

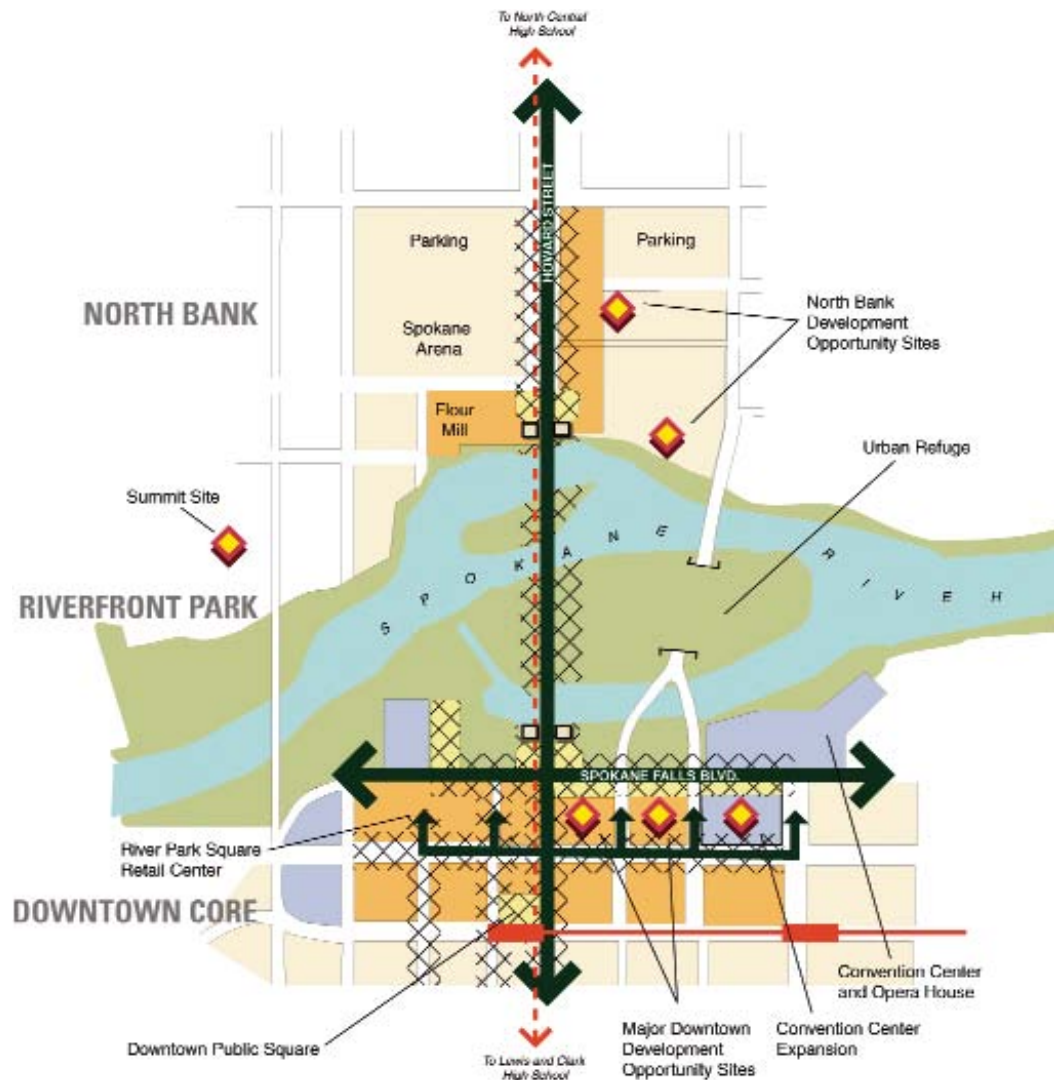
housing, pedestrian walkways and green streets as the City grows. And Downtown Spokane has many more projects on the drawing boards.

Project Goals

The Downtown concept focuses on key activity nodes, supporting uses and connectivity.

As the main economic symbol for the entire Inland Northwest region, the success and vitality of Downtown Spokane directly influences public and private growth opportunities throughout the region. Spokane needed to look beyond the Downtown alone and connect Downtown with its supporting neighborhoods and the region.

The City aimed to create an engine for Downtown Spokane's economic growth—to generate new investment, create new jobs, and improve everyone's quality of life with enhanced services and



Spokane needed to link the Downtown with surrounding neighborhoods.

facilities. Running this economic engine would require coordinating and supporting both public and private investments. The City hoped to attract private investors by demonstrating its commitment to a vibrant Downtown marketplace. Private development needed to be organized so that it would support public investment in key design projects: street activation, intensity of activity and the concentration of development in and around key City resources.

To create the engine, the City focused on five overall goals:

- *Catalytic Sites:* Catalytic development sites would spur additional investment as developers gained confidence in the viability of projects in the area. By directing new projects toward existing Downtown infrastructure, the City would provide a solid foundation for public support of the plan. The City's Riverfront Park, the "Jewel" of Spokane, served as the nexus for project initiatives, as devel-

opment efforts focused on a Convention Center, the International Airport, historic buildings, and nearby Gonzaga University.

- *Downtown/Neighborhood Connectivity:* The City hoped to invigorate interest in the Olmsted Brothers' original "green street" vision, connecting high-density development and surrounding neighborhoods with Spokane's natural beauty and the river, while providing a safe network of scenic streets shared by pedestrians, cyclists and automobiles. Howard Street will be the "string" that connects the pearls of the Riverfront Park, the Downtown retail core, a new public square, the North Bank and the South Side.
- *Unique District Identities:* By crafting complementary strategies for individual Districts within the Downtown, the City aimed to create Districts that could individually stand on their own, while creating a cohesive mar-

keting and planning strategy for the whole City center.

- *Reconnections with the River:* The City aimed to enhance Riverfront Park as an urban refuge in the center of Downtown, opening new vistas and planning new activity centers.
- *Preservation of Spokane's Historic Past:* Organizing catalytic sites around existing City landmarks would promote a renewed interest in Spokane's signature buildings—strengthening Spokane's identity as a distinctive Downtown.

To achieve these goals, the City developed a series of strategic action, master and development plans to revitalize Downtown Spokane and its interdependent neighborhoods. Five of these Plans are discussed in this chapter:

1. *Spokane Plan for a New Downtown*
Ultimately, the City aimed to create a Downtown Spokane that was "every-

body’s neighborhood”—a place that would generate excitement and comfort for residents and visitors, night and day. With the primary five goals in mind, a series of projects included improving housing, retail, economic development, transit, accessibility, community connections and usable open space.

Along with the Plan, design guidelines and a new Downtown Spokane zoning ordinance would enable new developments to better respond to site-specific conditions and surrounding conditions and character. (More information about these types of guidelines can be found in *Cityscapes Design Guidelines*, page 454.)

2. Riverfront Park Master Plan

Riverfront Park is a 100-acre open space area in and adjacent to the Spokane River. The City envisioned it as a peaceful urban refuge in the heart of Downtown, operated and

maintained by the Spokane Parks and Recreation Department. It’s closely linked with the North Bank Development Plan (below).

3. North Bank Development Plan

A focused development plan for this region would reconnect and revitalize the entertainment district with the City core and guide major public and private investment entertainment projects.

4. Davenport District Strategic Action Plan

Working with the nonprofit “Friends of Davenport,” the City hoped to establish this historic area as a dynamic arts, entertainment and creative district.

5. The Great Spokane River Gorge Strategic Master Plan

The Spokane River Gorge is the area’s key natural treasure. Primary goals were to enhance public use and protect its natural beauty, reflecting local history and culture.

User Groups

- Businesses (local, regional, national)
- Current Downtown residents
- Nearby neighborhood residents
- Regional residents who might relocate Downtown
- Outdoor recreation users (walkers, bikers, boaters, kayakers, etc.)
- City agencies
- Higher education institutions
- Medical/healthcare institutions
- Visitors and tourists

Design Process

Each of the five Plans included extensive community and business involvement, including large public meetings, small group discussions, and design charettes.

SPOKANE PLAN FOR A NEW DOWNTOWN

Spokane’s Plan for a New Downtown was developed by a joint public-private partnership between the City of Spokane and the Downtown Spokane



Participants used modular maps to help visualize the effects of land use planning on the City.

challenge in the planning process. “Envision Spokane,” a community newsletter designed to update citizens on new planning information, helped attract 1,500 attendees to five community meetings. The first meeting, The Downtown Vision Workshop, took place at the Spokane Convention Center on February 5, 1998. Broadcast on local television, the workshop’s posi-

tive interchange confirmed the importance of Downtown’s future and identified key issues that later comprised the Vision for Downtown Spokane.

A second workshop, the Planning and Design Charette, transformed the priorities identified in the first meeting into a series of “planning stations.” At each station, participants engaged in interactive

activities unique to specific design and topic areas—allowing City staff and steering committee members to directly record community feedback on emerging concepts for the plan.

Three more community meetings followed, allowing community members to review major plan policy elements and, finally, to celebrate and review the



Community members participated in an outdoor festival to help plan the future of Riverfront Park.



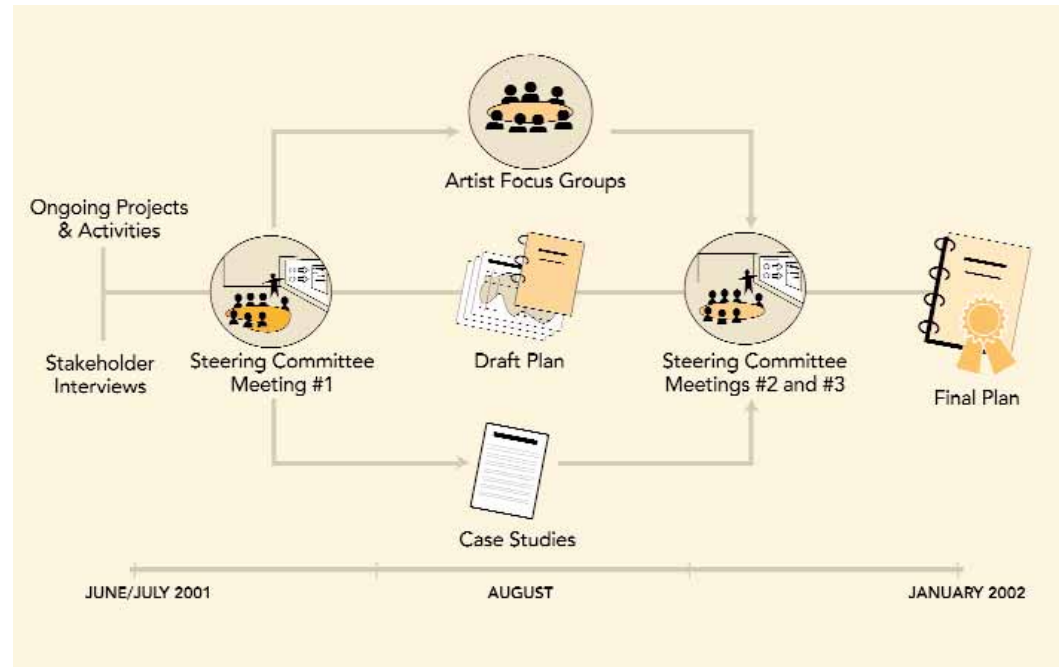
Individual booths highlighted different alternatives and proposals.

draft plan. Almost all of those in attendance agreed with the Plan for a New Downtown and its action items.

The breadth and success of the community outreach process and Downtown Plan earned Spokane the 1998 Washington American Planning Association award.

RIVERFRONT PARK MASTER PLAN AND NORTH BANK DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Stakeholder interviews played a key role in the gathering of public input for the Riverfront Park and North Bank Plans. Community members representing a diverse range of interests were asked a series of open-ended questions intended to gather opinions and solicit ideas for specific redevelopment concepts. Questions focused on key areas within the Park and North Bank, directing the resulting Plan on specific development areas. Four community workshops and a telephone survey helped develop the types of attractions and recreation the Park should offer.



The strategic planning process for the Davenport District included artists, business owners and residents.

DAVENPORT DISTRICT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The first planning document for the area was drafted in 1990 by Friends of the Davenport, a nonprofit group promoting redevelopment. A group of volunteers began organizing and holding community meetings in 1997. They formed the Riverside Neighborhood Council and provided input to the City. In 1998, the City then involved those community members in the Plan for a New Downtown process—including

local artists, business owners, the Davenport District Arts Board, the Downtown Spokane Partnership, the Spokane Arts Commission and the Business Improvement District. The Spokane Arts Commission and the Downtown Spokane Partnership gathered additional community feedback through an artist's focus group and by distributing over 500 questionnaires to arts and cultural organizations and individual artists. During three planning workshops, district stakeholders devel-

oped a vision for continued revitalization and established priority strategies and actions necessary to implement the Davenport Plan.

THE GREAT SPOKANE RIVER GORGE STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN

In May 2004, a 25-member steering committee worked to identify projects and programs in the Spokane River Gorge to reacquaint local residents and visitors with this dramatic and unique natural resource.



Led by Friends of the Falls, the Spokane River Gorge planning process included Indian tribes, residents and government agencies.

Led by Friends of the Falls (FOF), a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the historic waterfalls and river gorge in Downtown Spokane, the planning process included months of interviews with government and park agencies, residents' boards, representatives from local American Indian tribes, business organizations and outdoor recreation groups. To better understand the river from varied perspectives, stakeholders visited river trails and overlooks, and even rafted through the river gorge.

The City hosted an initial community workshop in June 2004 to gauge community response to a Plan for the gorge area; about 100 people provided feedback on the Plan's principles, vision and proposed projects. FOF hosted a final public workshop, generating feedback on the Great Spokane River Gorge Strategic Master Plan and its priority projects. The Plan was revised to incorporate public comments and it was subsequently approved by the Park Board.

Inclusive Design Features

SPOKANE PLAN FOR A NEW DOWNTOWN

“Our Downtown is a mixed-use regional center for shopping, 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.”

—*Vision of Downtown Spokane*

To reinvent and revitalize Downtown Spokane, the City developed action strategies for nine elements the community considered crucial:

1. *Land Use*
2. *Downtown Districts*
3. *Special Districts*
4. *Economic Development*
5. *Housing*
6. *Transportation and Circulation*
7. *Community Design*
8. *Historic Preservation*
9. *Neighborhood Economic Development*