



Chapter 11

Neighborhoods

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11.1 Introduction

The Future of Spokane's Neighborhoods

The neighborhoods chapter contains goals and policies that set the direction for citywide neighborhood growth and development. They establish basic principles that apply to all neighborhoods, ensuring an overall growth pattern that represents the interests and desires of the entire community.

Policies pertaining to neighborhood design and preservation are included in Chapter 8, Urban Design and Historic Preservation, DP 6, Neighborhood Qualities, and DP 7, Local Determination. Policies pertaining to land use can be found in Chapter 3, Land Use, LU 3.2, Centers and Corridors, LU 3.3, Planned Neighborhood Centers, LU 3.4, Planning for Centers and Corridors, and LU 3.5 Mix of Uses in Centers.



This chapter's goals and policies are intended to enable Spokane to be a cohesive network of individual neighborhoods by providing residents with a wide range of choices of housing locations and options; the preservation of distinctive neighborhood character; attractive and safe streetscapes; transportation options; quality schools; inviting gathering places; proximity to a variety of public services; cultural, social, recreational, and entertainment opportunities; and finally, a sense of place and community – a city citizens can proudly call home – a city of neighborhoods.



11.2 Vision and Values

Spokane volunteers working to develop the 2001 Comprehensive Plan identified important themes in relation to Spokane's current and future growth. A series of visions and values was crafted for each element of the Comprehensive Plan that describes specific performance objectives. From the Visions and Values document, adopted in 1996 by the City Council, the Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies were generated.

Vision

"Spokane's neighborhoods will be safe, inclusive, diverse, and livable with a variety of compatible services. Existing neighborhoods will be preserved or enhanced and new distinctive neighborhoods, including the downtown area, will be established so that a sense of community is promoted."

Values

"The things that are important to Spokane's future include:

- Preserving or enhancing older neighborhoods that make Spokane unique;
- Developing new neighborhoods that have individual character and identity;
- Encouraging the development of neighborhoods that feel like small towns, that provide a variety of compatible services, and that have schools and community centers;
- Preserving or enhancing inner city neighborhoods;
- Recognizing downtown Spokane as a mixed-use neighborhood with a diversity of housing; and
- Ensuring safe, relaxing, attractive, livable, enjoyable, economically diverse neighborhoods."



11.3 Goals and Policies

Goals and policies provide specificity for planning and decision-making. Overall, they indicate desired directions, accomplishments, or aims in relation to the growth and development of Spokane. Additional materials for this chapter are located in the Draft Comprehensive Plan/EIS, Volume 2, Chapter 25, Neighborhoods.

N 1 THE DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

Goal: Recognize downtown Spokane as the primary economic and cultural center of the region and improve its viability as a desirable neighborhood in which to live and conduct business.

Policies

N 1.1 Downtown Development

Develop downtown Spokane as the primary economic and cultural center of the region and provide a variety of housing, recreation, and daily service opportunities that attract and retain neighborhood residents.

Discussion: Enhancing downtown Spokane as a vital and desirable neighborhood in which to live attracts a diverse and stable resident population. The vitality of the downtown neighborhood is key to the success of preserving the quality of life in city neighborhoods, particularly those neighborhoods that are close to the city core. Healthy neighborhoods provide the downtown area with a market support base for its retail, services, restaurants, and entertainment sectors.

N 2 NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Reinforce the stability and diversity of the city's neighborhoods in order to attract long-term residents and businesses and to ensure the city's residential quality, cultural opportunities, and economic vitality.

Policies

N 2.1 Neighborhood Quality of Life

Ensure that neighborhoods continue to offer residents transportation and living options, safe streets, quality schools, public services, and cultural, social, and recreational opportunities in order to sustain and enhance the vitality, diversity, and quality of life within neighborhoods.

Discussion: Spokane enjoys a rich variety of living opportunities within its individual neighborhoods, each with its unique character. Maintaining and enhancing our neighborhood assets is key to providing stability within neighborhoods and Spokane citizens with a prolonged sense of pride.



N 2.2 Neighborhood Centers

Develop neighborhoods that enable citizens to live, work, shop, socialize, and receive other essential services within their neighborhood.

Discussion: Mixed-use Neighborhood Centers in designated areas throughout the city provide neighborhood services as well as economic and cultural opportunities that are centrally located, easily accessible, and affordable.

N 2.3 Special Needs

Ensure that neighborhood-based services are available for special needs and located in proximity to public transit routes in order to be accessible to local residents.



Discussion: Special needs services can include child/adult care services, long-term care for special needs, special needs housing, and other related services which recognize self-direction and participation by all residents and/or recipients of the services.

N 2.4 Neighborhood Improvement

Encourage revitalization and improvement programs to conserve and upgrade existing properties and buildings.



N 2.5 Neighborhood Arts

Devote space in all neighborhoods for public art, including sculptures, murals, special sites, and facilities.

Additional information on Neighborhood Centers is found in Chapter 3, Land Use. Additionally, policies related to housing options – including neighborhoods and Neighborhood Centers – are included in Chapter 6, Housing.

N 3 NEIGHBORHOOD FACILITIES

Goal: Maximize the usefulness of existing neighborhood facilities and services while minimizing the impacts of major facilities located within neighborhoods.

Policies

N 3.1 Multipurpose Use of Neighborhood Buildings

Work with neighborhoods to develop a strategy for the multipurpose use of existing structures and the extension of services within neighborhoods for neighborhood activities.



Discussion: Rather than constructing new buildings for neighborhood services and activities, the city should make better use of existing buildings and parks. The city should extend facility hours, hire additional staff, or provide the opportunity for neighborhood volunteers to staff the facilities. The City of Spokane and neighborhoods can also partner with private resources to acquire needed space for neighborhood activities such as performances, exhibitions, classes, and neighborhood meetings.

N 3.2 Major Facilities

Use the siting process outlined under "Adequate Public Lands and Facilities" (LU 6) as a guide when evaluating potential locations for facilities within city neighborhoods, working with neighborhood councils and/or interest-specific committees to explore mitigation measures, public amenity enhancements, and alternative locations.



Discussion: Traffic and noise are just two negative impacts of locating a major facility within a neighborhood. The city needs to examine the benefits of centralizing these large facilities so that neighborhoods are not negatively impacted. The city can look to mitigation measures or a public amenity in exchange for major facility siting. In addition, the fact that property is city-owned is not a sufficient reason for choosing a site for a large facility, and alternative locations should be explored. The Land Use Policy 6.11, "Siting Essential Public Facilities," describes the siting process contained in the "Spokane County Regional Siting Process for Essential Public Facilities." This process should also be applied to siting decisions relative to essential public facilities of a local nature within neighborhoods, such as libraries, schools, and community centers.

N 4 TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

Goal: Provide Spokane residents with clean air, safe streets, and quiet, peaceful living environments by reducing the volume of automobile traffic passing through neighborhoods and promoting alternative modes of circulation.

Policies

N 4.1 Neighborhood Traffic Impact

Consider impacts to neighborhoods when planning the city transportation network.

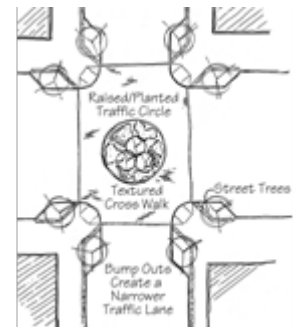


Discussion: City growth has impacted many older, established neighborhoods, particularly those that are close to the city core. The primary impact to these established neighborhoods is from traffic passing through them from new developments. Streets are often widened to accommodate the additional traffic, which produces more traffic, air pollution, and safety concerns.

N 4.2 Neighborhood Streets

Refrain, when possible, from constructing new arterials that bisect neighborhoods and from widening streets within neighborhoods for the purpose of accommodating additional automobiles.

Discussion: Though designed to increase convenience to outlying housing, the addition of major arterials is compromising older neighborhoods. In addition to increasing traffic congestion, reducing air quality, and posing safety hazards, arterials that pass through neighborhoods physically divide, disrupt, and diminish the character and social fabric of the neighborhood.



N 4.3 Traffic Patterns

Alter traffic patterns and redesign neighborhood streets in order to reduce non-neighborhood traffic, discourage speeding, and improve neighborhood safety.

Discussion: When arterials become congested, drivers look for alternative routes and often use neighborhood streets for short-cuts. This habit has increased the volume of automobile traffic in city neighborhoods and has caused increased safety, noise, and air pollution concerns for neighborhood residents. To help deter the inappropriate use of neighborhood streets by non-neighborhood traffic, the city should take steps to alter traffic patterns and redesign neighborhood streets by implementing a program that includes large street trees, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, traffic circles, stop signs, and narrower streets.

N 4.4 Neighborhood Business Traffic

Ensure that the size of a neighborhood business is appropriate for the size of the neighborhood it serves so that trips generated by non-local traffic through the neighborhood are minimized.

Discussion: Neighborhood businesses should be of the size and type to fit neighborhood character and to serve the needs of neighborhood residents. Larger businesses within neighborhoods often attract community and regional traffic. By limiting the size of businesses within neighborhoods, fewer trips are generated through the neighborhood by non-local traffic.

N 4.5 Multimodal Transportation

Promote a variety of transportation options to reduce automobile dependency and neighborhood traffic.

N 4.6 Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections

Establish a continuous pedestrian and bicycle network within and between all neighborhoods.

N 4.7 Pedestrian Design

Design neighborhoods for pedestrians.

Discussion: Neighborhoods become more stable, desirable living environments through the use of basic community building design principles that include more transportation options, convenience, safety, social interaction, and aesthetically pleasing streetscapes.



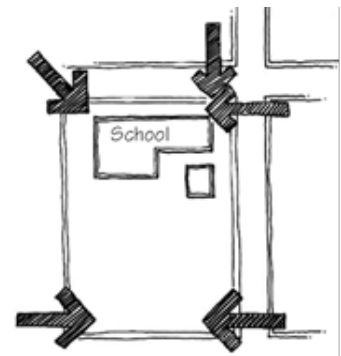
N 4.8 Sidewalk Program

Develop a sidewalk program to maintain, repair, or build new sidewalks in existing neighborhoods, and require sidewalks in new neighborhoods, concurrent with development.

N 4.9 Pedestrian Safety

Design neighborhoods for pedestrian safety.

Discussion: Pedestrian safety can be achieved through such means as adequate pedestrian lighting and landscape design, sidewalk systems, pathways, building access that is visible from the street, and open views.



N 4.10 School Walking and Bus Routes

Coordinate with local school districts, private schools, and colleges to determine which bus and walking routes to and from neighborhood schools provide the highest degree of pedestrian safety.

Additional policies related to transportation as it affects neighborhoods are included in Chapter 4, Transportation.



N 5 OPEN SPACE

Goal: Increase the number of open gathering spaces, greenbelts, trails, and pedestrian bridges within and/or between neighborhoods.

Policies

N 5.1 Future Parks Planning

Utilize neighborhood groups to work with the City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department to locate land and develop financing strategies that meet the level of service standards for neighborhood parks and/or open space.

Discussion: Parks, squares, or other open space within neighborhoods provide neighborhood families with areas for recreation and gives neighbors the opportunity to gather and socialize, reinforcing a sense of home and community. A public-private collaboration to find supplemental funding for parks on an individual neighborhood basis is a possible way to ensure that neighborhoods have adequate open space. Another use of open space is for the development of community gardens, which can also serve as a tool for developing a sense of community.

N 5.2 Parks and Squares in Neighborhood Centers

Include a park and/or square in each neighborhood center.

N 5.3 Linkages

Link neighborhoods with an open space greenbelt system or pedestrian and bicycle paths.

Discussion: Linking neighborhoods allows for reduced automobile use and increased opportunities for alternative forms of transportation.



N 6 THE ENVIRONMENT

Goal: Protect and enhance the natural and built environment within neighborhoods.

Policies

N 6.1 Environmental Planning

Protect the natural and built environment within neighborhoods.

Discussion: Efforts must continue to be made to preserve the environment when introducing new projects into established neighborhoods, when developing new neighborhoods, and as a daily exercise in maintaining a clean living environment for health, safety, and aesthetic purposes.



N 6.2 Code Enforcement

Enforce the city codes for public nuisances impacting neighborhood properties.

Discussion: It is the duty of local government to pursue compliance with codes with a proactive code enforcement program.

See Policy LGC 6.1, Enforcement of Land Use and Development Codes. Refer to the Spokane Municipal Code, Section 10.08.010, "Litter and Rubbish," and Section 10.08.030, "Nuisance," for applicable regulations.

N 6.3 Open Space and Nature Corridors

Identify and protect nature and wildlife corridors within and between neighborhoods.

N 6.4 Maintenance of City Property

Ensure that city land, property, and infrastructure within neighborhoods are adequately maintained to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

Discussion: It is imperative that the city maintains its property within neighborhoods at a level that serves as a good example to citizens. Properly caring for city property protects the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens while improving aesthetic values and quality of life.



N 7 SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Goal: Promote efforts that provide neighborhoods with social amenities and interaction and a sense of community.

Policies

N 7.1 Gathering Places

Increase the number of public gathering places within neighborhoods.

Discussion: Increasing the number of public gathering places in neighborhoods encourages neighborhood socialization, resulting in a more cohesive and safe neighborhood. A park, plaza, or a favorite retail establishment within a mixed-use neighborhood center can serve as a gathering place. Sites outside a center, such as a neighborhood park, church, or community center are also suitable for neighborhood meetings and social gatherings.

N 7.2 City Hall Outreach

Encourage City Hall outreach efforts in neighborhoods.

Discussion: Outreach efforts might include such activities as providing neighborhoods with public information regarding neighborhood and city announcements, newsletters, or other information. The city will work with neighborhoods to determine the need, if any, and the preferred venue for outreach activities.

N 8 NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROCESS

Goal: Ensure a sense of identity and belonging for each neighborhood throughout the city and the adjacent Urban Growth Area through a neighborhood planning process that is all-inclusive, maintains the integrity of neighborhoods, implements the comprehensive plan, and empowers neighborhoods in their decision-making.

Policies

N 8.1 Inclusive Neighborhood Planning

Ensure that neighborhood planning is conducted through the cooperation and contributions of all interested parties, including institutions, organizations, and individuals of all ages, whether resident, property owner, business owner, or employee.

Discussion: The City of Spokane Planning and Development Services, Office of Neighborhood Services, Community Assembly, and Neighborhood Councils will participate in community outreach efforts to help ensure neighborhood representation during neighborhood planning. Sufficient resources will be used in



the process to allow accessible, full and fair participation by citizens, making special efforts to accommodate participation by everyone.

N 8.2 Neighborhood Planning Process

Ensure that the neighborhood planning process carries out the city's firm commitment to neighborhood planning, involves simultaneous consideration of city and neighborhood goals and strategies, and includes representatives of both the city and neighborhood working together.

Discussion: While many of the complex issues and opportunities facing the city can be effectively addressed at a citywide level, others need more specific solutions. In addition, neighborhoods may face issues and opportunities different from other parts of the city. Neighborhood planning helps to address individual neighborhood issues and opportunities in order to maintain and enhance the City of Spokane's quality of life.

The city is committed to continuing its long tradition of neighborhood planning activities that implement the comprehensive plan, even though the planning process is not static – it evolves over time to reflect both the need for additional neighborhood planning and city resources.

N 8.3 City Participation in Neighborhood Planning

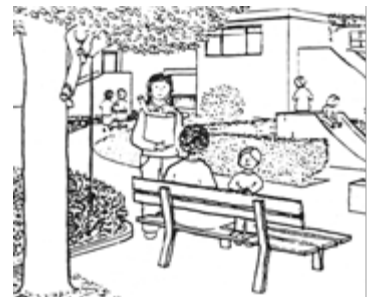
Require neighborhoods to coordinate and consult with the City of Spokane Planning and Development Services when conducting neighborhood planning.

Discussion: It is important that neighborhoods coordinate with the city when developing their plans to ensure that the plans do not conflict with the comprehensive plan or federal, state, and/or local regulations. Only those neighborhoods that coordinated with the city will have reasonable assurance of neighborhood plan review, adoption, or action by the city. The city will provide staff to coordinate and consult with the neighborhoods to ensure that neighborhood goals, policies, and implementation measures are viable.

N 8.4 Consistency of Plans

Maintain consistency between neighborhood planning documents and the comprehensive plan.

Discussion: Neighborhood planning shall be conducted within the framework of the comprehensive plan, and further, the Growth Management Act requires that these plans be consistent with the comprehensive plan.



N 8.5 Neighborhood Planning Coordination

Require neighborhoods to coordinate planning and review of individual neighborhood plans so that neighborhood projects have minimal negative impacts on other neighborhoods.

Discussion: Neighborhoods need to work cooperatively with each other to ensure that visions and plans do not conflict. In the past, solutions to one neighborhood's traffic, safety, air pollution, noise, and design problems may have negatively impacted another neighborhood. Spokane should be defined as a city of neighborhoods with interwoven plans and policies.

N 8.6 Neighborhood Planning Recommendations

Consider recommendations from neighborhood planning in the context of the city as a whole.

Discussion: Incorporate neighborhood planning recommendations into city prioritization processes for capital expenditures or other decision-making, only after any required studies, analyses, review, public process, and proper procedure have been performed in a city-wide context.

N 8.7 Agreement for Joint Planning

Agree with the county, affected neighborhoods, and interested stakeholders on a consistent process for developing neighborhood plans within the city's unincorporated Urban Growth Area.

N 8.8 Neighborhood Planning Outside the City

Use the City of Spokane and Spokane County planning processes when conducting planning in neighborhoods within the city's unincorporated UGA.

Discussion: It is anticipated that neighborhood plans shall be completed for neighborhoods within the city's unincorporated UGA.

N 8.9 Consistency of Plans Outside the City

Maintain consistency between the city's unincorporated UGA neighborhood plans and the City of Spokane and Spokane County Comprehensive Plans.

Discussion: The city and county will work with these neighborhoods to help them develop a document that is consistent with both comprehensive plans, yet achieves the goals of the neighborhood. It is expected that this process will result in the development of one neighborhood plan, even though the neighborhood may be in both jurisdictions.

