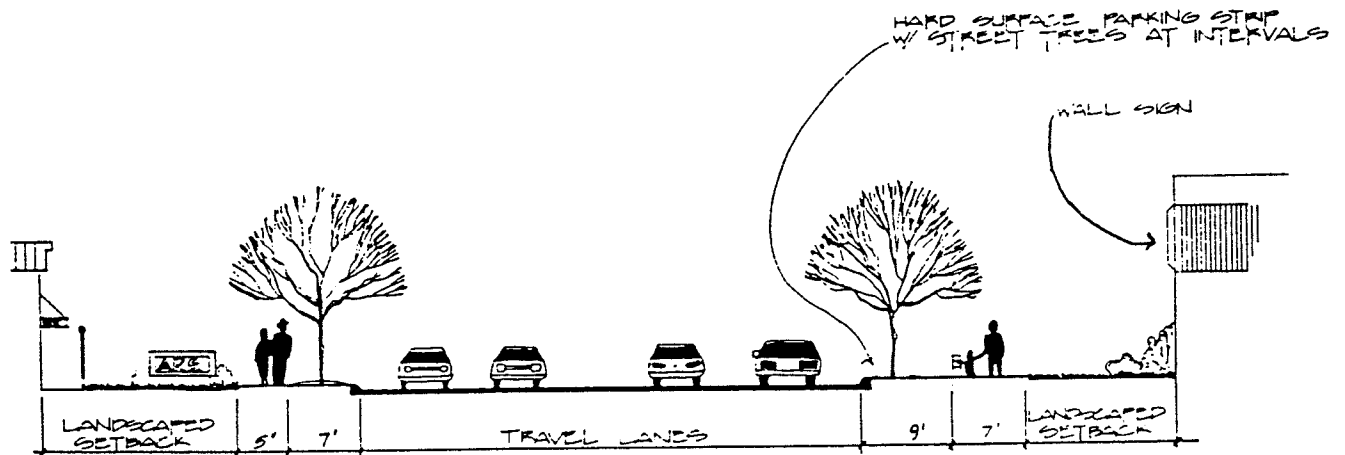
The system of arterial streets to serve the vehicular circulation needs of the neighborhood and total community is shown in Figure 2. With the exception of proposed arterial designations to provide access to undeveloped property south of Bridge/Ide, arterial classifications within the neighborhood are derived from the City-wide Arterial Streets Plan, and their inclusion in the design plan is a confirmation of appropriateness by the neighborhood.

The neighborhood's interest in arterial planning centers largely on the built character of arterials and their associated streetscapes. The minimum standards for arterial design include 12' wide travel lanes, 7' wide parking strips, and 5' wide sidewalks. Street trees are specified within all parking strips. Additional operational features such as medians on principal arterials may bring additional width to the right-of-way requirement.



Arterial Section Through Residential Area

An arterial's acceptability to residents along its route and the surrounding neighborhood is related, in part, to the streetscape environment it establishes. In residential areas arterials of all capacities should present a residential streetscape character: parking strips with street tree varieties determined by scale relationships and exposure, grass groundcover in parking strips, wider sidewalks on primary pedestrian routes to neighborhood shopping, schools and parks, and building setbacks which are consistent with residential front or side yards. Along nonresidential frontages arterial streetscape design should consider business exposure, property maintenance costs, flow and volume of pedestrian traffic, and the greater complexity of elements within the right-of-way and adjacent yards (e.g., traffic signage, business signage, street lighting, street furniture, etc.).



Arterial Section Through Commercial Area


Arterial streetscape improvements which respond to nonresidential environments may include hard surface parking strips integrated with the sidewalk and punctuated at regular intervals by street tree varieties which relate in size and form to the scale, intensity and exposure of adjacent private development, increased separation between sidewalks and car traffic on high volume arterials and in areas of high pedestrian activity, and detailing of landscaping, street furniture and other features of the streetscape which visually "blend" the street into the adjacent development.

POLICY 12 Provide arterial access to undeveloped areas of the neighborhood which have the development potential to generate large volumes of traffic.

Discussion

The only proposed addition to the arterial street system in the neighborhood is the designation of new arterials to access the large, vacant development site south of Bridge/Ide. Proposed development of this property may generate nearly 12,000 additional vehicle trips daily.

In the east-west direction, Broadway Avenue and Ide Avenue/Ohio Avenue should be used as the main arterial access along the north and south sides of the site, respectively. Broadway remains a four-lane minor arterial between Monroe and Ash and a two-lane, neighborhood collector from just west of Ash to present Summit Boulevard. A slight redesign of the Broadway/Chestnut intersection eliminates a jog in Broadway's alignment to facilitate safe flow of larger traffic volumes. Between Monroe and Cedar, Ide is proposed as a minor arterial with four traffic lanes to accommodate traffic generated by the County government complex and "riverfront mixed-use" development. Ide Avenue is realigned northward at its intersection with Monroe to meet realigned Bridge Avenue. Monroe and Lincoln function as one-way legs of a couplet. Ide is renamed "Northriver Drive" and developed with a parkway character. West of Cedar, Ohio Avenue is redesigned as a two-lane, neighborhood collector (parkway) and renamed "Northriver Drive."



In the north-south direction, arterial connections to the development site are proposed on Nettleton, Cedar and a third, undetermined route in the vicinity of Oak Street. These are proposed as two-lane, neighborhood collectors, connecting to Broadway on the north and the proposed Northriver Drive on the south. Nettleton also provides a convenient arterial route between the proposed medium-density residential component of the site and the area designated for neighborhood business expansion at Nettleton and Broadway.

2. Local Access Streets

POLICY 13 Maintain a system of hard-surfaced, local access streets and alleys to serve the neighborhood.

Discussion

While all developed properties in the neighborhood are served by improved local access streets, there are a few unpaved street segments within the Sinto Street industrial corridor and in the Lower Crossing residential area. Ohio Avenue and a portion of Summit Boulevard are also unpaved.

Paved streets benefit adjacent properties and the community as a whole by reducing air pollution, facilitating circulation and minimizing maintenance costs. Hard-surface paving should be required of all new development whether ~~accesses are provided on public streets or private roads~~. This applies to

existing streets in redevelopment areas as well as streets dedicated as a component of a new project.

Although a lower priority than streets, existing and new alleys should also be paved to reduce dust, aid circulation and improve the visual environment of rear yards. Unpaved alleys which provide access to the rear yards of multi-family or nonresidential uses are a particular problem due to the volumes of traffic these uses generate.

POLICY 14 Encourage vacation of street segments that are not needed for general circulation, other public use or access to private property and facilitate private redevelopment of the vacated right-of-way.

Discussion

Over 20% of the City's land area is dedicated street right-of-way, serving the circulation needs of motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists and providing access to individual property. As land use and circulation patterns in the City evolve, right-of-way needs also change. In some cases new right-of-way is dedicated or purchased and in others, existing right-of-way is no longer needed for public purposes.

Where street right-of-way is determined by the City to be surplus to public needs and is of potential benefit to the development interests of adjacent owners, the City should support vacation of the right-of-way to convert the property to private ownership. The concept for the proposed Cannon Commercial Park (Land Use Policy 10) relies on the opportunity to vacate nonarterial streets on the interior of the complex to facilitate redevelopment and is the best current example of the application of this policy in the neighborhood.

POLICY 15 Encourage closure or vacation of portions of streets that are not needed for vehicular circulation and not essential for accessing private property and redesign this right-of-way for other public use such as pedestrian ways, bike paths, and parks and open space.

Discussion

Chestnut Street from Maxwell Avenue south to Bridge Avenue has a 30' right-of-way and a 20' curb-to-curb width, both falling far short of the City's minimum standards for a local access street. The operational deficiencies inherent to the diminished right-of-way support the redesign of the street for nonvehicular uses. A mid-neighborhood pedestrian/bicycle "streetway", as proposed in Community Facilities Policy 18, solves the problem of an inadequate vehicle street while responding to other needs for intra-neighborhood circulation.

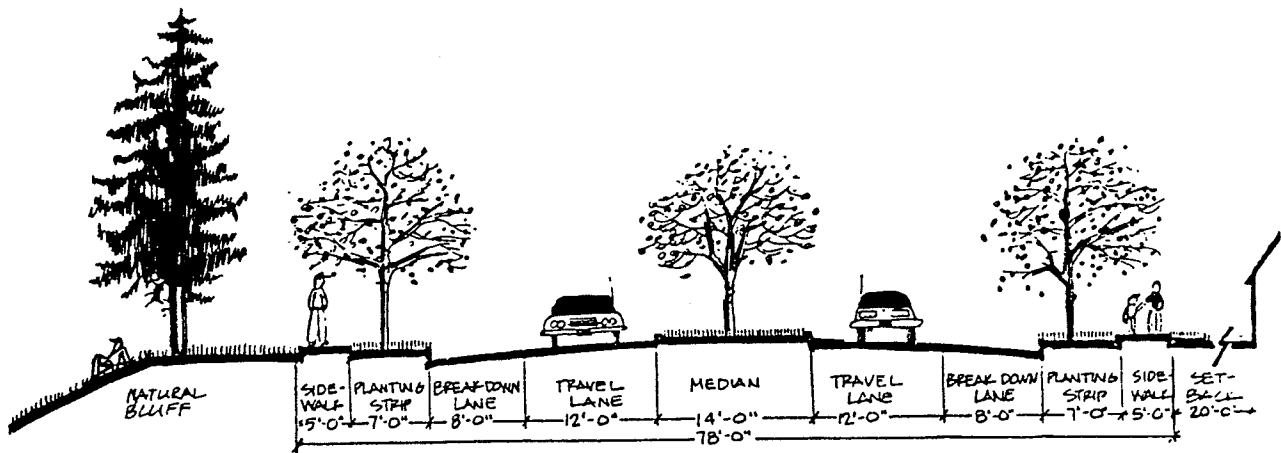
Vacation of street segments is a necessary action to expand Cannon Park northward and to integrate the park with the West Central Community Center site (Community Facilities Policy 23). Streets affected by the proposed long-range park master plan are Mission, Belt, Spofford, and Cannon.

3. Scenic Drives

POLICY 16 Construct a low-volume, scenic drive which generally follows the alignment of Ohio Avenue, Summit Boulevard and Pettet Drive, extending North-river Drive to Downriver Drive; emphasize a roadway design which promotes visual and physical access to the river valley for motorists while maintaining the character of the open space environment.

Discussion

This policy is a confirmation of neighborhood support for a scenic drive "parkway" as proposed in the Riverfront Development Program. The parkway should function as a collector arterial and should generally follow the current alignment of Ide Avenue, Ohio Avenue, Summit Boulevard and Pettet Drive. Parkway design features along this route include landscaped medians, vehicle pull-outs, viewpoints, bike paths or lanes, pedestrian paths and/or sidewalks, street lights, street trees and other landscaping. The name "North-river Drive" will help maintain the parkway's functional identity as the mid-City connection between Upriver and Downriver Drives.



Scenic Drive "Parkway"

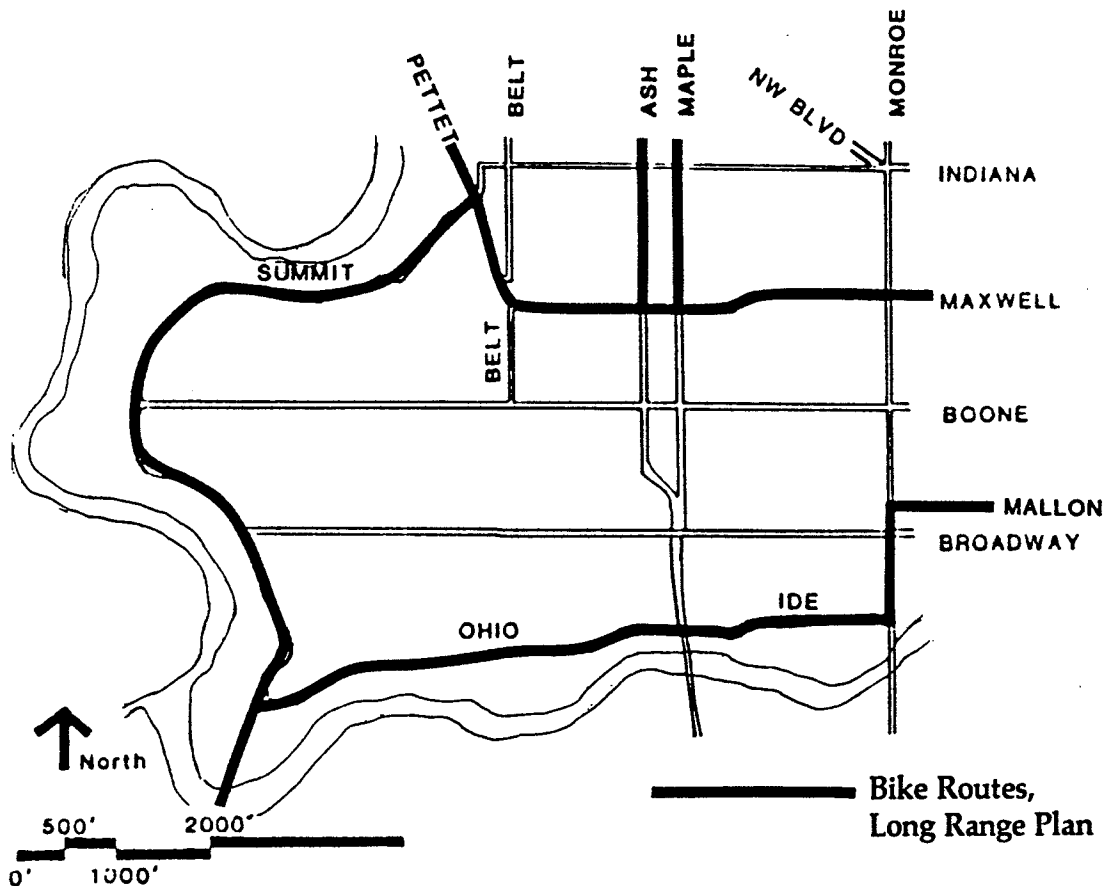
Pedestrian/Bicycle Policies

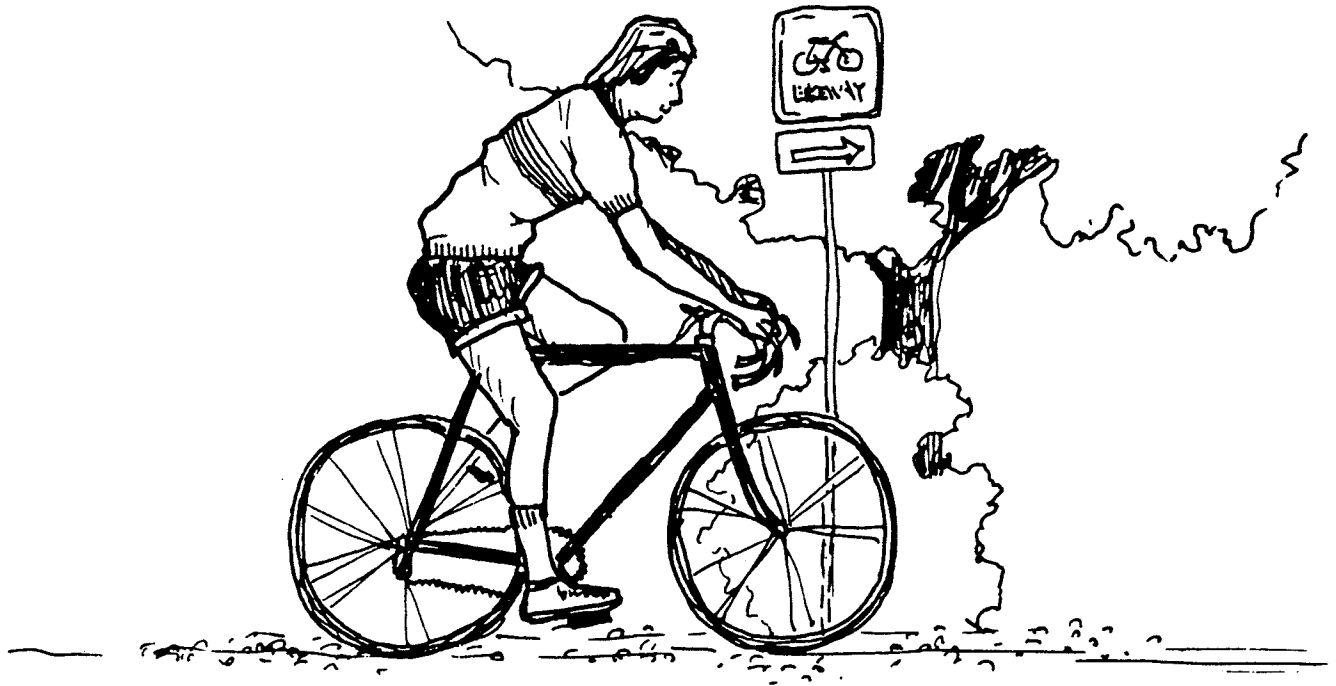
Among the criteria which define desirable living environments is the inclusion of facilities which promote walking and bicycling in attractive settings along safe and convenient routes. West Central is typical of established, inner-city neighborhoods which enjoy the benefits of improved streets and sidewalks. All of West Central's residential streets are paved, and sidewalks exist along most residential frontages.

Sidewalks are the most common pedestrian facility in cities. They are the minimum improvement to facilitate foot travel in the neighborhood, confining the traveler to routes dictated by West Central's predominant grid street pattern. Sidewalk deficiencies, either sidewalks in disrepair or missing sidewalks, are corrected as a part of routine property maintenance by property owners or as a part of public or private development projects. A 1983 field survey indicates that there are about eight miles of frontage without sidewalks and another four miles with severe problems.

Bicycle facilities in the neighborhood are largely a public responsibility, and few improvements have been made. The City's Bikeways Plan designates bike routes through the neighborhood. (Figure 2). A short stretch of separated bikepath was constructed along Summit Boulevard with Community Development funds in 1975. Arterial traffic volumes and occasional hazardous road surfaces present the greatest obstacle to safe, convenient bicycling in the neighborhood.

The Pedestrian/Bicycle Policies address circulation between activity nodes within the neighborhood, as well as travel to destinations in areas on the neighborhood's periphery.





1. Pedestrian Policies

POLICY 17 Maintain a complete system of sidewalks adjacent to City streets as the primary means of pedestrian movement in the neighborhood.

Discussion

Most pedestrian travel in the neighborhood occurs on the existing sidewalk system. In the residential areas sidewalks exist along most frontages and are usually separated from the street by parking strips with street trees. In nonresidential and partially developed areas, sidewalk improvements are more intermittent and, where provided, are often constructed with integral curbing immediately adjacent to the street, providing little separation between foot and car traffic. Even where sidewalks exist, many segments are in need of repair due to age deterioration or uplifting by fully-matured street trees.

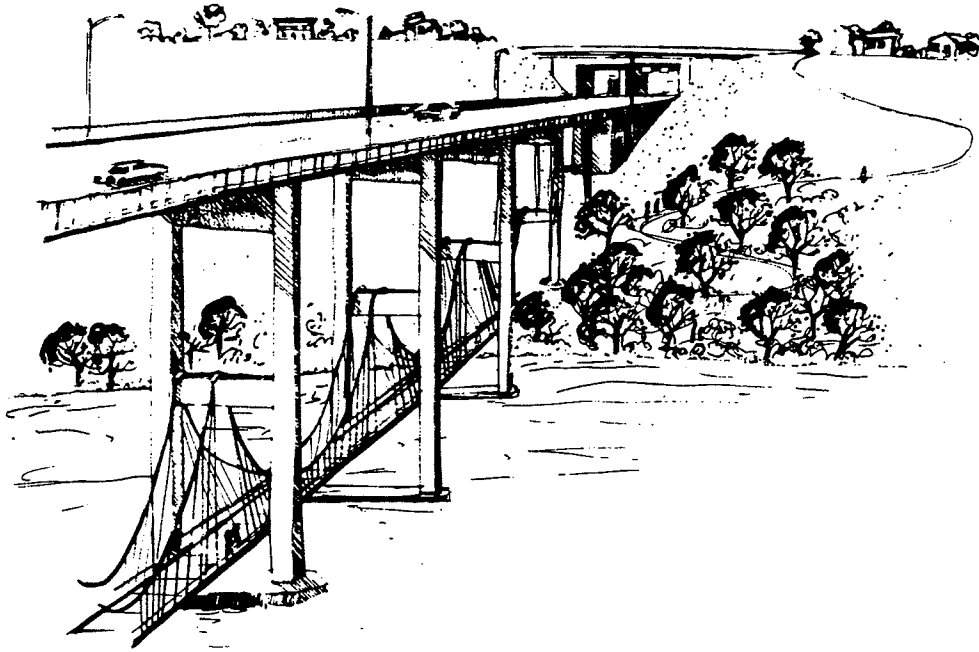
The City's current sidewalk policies and regulations are adequate to ensure completion of the sidewalk system as new development or redevelopment occurs. Arterial frontages and commercial districts where there is the greatest potential for car/pedestrian conflict are the priority areas for new sidewalks.

Efforts to maintain existing sidewalks should continue. Sidewalk repairs have been an annual funding item for neighborhood Community Development money and, at 100% funding, have produced most of the neighborhood's sidewalk reconstruction over the past decade. In the future, however, more of the financial responsibility will likely accrue to individual property owners.

POLICY 18 Establish a system of major pedestrian facilities to connect neighborhood activity centers, parks and open spaces and to access primary destinations outside the neighborhood.

Discussion

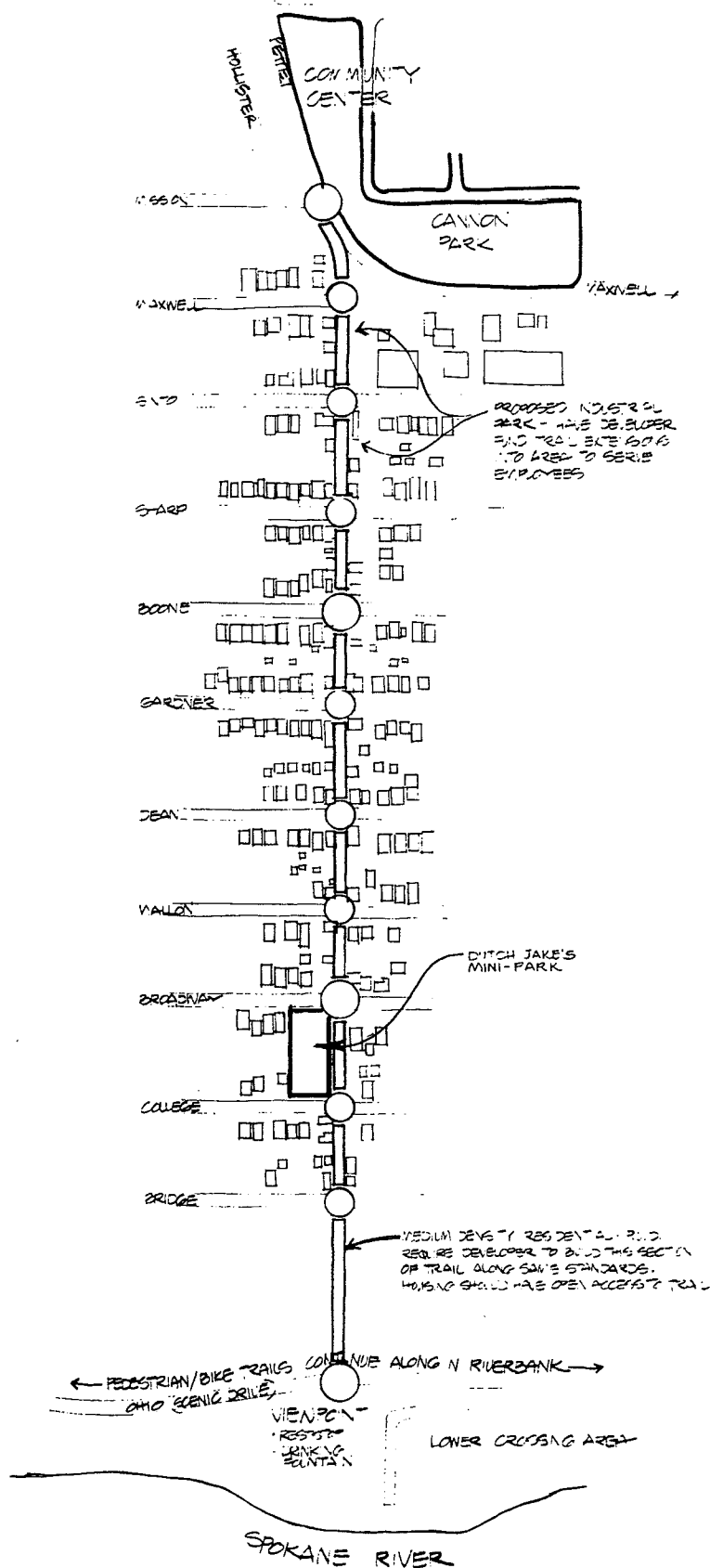
Opportunities exist in the neighborhood to develop a system of major pedestrian facilities to link the Community Center, Cannon Park, Dutch Jake's Park, Holmes School, neighborhood shopping areas and riverfront open spaces. Extensions of this system can provide connections to destinations outside the neighborhood such as downtown, Peaceful Valley/High Bridge Park, and the Three Springs area. The utilization of routes within the system by pedestrians is promoted by facilities which make walking more convenient, safe and enjoyable than other routes.




Connections to Peaceful Valley/Highbridge

Existing public right-of-way is often the easiest property to improve for higher volumes of pedestrian use. Street right-of-way can usually accommodate widened sidewalks, an appropriate improvement for the greater pedestrian activity experienced in the vicinity of neighborhood shopping areas. The right-of-way requirements for the proposed extension of Northriver Drive will accommodate 5'-wide sidewalks and a separated walking/jogging path on the river side of the drive, providing a route to riverfront open space along the entirety of the neighborhood's south and west edges.

A more "dramatic" improvement of street right-of-way for pedestrian traffic is the conversion of the total right-of-way from vehicle to pedestrian use. The right-of-way for Chestnut Street from Maxwell to Bridge Avenue, at 30' total width and 20' curb-to-curb, is far short of City local access street standards for vehicular traffic but provides a direct route for foot traffic between Cannon Park and Dutch Jake's mini-park. An alternative design which converts this vehicular street into a pedestrian/bicycle "streetway" is proposed for the right-of-way. The streetway should have the character of a linear park or



Schematic Chestnut Streetway Plan



greenbelt, paying particular attention to screening for privacy on adjacent properties, to safety at intersecting east-west streets, and to accesses to private properties for both residents and service/emergency vehicles. In the long term the streetway should be extended south, through the proposed private development between Bridge and Ohio, to a viewpoint on Ohio and connections to future riverfront pathways.

Public acquisition of railroad right-of-way in the neighborhood presents another opportunity to create a specialized pedestrian facility. The Sinto rail spur segment between Maple and Madison could be converted to a pedestrian pathway/greenbelt following abandonment of railroad operations. To the west, the pathway could extend on widened sidewalks along Maxwell to Pettet Drive and destinations downriver. Eastward, connections could be developed to Riverfront Park and downtown.

Where pedestrian movement requires routes through private property, e.g., through mixed-use projects in the southern portion of the neighborhood, easements or right-of-way dedications should be secured to maintain public access.

Pedestrian overpass structures are desirable at two locations. An overpass at Monroe in the vicinity of Ide/Bridge is necessary to provide a safe pedestrian pathway along the North Riverbank and a connection between downtown and the county government complex. This overpass might be constructed as a "skywalk" bridge between new buildings on either side of Monroe when these Monroe frontages redevelop, or the overpass may be built as a freestanding structure closer to the Monroe Street Bridge. A second overpass should be considered at Maxwell just west of Belt to provide a safe pedestrian connection between Cannon Park and the proposed Chestnut Streetway. Design features should be incorporated into this improvement to insure use of the overpass rather than at-grade crossing of the Maxwell arterial.

The importance of developing pedestrian routes according to a "systems concept" is highlighted by the relationship this system has to the overall neighborhood design concept (Figure 5). The pedestrian system satisfies one requirement of neighborhood function and, in so doing, promotes neighborhood integration and identity.

POLICY 19 Enhance pedestrian travel in the neighborhood by providing facilities which are safe, attractive and convenient for foot travel.

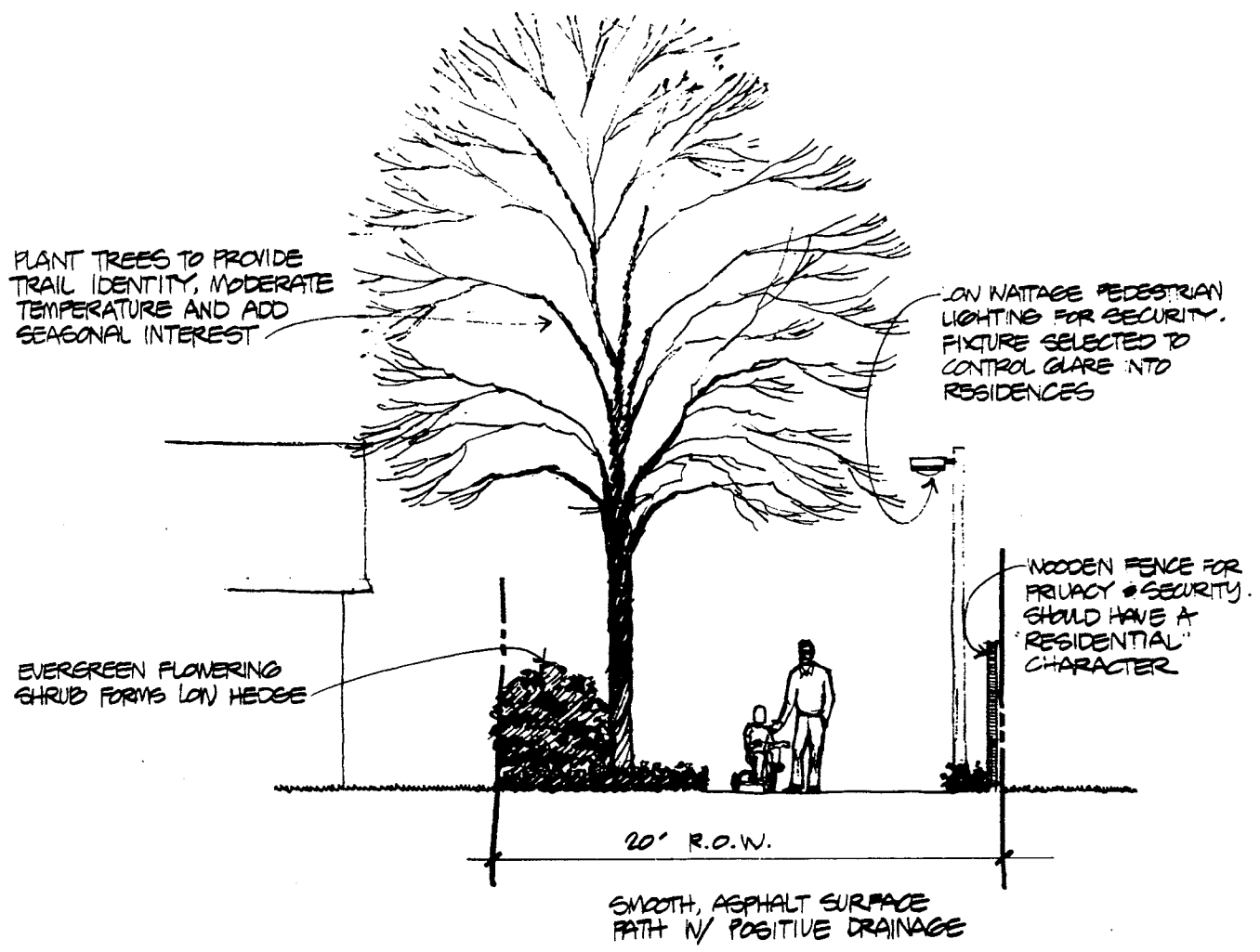
Discussion

The degree of utilization of pedestrian facilities is determined as much by their physical character as it is by their alignment. Merely connecting two places with a flat walking surface is not sufficient to promote walking as a means of travel or recreation. The design of pedestrian facilities, whether basic sidewalk improvements or specialized pathways, should address safety, aesthetics, and convenience.


Safety is enhanced by increased separation of pedestrians and vehicles, particularly along arterials. Along most neighborhood streets, landscaped parking strips are an appropriate separator between sidewalks and streets. Where situations permit, such as the proposed extension of Northriver Drive, additional separation can be achieved for both sidewalks and jogging paths.

Although the Chestnut Streetway and Sinto Greenbelt pathways appear to present even greater pedestrian safety, as relatively vehicle-free facilities, both routes intersect several vehicle streets, requiring special design considerations at these crossings.

If routes are not covered by existing street light illumination, new lighting is required for safe movement and crime deterrence.



Typical Chestnut Streetway Section



The walking experience should be enjoyable. Street tree plantings along sidewalks and "formal" pathways such as Chestnut Street provide shade and visual interest. More informal plantings of deciduous and coniferous trees are appropriate along routes such as the Sinto Greenbelt and Northriver Drive pathway. Pathway surfaces should be varied to suit the use and environment.

Surface treatments include traditional concrete sidewalks, asphalt, cinders/crushed rock, concrete unit pavers, decorative brick and tile. Concrete sidewalks are appropriate for all neighborhood streets, but their design may include additional surface detailing to highlight special districts or routes. Brick pavers, for example, work well as sidewalk borders in neighborhood shopping areas, unifying the business district and adding visual interest to the streetscape. Asphalt's relative low cost, easy maintenance, and durability make it an attractive choice for major, high traffic facilities such as the Chestnut and Sinto pathways. Secondary paths along the Sinto Greenbelt and Northriver Drive may be surfaced in pervious materials such as cinders or gravel to compliment a natural landscape. Street furniture, signage, lighting and drinking fountains are other elements that contribute to pleasant walking experiences. The design of these improvements should relate to their setting and visually contribute to the enjoyment of the pedestrian environment. The design should also be low maintenance and vandal-resistant.

2. Bicycle Policies

POLICY 20 Encourage bicycling in the neighborhood as a recreation for the total community as well as a means of travel for neighborhood residents.

Discussion

The City Bikeways Plan, Figure 2 provides ample policy guidance to enhance bicycling in all areas of the City. The Plan highlights improvements in West Central that will attract both leisure and commuter bicyclists to neighborhood streets. Priority, short-term improvements include sign installation along designated routes and street paving or a new separated, hard surface bikeway along Ohio Avenue.

Removal of the Sinto rail spur trackage will eliminate road hazards at many locations where the tracks intersect neighborhood streets.

Pathways proposed along Chestnut Street and the Sinto rail spur offer new bicycling opportunities in the neighborhood not included in the Bikeways Plan; however, the proposed design of these facilities will limit their use to low-speed, leisure cycling.

Transit Policies

Public Transit will grow in importance as a means of travel for residents and employees in West Central. The Neighborhood's proximity to downtown, government offices, cultural activities, medical services, etc., contribute to the attractiveness of transit as a convenient and inexpensive form of travel. Full development of the neighborhood at densities specified in the Land Use Element will generate increased demand for responsive service and comfortable facilities, particularly to serve new development in the southern and southeastern portions of the neighborhood.

1. Transit Service and Facilities

POLICY 21 Promote public transit as a means of travel for all neighborhood users by providing service which is easily accessible, convenient to riders and responsive to changes in neighborhood landuse and demographic patterns.

Discussion

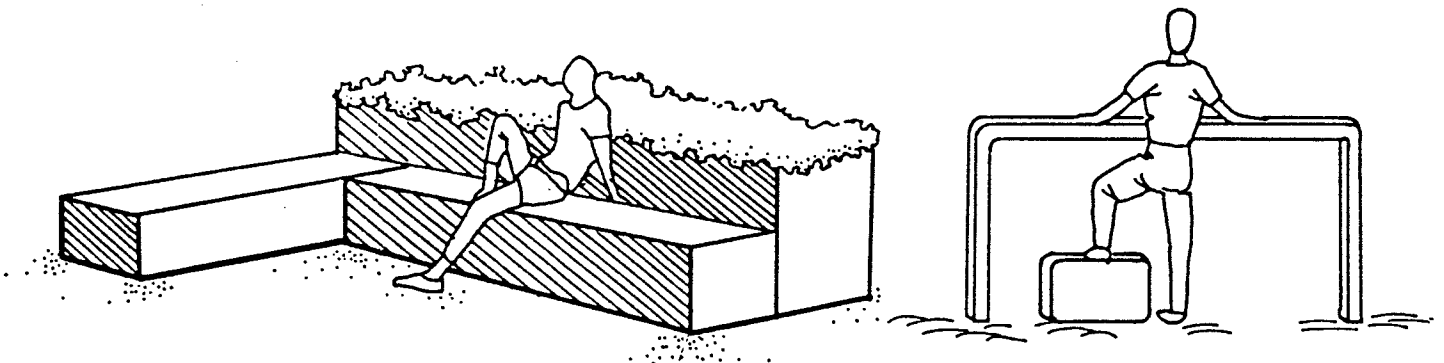
West Central benefits by its inner-city location . . . travel time by bus to many major city destinations is brief and the several routes through the neighborhood provide great accessibility to bus travel. Routes, schedules and headway intervals, however, need to respond to the neighborhood's planned increases in resident population and non-residential development. Mixed use development proposed in the southern portions of the neighborhood could significantly change ridership patterns and may warrant extension of Routes 1 and 2 into these areas.

South of Boone Avenue the potential doubling of the resident population at full development under the planned land use pattern, coupled with substantial new office use in the area, could significantly intensify circulation problems on neighborhood streets. Increased reliance on public transit is one measure to help relieve congestion.

POLICY 22 Encourage neighborhood use of public transit by developing safe, comfortable bus stop facilities at intervals along routes.

Discussion

Spokane's four-season climate puts the comfort of transit riders at risk where shelter is not available at transit stops. The economics of transit service in low-density environments does not permit shelter facilities at every stop;



Bus Stop Facilities, Concrete Sitting Wall, Leaning Rail

however, centers of neighborhood activity, e.g., the Community Center, parks and neighborhood businesses, may generate sufficient ridership to warrant shelter improvements. While shelters are commonly developed as free-standing structures, shelter may also be provided as an extension of an existing building such as the Community Center, or it may be developed as a component of a larger structure which serves other purposes, such as a park picnic shelter.

Improvements to add amenity at transit stops are not confined to fully enclosed shelter facilities. Benches, sitting walls, leaning rails, shelter

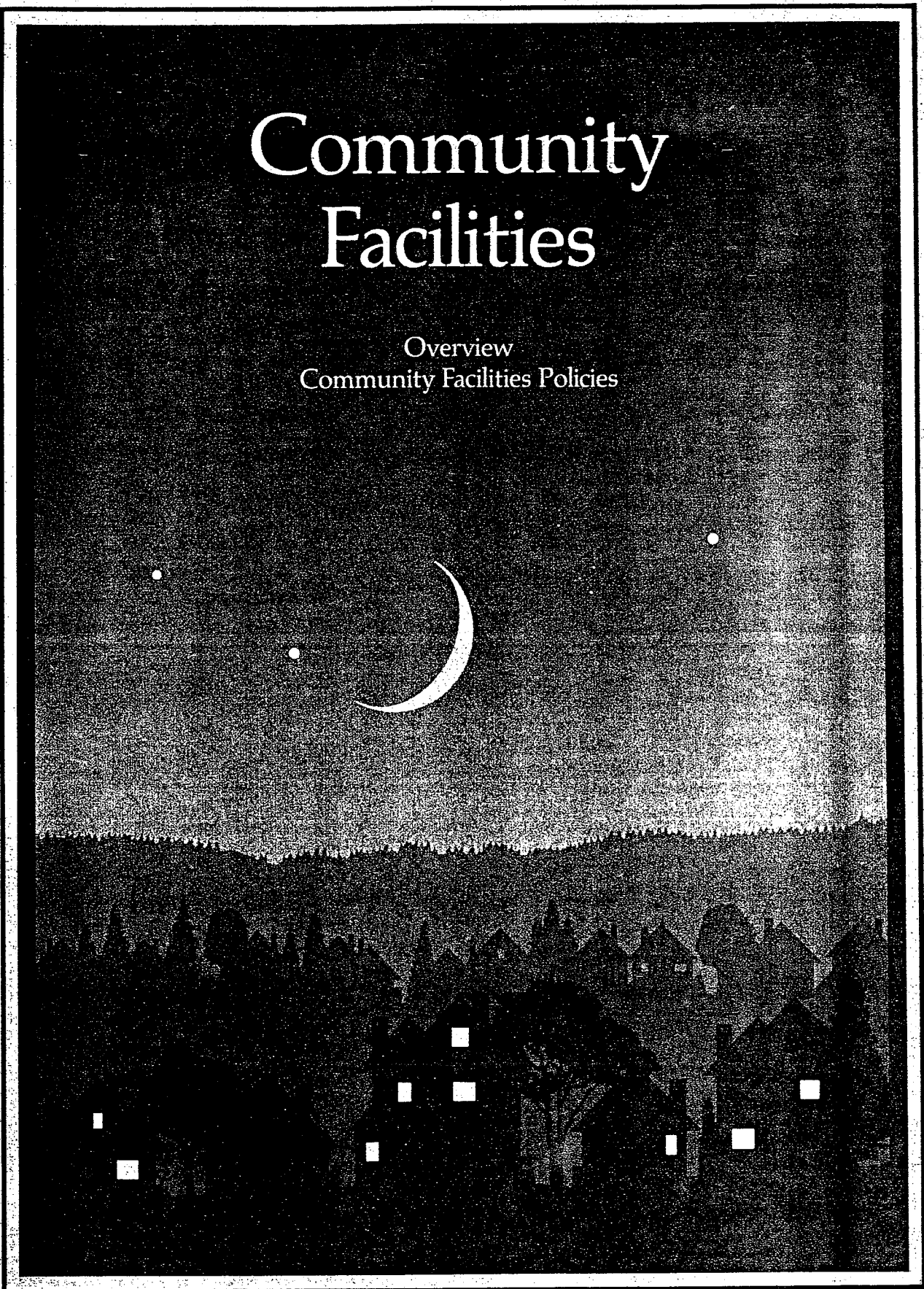
rails and similar features to add to the comfort of waiting passengers may be installed at points of lower ridership or where site dimensions prohibit large shelter structures. To varying degrees, these facilities sacrifice protection from weather for lower construction and maintenance costs. They can also be relocated with relatively minor effort and expense if changes in ridership occur. Shade trees, area lighting and informational route signs are also desirable features at most locations.

The transit system is operated by the Spokane Transit Authority (STA) and STA only maintains transit stop facilities which it has approved. Location and design of improvements should be closely coordinated with the STA board and staff.



Community Facilities

Overview
Community Facilities Policies



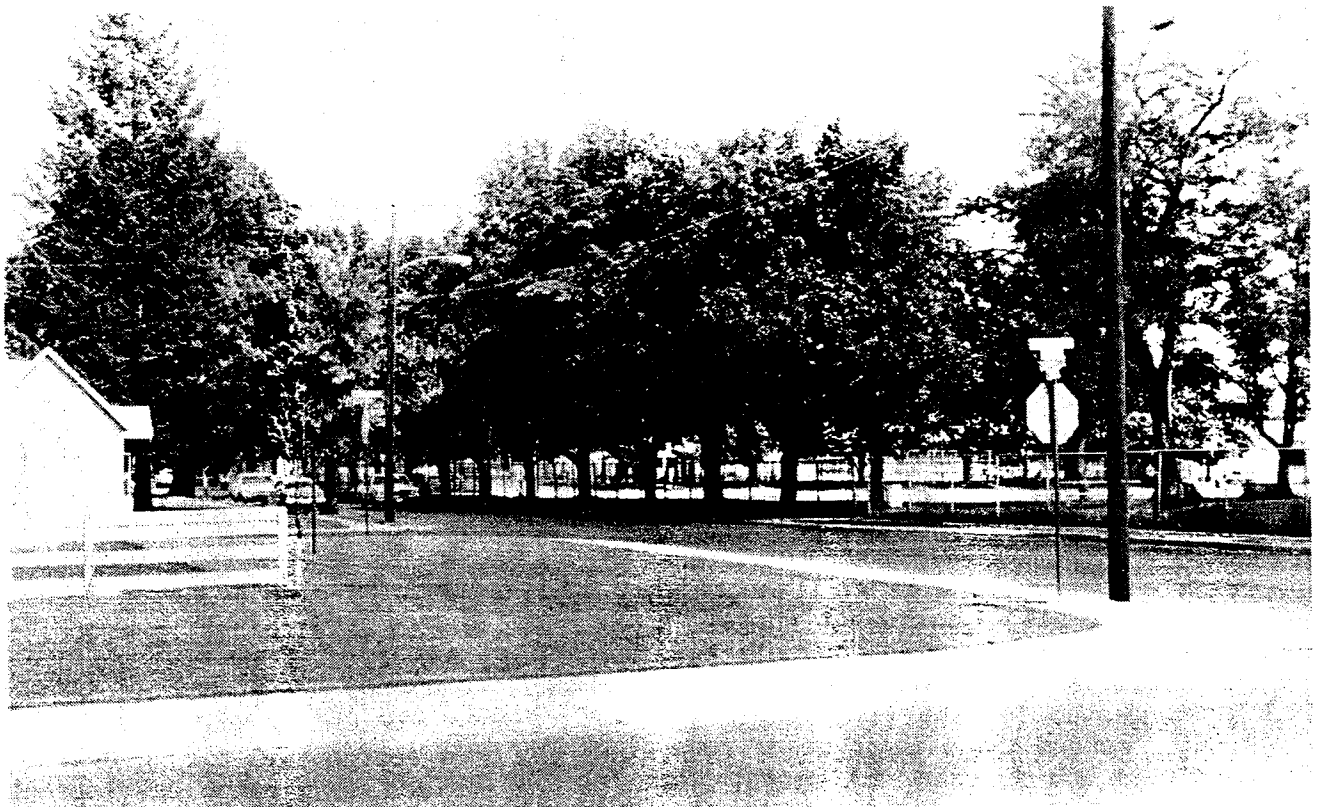
Overview

West Central's continued growth will not occur without growing pains . . . residential development of vacant land and increased population density will generate additional demands on neighborhood facilities for active and passive recreation that will be hard to meet with the City's minimal capital improvements budget. Increased use of existing facilities will further strain maintenance and operational budgets. The neighborhood enjoys public assets in riverfront open space, A.M. Cannon Park, Dutch Jake's Place and Skeet-So-Mish mini-parks, Holme's and Bryant school playgrounds and the West Central Community Center.

These properties and facilities comprise millions of dollars in public land value and capital investment, but even this economic measure is exceeded by the social value such community facilities add to the neighborhood's livability. Community facilities are considered one of the most basic elements of neighborhood environments . . . development of parks, playgrounds, and community centers is accepted as a primary tool in "building" neighborhoods.

The Community Facilities element focuses on improvements or enhancement of existing assets and on developing improved functional relationships between public facilities. Many of the proposals, such as the desire to expand Cannon Park, confirm City policies of long standing. Others, such as the planned integration of the West Central Community Center and expanded Cannon Park site, take advantage of new opportunities that have arisen recently within the neighborhood.

GOAL: Provide community facilities to meet the neighborhood's desires for active and passive recreation, social services, access to public open spaces and preservation of views and other natural features.



Community Facilities Policies

1. Neighborhood Parks/Playfields

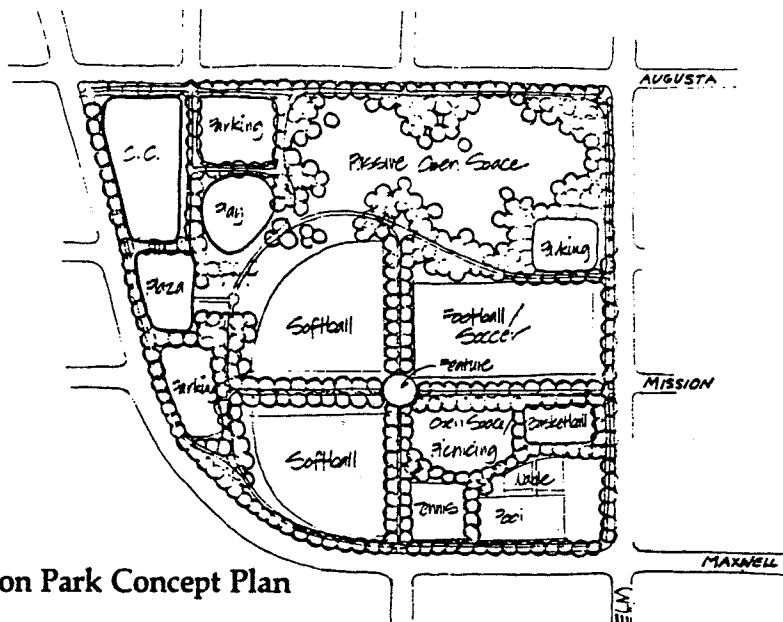
POLICY 23 Improve A.M.Cannon Park to meet the active and passive recreational demands of an increasing neighborhood population as well as those of adjacent neighborhoods.

Discussion

A.M. Cannon Park is the most heavily used neighborhood park in the City system, on a per capita basis. Plans to enlarge and redevelop the park have attained a position of high City priority on several occasions in the past 25 years, but, each time, other priorities and limited funding pushed improvements aside. Expansion of Cannon Park to 15 acres to create a "community park" is a recommendation of the City's Parks and Open Spaces Plan.

A 1983 study of land costs and potential site configurations concluded that expansion of the park northward is the most economical and operationally efficient plan. To meet the 15 acre site standard for a "community park," the expansion area would encompass four blocks of residential use bounded by Augusta, Elm, Mission and Belt.

A "concept plan" for the expanded park indicates the potential vacation of Belt Street to fully integrate the park and West Central Community Center sites. Other major features of the proposed expansion include retaining the swimming pool, adding active play and athletic facilities, increasing passive open space areas and creating additional parking capacity.



Park expansion is a \$3 million project, split equally between property acquisition and site improvement costs. A two step, phased development is suggested to balance anticipated demand for additional facilities against funding limitations. Expansion northward to Spofford, consuming two blocks of homes, is suggested for the first phase to nearly double the park's area. The long range, second phase improvement redevelops two more residential blocks between Spofford and Augusta. A master plan for the desired long range development should accommodate phasing of short and long term improvements.

POLICY 24 Provide limited "mini-park" recreational facilities at dispersed sites throughout the neighborhood, particularly in residential sub-areas where access to Cannon Park is limited by distance or arterial crossings.

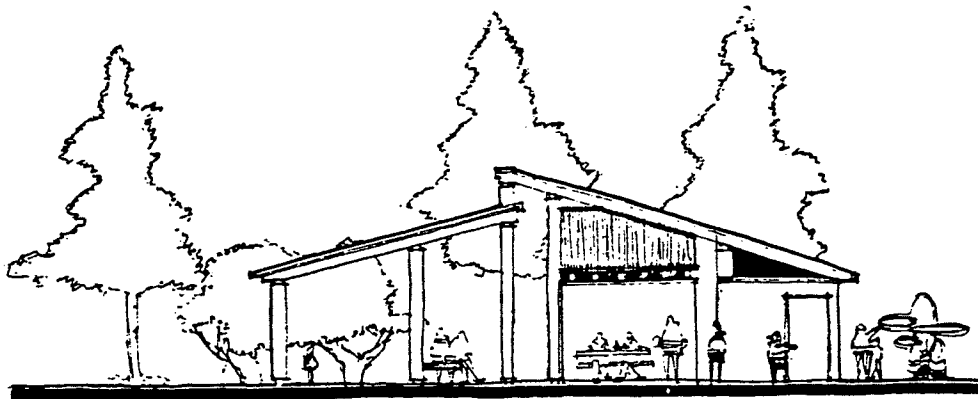
Discussion

The neighborhood's two existing mini-parks, Dutch Jake's and Skeet-So-Mish, are located in residential areas with poor access to Cannon Park. Both parks provide limited play facilities for young children, and Dutch Jake's also has an asphalt ball court for older children.

Skeet-So-Mish park's utility suffers from several site deficiencies. Access is hindered by a steep bank and arterial street frontage on the south, leaving an unpaved residential alley as the best route to the park in the interior of the block. Site dimensions allow minimal facilities, and existing improvements are committed entirely to active play for children. The site is flanked by residential structures on both sides, creating potential activity conflicts and limiting visibility (i.e., safety) to the site.

Skeet-So-Mish park should be relocated to a larger site more nearly situated in the middle of the residential sub-area bounded by Maple, Monroe, Indiana and the "bluff". A balance of active play and passive recreation should be accommodated on the new site to meet the needs of the many "seniors" as well as young children. Sites at the corners of blocks are preferred to interior properties to minimize activity conflicts with adjacent residential properties and to enhance visibility into the park.

Dutch Jake's is a heavily used park, and some of this use is characterized by conflicts between the activities of young and old children. Vacant lots to the north and west of the park offer an opportunity to expand the park and better separate user groups. The expanded site should include more facilities for families and senior citizens and may incorporate a combined picnic/transit shelter along the new Broadway frontage.



Dutch Jake's Mini-Park, Picnic and Multi-Purpose Shelter

Additional "mini-park" facilities may be required in the southern portion of the neighborhood, depending on the number and occupancy of new housing units encouraged on the large undeveloped sites along Ohio and Ide. A substantial increase in families with young children may generate active play demand in excess of Dutch Jake's capacity . . . similarly, a new resident profile of young professionals or retired persons would generate demand for specialized park facilities for these groups.

POLICY 25 Encourage "shared-use" development and operation of public school playgrounds to provide additional active play opportunities for neighborhood children.

Discussion

The Holmes and Bryant school playgrounds are major public capital investments that can be utilized by the general neighborhood population for active recreation. The Holmes playground includes play apparatus constructed with neighborhood Community Development funds and has provided a valuable play area for children in the western portion of the neighborhood. Bryant School serves a special population and the playground is secured with a high chain-link fence around its perimeter, denying general public use of the playground facilities.

During non-school hours, Bryant's play facilities should be accessible to residents of the area. Installation of secured entry gates at the southeast and southwest corners of the playfield would allow after-school-hours play by neighborhood children without conflicting with the school's primary function.

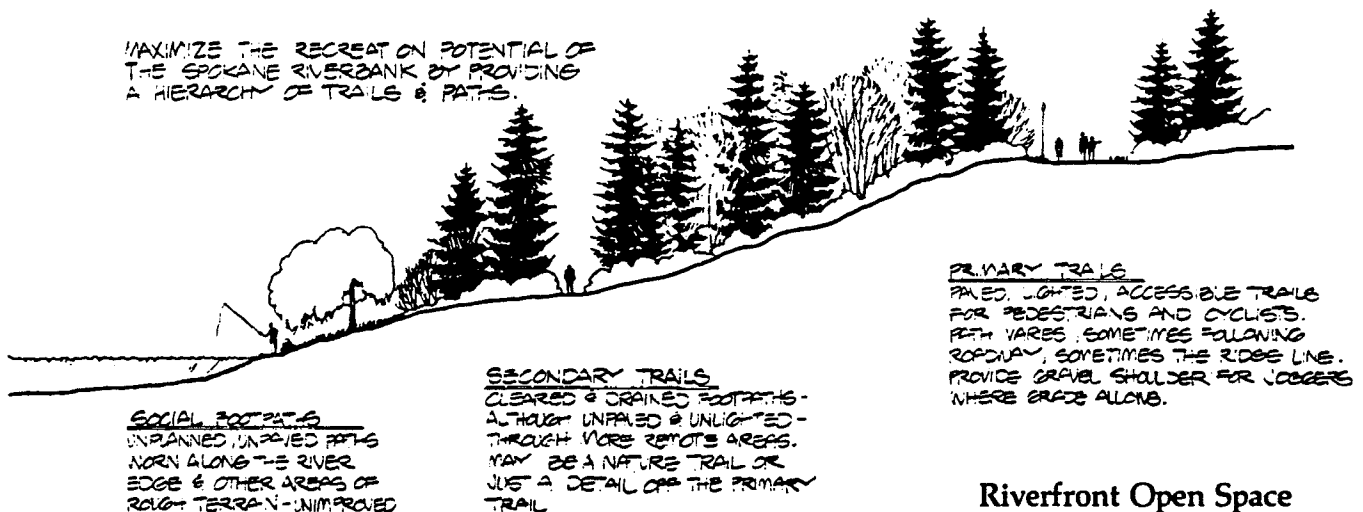
The neighborhood, City Parks Department and School District 81 should continue the history of shared-use playfield operation. School grounds are an important asset in the inventory of public recreation facilities and, like neighborhood parks, should be considered primary facilities to meet active recreation needs.


2. Open Space Areas

POLICY 26 Insure public access to all riverbank areas through public acquisition or easement.

Discussion

Residents would like to see access to the river increased. Public open space should generally extend all along the riverbank from the shoreline to the nearest adjacent street. To increase public access, acquisition through purchase or donation is the ultimate objective, but easements are a short-term alternative. Over one-half of the riverfront property is already City-owned.





POLICY 27 Maintain the natural environment which predominates along the riverfront and emphasize passive recreation in new public development.

Discussion

The uniqueness of the river within its urban setting is the extent of natural landscape along both shores of the Lower Gorge. This riparian habitat is vulnerable to major development or intensive human use. Fortunately, neighborhood parks and playgrounds can meet the active recreation needs of residents, leaving the undeveloped riverfront for passive recreation use, such as, walking, bicycling, contemplation and nature-watching. Limited picnic and child play areas are appropriate within confined activity nodes distributed at large intervals along the riverfront pathway. A long-term program should be instituted to ecologically balance the mix of "volunteer" deciduous trees with indigenous conifers.

3. Viewpoint/View Corridor Policies

POLICY 28 Develop public viewpoints at locations which provide good views of the river valley and are easily accessed by foot.

Discussion

Within the neighborhood there are views of the river and Lower Gorge which range from intimate, tranquil scenes along the river's edge to spectacular views of the thundering lower falls. Some of these views occur at unimproved points along neighborhood streets or other public right-of-way, and others occur along the riverbank but are not conveniently accessible. Viewpoints with seating, lighting, orientation graphics, etc., should be established at opportunity sites determined by property ownership, topography, accessibility, and quality of view.

POLICY 29 Maintain the opportunity to discover views from locations along pedestrian paths which are not appropriate for designation and improvement as viewpoints.

Discussion

View experiences within the neighborhood should not be limited to locations with improved viewpoints. "Discovery" of views along meandering pathways adds elements of interest and surprise to the walking experience. Within the riverfront environment, these discoveries may be made along pathways which follow the river's edge, with views framed by the natural vegetation. The design of public improvements, including pathways should be sensitive to maintaining these view opportunities and providing a feeling of discovery.

POLICY 30 Maintain view corridors from the neighborhood's interior to the riverfront to extend the positive influence of the riverfront amenity into the neighborhood.

Discussion

The best opportunity to maintain views of the river valley from the neighborhood interior is the retention of open corridors where the extension of public right-of-way creates visual "paths" to the valley's crest. These situations occur where streets have been platted on a "grid" to the edge of development. Acquisition, easement or "binding" site plan should be used to maintain view corridors through new development.

POLICY 31 Maintain views within the neighborhood which visually capture or define special neighborhood features or characteristics.



Discussion

The bluff which runs northwest through the neighborhood from the vicinity of Boone and Monroe provides limited opportunities to view portions of the neighborhood. Views of the County Courthouse which once existed at Sharp and Jefferson and at Sinto and Cedar are now blocked by the new county jail "tower", but these locations still provide good vantages of the county government complex and new STA facilities and views of the downtown skyline and South Hill. Further west, the diminishing bluff provides less advantage to view the predominate residential neighborhood to the south . . . Belt in the vicinity of Indiana is characteristic of the limited views afforded by the street right-of-ways which break over the bluff and open views to the south.

Street tree pruning is required to restore excellent views of the Courthouse tower from Mallon and Broadway as they run west into the neighborhood's residential core. The maintenance of street trees is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner, but the loss of this view experience to the public may warrant some public investment to remedy the situation. Many of the trees have matured beyond their confined setting and should be replaced with new stock.

4. Community and Senior Center Policies


POLICY 32 Provide community center facilities and programs which are responsive to the community's needs for recreational activities and localized social services and which effectively contribute to the economic and social revitalization of the area.

Discussion

The West Central Community Center is one of three new facilities in the City established to address problems within the City's three major low income areas. The Center provides eleven social, health, recreational, educational, and disabled and handicapped rehabilitation programs and services to its service area community. It also provides a focal point for community organization and assists the City government in the planning and development of public services and physical improvements in the area. Residents of the neighborhood comprise about one-third of the Center's service area population of 25,000.

The Community Center provides programs and services on the basis of needs identified through a formalized "Community Needs Assessment." Assessments of the service area were conducted in 1978 and 1985. This assessment process should be conducted periodically to insure that Center activities respond to changing conditions in the neighborhood.

The Center should be integrated with A.M. Cannon Park, both physically and functionally, to enhance its setting and operations. As the park is expanded northward (Policy 23), the vacation of Belt St. eliminates the physical separation between the park and Center. Parking can be expanded adjacent to the Center to serve patrons of both the Center and the Park. With increased access to park facilities, the Center can expand recreational and social activities for all age groups.



POLICY 33 Maintain the Sinto Community Center to provide social programs and activities for the neighborhood's elderly population.

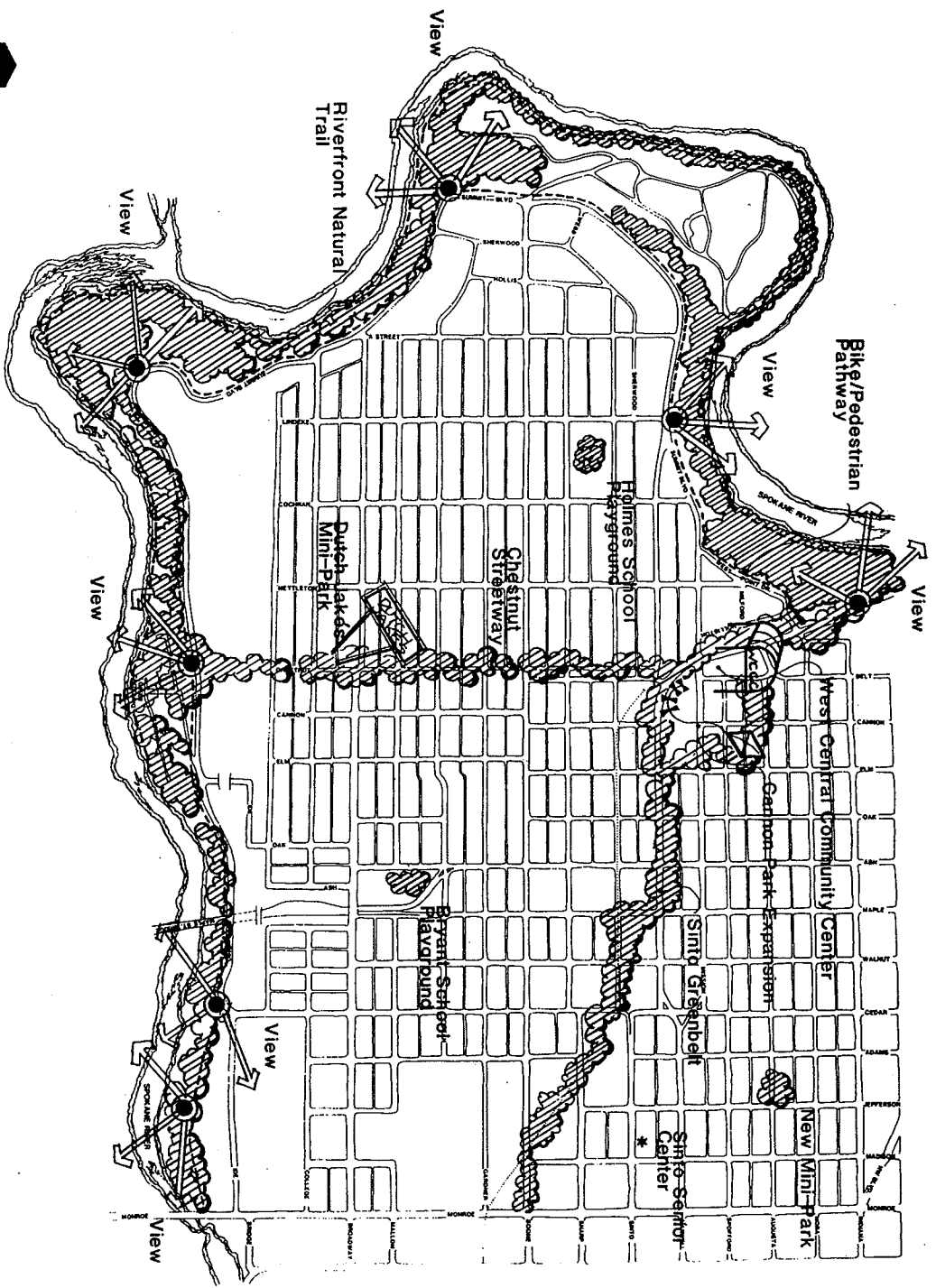
Discussion

One in every seven West Central residents is 65 years old or older. Many of these senior citizens have lived in the neighborhood all their life --their personal histories have made a significant contribution to the social history of the neighborhood.

The Sinto Community Center provides a social and recreational focus for the neighborhood's elderly. The Center is well located in an old structure within a low-density residential environment. It is most easily accessed by residents in the northeast corner of the neighborhood, but a broader service area is accommodated by public transit and the Center's own ride services.

The Sinto Center provides complementary programs to those of the West Central Community Center for the elderly population. However, it is a facility that the patrons can call "their own", providing a special social environment that is found in few other settings. The Center should continue to be improved at its current location, unless more modern facilities become available in the area.

West Central Neighborhood DESIGN PLAN Community Facilities



Spokane City Plan Commission

Figure 3