

1.0 VISION OF DOWNTOWN SPOKANE

The following statement for the future of Downtown Spokane was developed from community input through a series of community forums, workshops and town hall type meetings from the fall of 1997 to June 1998. The Vision Statement expresses what the citizens of Spokane envision Downtown Spokane's future over the next 20 years.

The Vision

Our Downtown is a mixed-use regional center for shopping, working, living, recreation and entertainment. Riverfront Park is the center of the City and Downtown. It is the "Jewel" of the City. Riverfront Park is a great public open space in the center of a growing vital and urban City.

Spokane is a destination place. Spokane is the capital of the Inland Northwest and a gateway to the Rockies. Day and night, our Downtown is a vibrant and active place, where people live, work, dine, shop, and visit.

Downtown Spokane is a place to work and shop. Our lively Downtown – vibrant and vital – is the center of business, financial, medical, government, entertainment, social and cultural activities. Downtown is a major shopping destination for the region.

Our Downtown contains **cultural and arts facilities** for the region such as an arboretum, a science and technology museum and river aquarium, live music and theater halls, and a Native American Museum.

Downtown Spokane is a place to live. People of all economic levels enjoy living in the Downtown.

Downtown is a pedestrian friendly and safe place. Our Downtown is connected with a network of pedestrian friendly streets, attractive clean, and safe, linking places and neighborhoods to live with retail and recreational, entertainment, educational, and cultural opportunities.

The City and Downtown are connected with a network of “Green Links.” Downtown Spokane is a “green place” with an extensive network of tree lined streets, trails and pedestrian oriented streets connecting the Riverfront Park to Downtown plazas, parks, open spaces and city neighborhoods.

The Downtown provides for convenient transportation and circulation. Our vibrant Downtown is supported by safe, clean, and reliable and convenient transportation and transit systems.

Downtown is a place for youth and families. Our Downtown is a place that children and youth are ensured a high-quality education, activities, and services that nurture development and encourage pride and involvement in our community.

Our Downtown is a historic center of the community.

Our Downtown celebrates the variety of interesting, older buildings and places that give charm and character to the city and helps create a special “sense of place.”

Our community is a place of that encourages community participation and involvement. Our community is enthusiastic, motivated, and committed to enriching Spokane’s future.





Activities Bring People to
Downtown Spokane (Ice Palace)

2.0 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The concept for Downtown development is based upon the “Vision for Downtown Spokane” as well as other ideas from the community and focus group meetings. The “concept” forms a foundation that focuses on key activity nodes, supporting uses, and connectivity throughout Downtown.

As illustrated in Figure 3-1, the highlights of the *Plan* include the following components:

Development Opportunity Sites

There are several key opportunity sites for development, using currently vacant lots, parking lots, and underutilized properties. The *Plan* first calls for expanding the Convention Center on the undeveloped site south of the current facility.

Underused sites on Stevens Street (between Spokane Falls and Main) are ideal for a mix of new retail and residential development, with a public plaza opening to Riverfront Park. This will also enhance the Spokane Falls corridor, strengthening the connection between the Convention Center and Downtown.

The *Plan* targets several other sites that have high potential to catalyze further development:

- First Avenue in the West End
- Bernard Street in the East End
- Normandie Street (between Washington and Division) in the North Bank
- The Mallon/Post parking lot in the North Bank
- Dean Street (between Boone and the river) in the North Bank

Green Streets

The “green streets” concept builds on Spokane’s 1913 master park plan, which called for large regional parks and local neighborhood parks connected by a system of beautiful parkways and boulevards. These streets will have additional tree plantings and landscaping designed for both walking and driving. Our Downtown plan creates a network of three types of green streets centered on Howard Street and Spokane Falls Boulevard.

- Mainly pedestrian-oriented streets with high levels of retail activity.
- Streets for pedestrians, bicycles and autos, linking Downtown to adjacent residential neighborhoods and employment centers.
- Mainly auto-oriented streets and boulevards.

Howard Street String of Pearls

Howard Street will be the “string” that links the “pearls” of Downtown, including the North Bank, the Arena, Riverfront Park, the Downtown retail core, a new public square, and the South Side. It will be a pedestrian corridor, with new amenities such as landscaping, wide sidewalks, street furniture, public art, outdoor restaurants, and improved sidewalk/building interfaces. An electric trolley line will carry passengers along Howard Street, all the way from North Central High, through Riverfront Park and down to the Medical Center, providing both an exciting attraction and transportation through Downtown.

Spokane Falls Boulevard Link

Spokane Falls Boulevard will become the main East/West pedestrian connection between the Convention Center/Opera House and the core retail area, enhanced with pedestrian amenities and new retail development.

Urban Refuge

Riverfront Park will be enhanced as a peaceful urban refuge in the center of bustling Downtown. Planned improvements include opening new vistas to appreciate the beauty of Spokane River and Falls and a new activity center with buildings oriented toward the Howard Street corridor.

Downtown Public Square

A new public square on Riverside Avenue between Howard and Post Street will be a “ceremonial” place for the City, designed for public events and informal gatherings. Its location across from the STA Plaza, terminus of the planned light rail route, makes it a natural urban gathering place.

Increased Public Transportation

A new light rail line will help ensure smooth traffic flow through Downtown from the east side of the City. The rail will run along Riverside Avenue, with stops at Riverpoint campus, at Bernard, and ending at the new Downtown square at Howard Street. The trolley system will be expanded to include the new Howard Street route and east-west connections from Gonzaga University and the Riverpoint campus to the County Government center and Summit area.

Skywalk Improvements

Improved connections from the skywalks to the street level and parking ramps, as well as new signage and public maps, will enhance the overall system for both shoppers and employees.

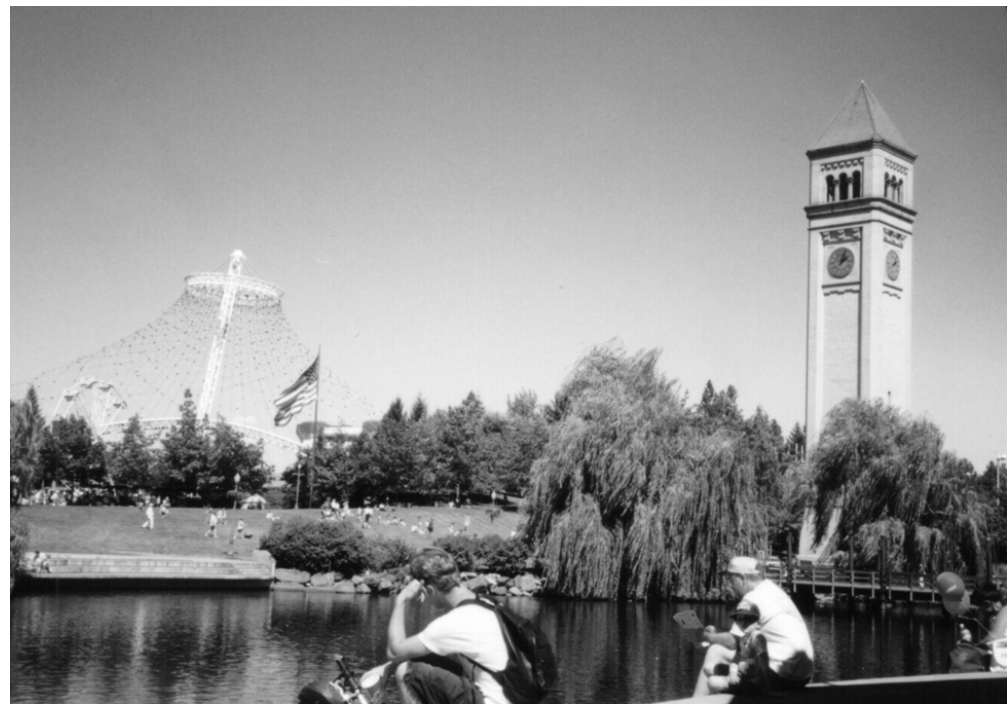


Figure III-1: Development Concept

