



East Central



East Central - Days of Yore

One of the first communities in Spokane to be developed with numerous suburban neighborhoods was a large tract of land east of the city called East Central Spokane. It was roughly bounded on the north by Trent Avenue, then later by Sprague Avenue, and extended south to Fourteenth Avenue. Spreading east from Division Street, the East Central area stretched for more than five miles to the city limits at Havana Street. Numerous multiple-block subdivisions were platted within the extensive East Central area.



According to an aerial perspective drawn in 1887, East Central Spokane was originally dotted with pine trees and covered with wild grasses and meadowland. Indians lived, fished, hunted, and traveled through the area on a regular basis. As reported in an April 20, 2000 article in the Spokesman-Review, Southeast Boulevard, which winds up the hill above Liberty Park to Twenty-Ninth Avenue, was first an Indian trail that was made into a road by pioneers who later settled the area. Spokane historian Nancy Compau explained in the article that “immigrants were attracted to Spokane with promises of work and farmland, and traveled there on ‘immigrant trains.’ Scandinavians, Italians, Russians, African Americans, French, and Poles settled into the East Central neighborhood, one of the oldest parts of Spokane. It was a good place to build because it was flat and easily accessible. The Spokane Inland Empire Electric Railway traversed through the East Central Neighborhood from downtown and east to Liberty Lake, Hayden Lake and into the Palouse with the Electric current being changed at the “Changing Station”.



East Central Spokane grew as an outgrowth of industrial development, which was built east of the city’s downtown core. Developed in the late 1800s and early 1900s as a working-class neighborhood, East Central Spokane was colloquially known as “Union Park,” a name originated from a concentrated industrial settlement that developed along Trent and Sprague Avenues. Union Park was described as the factory section of town. Nearby were lumber mills, flour mills and sawmills. The people who lived in Union Park were thrifty, hard-working people many of whom had immigrated from Italy and the Scandinavian countries. Most of Spokane’s banking, commerce, and merchant based businesses were established in the city’s central business district, located along Riverside Avenue west of Division and Bernard Streets, while industrial enterprises sporadically developed east of the downtown core along the Northern Pacific Railroad tracks and along Trent and Sprague Avenues. Mill sites, horse-and-buggy services followed by the automobile centers,



The East Central Neighborhood Council meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month (Sept. – July) at 6:30pm at the East Central Community Center – 500 S. Stone St.

eastcentral.spokaneneighborhoods.org





and a variety of stores, shops, markets, banks, and bars were clustered along Sprague and Trent Avenues. During the period from about 1889 to the early 1950s, the land south of Sprague was developed for residential purposes. Hundreds of small, affordable homes were built on 50-foot-wide lots. House styles were mostly vernacular expressions as interpreted by Spokane builders and from house plan catalogues that were widely distributed throughout the country. Old-timers remembered when land in the area sold for \$5 an acre and homes rented for \$5-\$10 a month.

Life in East Central - Today



Interstate-90 Freeway became the dividing line in the neighborhood in the late 1950s. Traffic through Spokane via East Sprague had become congested and plans were made to build the freeway corridor of 6-8 lanes. The building of the freeway destroyed the Historic Liberty Park and removed many hundreds of homes from Division to Havana on 2nd and 3rd and built a barrier dividing the neighborhood. The East Central neighborhood is in transition and growing. The low cost of living combined with proximity to downtown has created a suitable location for many young families to move in and call this part of Spokane home. With this influx of new residents, crime has dropped and diversity has increased.



Neighbors are full of optimism about the neighborhood's future. On any given day, families, professionals, and older veterans share space within the neighborhood. The South Perry Business District and Sprague Avenue in the East University District are two areas that have recently been transformed with the addition of neighborhood serving restaurants and businesses. The neighborhood is served by several parks, and residents love the older housing stock that has charm and value. Neighbors are friendly and get together in the summer over to barbeque and play kickball. In addition, the various events such as summer concert series and the South Perry Street Fair create family-friendly recreation activities.



East Central - Treasures

- Budge Brothers Brewery
- Eastside Library
- The Shop
- Casper Fry
- South Perry Pizza
- Lantern
- South Perry Brewing Company





- Thursday Farmer's Market
- Grant Park
- South Altamont Blvd
- Overlook that leads down to Lincoln Park
- Stone Path – Beautiful stairs from Liberty Park up the hill
- Liberty Park Florist
- East Central Community Center

East Central - Natural & Built Identity

- Liberty Park
- Older craftsmen homes that have great potential
- Big beautiful trees
- Streetscape on East Sprague – trees and lighting, bump-outs on Perry
- Parks

East Central - Annual Events or Activities

- Concert Series
- South Perry Street Fair
- Farmer's Market

East Central Neighborhood

