Spokane Valley Comprehensive Plan

2017-2037

ADOPTED: DECEMBER 2016 BY ORDINANCE NO. 16-018;
AMENDED BY ORDINANCE: 18-014; 19-004; 20-008; 21-014

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK.

Acknowledgments

CITY COUNCIL

Rod Higgins, Mayor

Arne Woodard, Deputy Mayor

Pam Haley

Ed Pace

Caleb Collier

Sam Wood

Mike Munch

PLANNING COMMISSION

Kevin Anderson

Heather Graham

James Johnson

Tim Kelley

Mike Phillips

Suzanne Stathos

Michelle Rasmussen

CITY OF SPOKANE VALLEY STAFF

Mark Calhoun, City Manager

John Hohman, Community Development Director

Mike Basinger, Senior Planner

Lori Barlow, Senior Planner

Chaz Bates, Economic Development Specialist

Gloria Mantz, Development Engineer

Sean Messner, Senior Traffic Engineer

CONSULTANT TEAM

Van Ness Feldman

Community Attributes Inc.

Fehr and Peers

AECOM

Table of Contents

Appendix A: SEPA Analysis

Appendix B: 11" x 17" Maps

Appendix C: 20-year Transportation Improvement Plan

Table of Maps

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction & Vision

Introduction

Spokane Valley is a city of approximately 94,000 people in eastern Washington, only 10 miles from the Idaho border. It is bordered by Liberty Lake to the east, Millwood to the north and Spokane to the west, and the Spokane River and Interstate 90 bisect the City on an east-west axis; as the ninth-largest city in Washington State, it is an integral part of the greater Spokane region (Figure 1). Though Spokane Valley incorporated relatively recently—in 2003—it is already a major retail destination and a recognized employment center that offers opportunity to visitors and residents alike.

Figure 1. Map of Spokane Valley and the Greater-Spokane Region
Source: Community Attributes Inc. (2016)
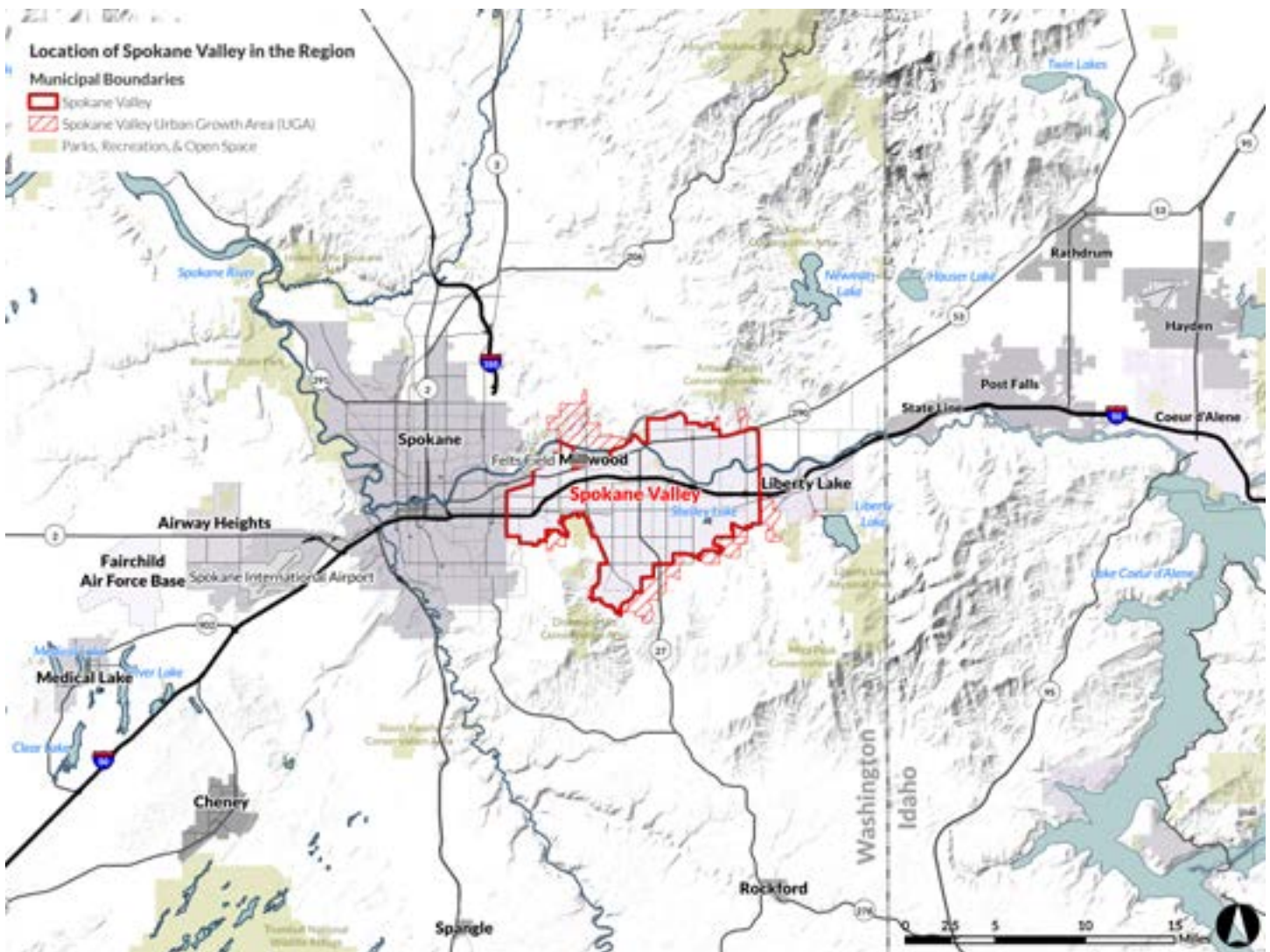
Note: for the purposes of this document, "Spokane Valley" and "the City" refer to the incorporated City of Spokane Valley. In certain parts of this document, particularly those dealing with the history of the region, "the Spokane River valley" and "the valley" refer to a larger area related to lowlands surrounding the upper reaches of the Spokane River.

As one of Washington's larger and faster growing cities, Spokane Valley is required to regularly update its Comprehensive Plan. This document includes the required update while referencing several other City plans and policies to guide growth and development for the next 20 years. This chapter, as an introduction to the updated Comprehensive Plan, contains some background about Spokane Valley's past and present, an overview of the comprehensive planning process and relevant legal frameworks, and a statement of the City's vision for the future.

About Spokane Valley

A brief history of the Spokane region and Spokane Valley is essential to understanding the demographic and economic trends and community priorities that underpin this planning effort.

NATIVE POPULATIONS AND EARLY SETTLEMENT

The Spokane River valley has been inhabited for thousands of years. The earliest residents of the valley (a geographic expanse roughly stretching from the river's source at Lake Coeur D'Alene to the current location of the City of Spokane) were members of the Spokane, Coeur D'Alene, and Kalispel tribes of the Interior Salish peoples. These tribes harvested, hunted, and fished throughout the area and valued the stock of trout and salmon in local rivers and streams. They also traded extensively, which frequently brought them into contact with other tribes from the region, including the Nez Perce and Palouse. Furthermore, the valley's topography allowed the Spokane River to run broad and flat, creating a natural corridor for foot traffic and bringing diverse groups together.

In 1849, Antoine Plante, a French-Canadian trapper and voyageur, arrived and built a cabin at a popular crossing of the Spokane River. By 1851 he had opened an outpost of the Hudson's Bay Company and established a ferry service, marking the first permanent non-native settlement of the valley. U.S. Army Captain John Mullan came to know Plante while building a military road through the region, and documented the quality of the ferry operation. As additional settlers, including Steven Liberty, William Newman, William Spangle, Joseph Moran, and Addison Dishman, arrived in the decades following Plante's settlement, new homes, businesses, and infrastructure projects were developed to accommodate the growth. Many of these early inhabitants have given their names to prominent natural features and built landmarks in and around present-day Spokane Valley.

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

- Land Area: 38.5mi²

- Population: 94,160

- Total Employment: 50,944

- Key Industries (Employment)

  > Retail Trade (9,650)

  > Health Care/Social Assistance (8,205)

  > Manufacturing (6,848)

- Median Age: 38.4

- Educational Attainment

  > High School or Higher: 91.9%

  > Bachelor's or Higher: 20.9%

- Median HH Income: $48,274

Sources: Washington OFM (2016); U.S. Census ACS (2014); U.S. Census LEHD (2014)

With the opening of the first transcontinental railroad in 1883, the valley received an influx of new settlers, many of whom were miners looking to capitalize on the discovery of silver in northern Idaho. Immigration and settlement took on new tones in 1895, when a local water company was formed to irrigate the valley with water from nearby lakes. In 1900, when Albert Kelly dug a deep well, he found an underground river that would later become known as the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer. In short order, the Modern Electric Water Company and the Vera Electric Power and Water Company formed to pump and distribute this newfound and abundant source of water, thereby enabling large-scale agriculture. Apple trees became the predominant crop and by 1922, there were 1.6 million apple trees growing in the Spokane River valley. These trees were so prominent that the primary road between Spokane and Coeur D'Alene became known as Apple Way—a precursor to today's Appleway Boulevard.

An 1860 watercolor by James Madison Alden depicts "Plante's Crossing" on the Spokane River, near present-day Spokane Valley.

(&) For more information on Spokane Valley's history, see: HistoryLink.org Essay No. 10,119.

The early agricultural townships that spring up with the advent of irrigation and the maturation of agriculture were called Opportunity, Veradale, Trent, Dishman, Yardley, and Greenacres, among others. These communities retain their unique histories and identities today, with only Millwood choosing to incorporate (in 1927) prior to the larger amalgamation of the communities as the City of Spokane Valley in 2003.

DECLINING AGRICULTURE, RISING INDUSTRY

As apple crops faced increasing competition from Wenatchee and Yakima, the valley began an economic transition. Though the area's orchards were being replanted with other crops or converted to non-agricultural uses as early as 1926, a deep freeze in 1955 sealed the fate of the apple industry in Spokane Valley. Timber harvesting became more prominent as a local industry, and spinoff enterprises like matchstick and paper manufacturing emerged.

The rapid growth of the Spokane region continued through the early 20th century, and the expansion of electricity allowed continued economic innovation. When, prior to World War II, the federal government decided to build an aluminum manufacturing facility (the Trentwood Aluminum Rolling Mill) in the valley, widespread industrialization ensued. Government warehousing facilities were constructed as part of an Naval Supply Depot in 1942, anchoring an industrial area that would eventually become the Spokane Business and Industrial Park.

Robust growth in the decades following World War II led to concerns about the environmental impacts of new development, especially on water quality in local lakes and the underground aquifer. A waste management plan and sewer system were established by Spokane County in 1983, but concerns about water quality are ever-present and represent a key policy issue to this day.

SPOKANE VALLEY TODAY

Spokane Valley today reflects its history as a collection of disparate agricultural communities, and the long-lasting drive for annexation between 1963 and 2003 is further evidence of the diversity of opinion surrounding the valley's future. Nevertheless, steady growth continues to push Spokane Valley forward.

Between 2003 and 2014, Spokane Valley's population grew by almost 11%. Compared to county and statewide annual growth rates during the same time period, Spokane Valley grew at a slightly slower pace: 0.9%, compared to 1.1% in Spokane County and 1.2% statewide. By 2037, the City is expected to accommodate 14,650 new residents.

Spokane Valley's economy is intrinsically tied to the larger regional economy, and despite a major recession that began in 2008, total employment in Spokane County increased by 8,200 jobs between 2005 and 2014 (Figure 2). Before the impacts of the recession were realized, the ten-year high was 208,900 jobs in 2007. The Spokane Valley economy, like the County economy, has taken several

years to recover lost ground and regain momentum. Nevertheless, the local economy has several strong anchors and is poised for further growth.

The top three employment sectors in Spokane Valley are retail, health care and social assistance, and manufacturing. In 2014, these three industries together accounted for 48.4% of employment in the City.

Demographic and economic trends that are relevant to future policy in Spokane Valley are further explored in the individual plan elements.

The Comprehensive Planning Framework

Spokane Valley is updating its Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the Growth Management Act (GMA), chapter 36.70A RCW. The Comprehensive Plan is the City's official statement regarding its vision for future growth and development over the next 20 years. A comprehensive plan is a required document for the largest and fastest-growing cities and counties in Washington State, and these documents must be periodically updated. This 2017 update of the Spokane Valley Comprehensive Plan is the first legislative update since 2006.

Figure 2.   Total Employment by Industry Sector, Spokane County, 2005 - 2014

Source: Community Attributes Inc. (2016)
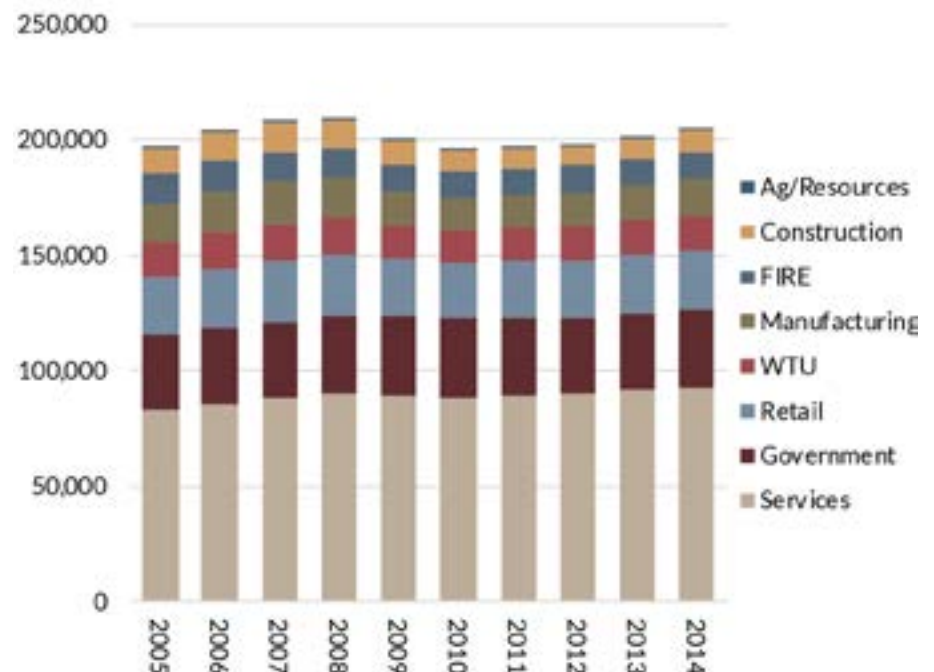
There are several important sources of information that form the Comprehensive Plan, including GMA-required elements, linkages to the Countywide Planning Policies for Spokane County (CWPPs), other local plans and policies, input from citizens and other stakeholders, and identified best practices based on established knowledge and recent trends. This section discusses each of these sources to establish a framework for the Comprehensive Plan.

THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT

The GMA was passed into law in 1990 by the Washington State Legislature. It is intended to prevent uncoordinated and unplanned growth, to maintain sustainable economic development, and to protect highly cherished quality of life. The act requires select cities and counties in Washington to protect critical areas and resource lands, encourage urban growth within designated urban growth areas (UGAs), prepare and regularly update comprehensive plans and implement them through capital improvements and development regulations. Spokane Valley is required to plan under GMA mandates, and this Comprehensive Plan is guided by the statutory goals and requirements of the GMA (WAC 365-196-400).

Required and Optional Elements

For cities and counties fully planning under GMA, there are a number of required elements, though jurisdictions may include other optional elements at will. The Spokane Valley Comprehensive Plan includes the following elements:

- Economic Development

- Land Use

- Transportation

- Housing

- Capital Facilities

- Public and Private Utilities

- Parks and Open Space

- Natural Environment (includes by reference shoreline goals and policies from the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) that was previously approved and adopted pursuant to Chapter 90.58 RCW)

For more information on GMA and the legal aspects of planning, see: *"A Short Course on Local Planning: Resource Guide"* at www.commerce.wa.gov.

In this Comprehensive Plan, each element is given its own chapter. The chapters are mutually reinforcing, and—individually and in sum—meet the requirements of the GMA. The following section summarizes the requirements of the GMA by element, and more detailed information about GMA requirements is provided in each element chapter.

COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES FOR SPOKANE COUNTY

Because the GMA applies to cities and counties, the act places a strong emphasis on regional coordination. Under the GMA, counties work with cities to produce population projections and to allocate anticipated population growth to local UGAs. One of the fundamental duties of cities under GMA is therefore to demonstrate adequate capacity, under adopted development regulations, to accommodate the growth allocated to their UGAs.

Furthermore, counties must adopt countywide planning policies that provide direction to cities on how to address certain regional priorities. The cities, in turn, must ensure that their comprehensive plans are consistent with the applicable countywide planning policies. The CWPPs for Spokane County last updated in 2011, includes a statement of principles that asserts the regional importance of continued citizen participation, preservation of neighborhood character, protection of the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer, support for ethnic diversity, differentiation of urban and rural character, sustainable economic growth, and the protection of private property rights.

Each element in this Comprehensive Plan discusses the planning context for relevant issues and includes reference to applicable Spokane County CWPP.

OTHER PLANS AND POLICIES

This Comprehensive Plan update is informed by the findings of the 2015 Housing and Economic and Transportation System existing conditions reports. These findings are interspersed, as appropriate, in their respective elements. Two other plans that were recently completed also function as guiding documents for the City's economic development efforts and Comprehensive Plan update, and are briefly described below.

Retail Improvement Strategy

In 2015 and 2016, the City commissioned a retail improvement strategy to provide direction for Spokane Valley's efforts to improve local retail options. Key focus areas in the strategy include: maintaining and improving the quality

of existing retail centers, filling retail vacancies, pursuing differentiation from competing markets, defining the local retail experience, incorporating innovative retail projects in catalytic private developments, and promoting neighborhood-scale retail options that are accessible by walking, biking, and driving. These focus areas are reflected in the goals, policies, and strategies contained in this Comprehensive Plan.

Tourism Strategy

In 2015 and 2016, the City commissioned a strategic plan to improve existing efforts to drive tourism and support the hospitality industry. Themes from the strategic plan include: participation in regional tourism and event promotion efforts, a focus on outdoor recreation and natural amenities, infrastructure investments that improve the City's "curb appeal", an emphasis on family-friendly events and amenities, and improved branding and marketing of local programs and destinations.

RIGOROUS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Citizen participation in community planning efforts is a valued part of the democratic process, and can include organization and advocacy, political service, event attendance, voting, and other practices. The Comprehensive Plan relies on input from citizens and stakeholders, and after Spokane Valley adopted a Public Participation Program, hundreds of people participated in the engagement process to provide robust input, and their feedback was essential. The following goals for public and stakeholder participation were identified at the outset:

> (SV) Retail Improvement and Tourism strategies are located on the City's website at www.spokanevalley.org.

- Enhance the quality of and support for the Comprehensive Plan through meaningful public and agency participation in the preparation of the Plan update.

- Balance the interests of our community with the interests of the state and region.

- Identify issues early and evaluate options for resolution during the planning process.

- Comply with all state laws and regulations related to public participation.

Engagement activities included three open house workshops to support visioning, numerous City Council and Planning Commission meetings, a joint City Council/Planning Commission workshop to refine draft goals and policies,
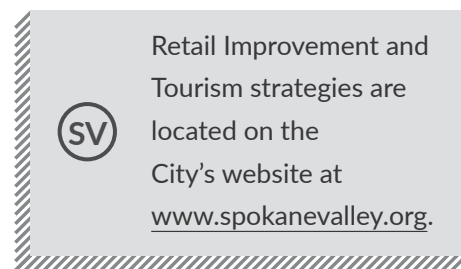
The "Vision Wall" allowed participants to express their vision for Spokane Valley.

Map-based activities gave participants an opportunity to offer recommendations for specific places in the city.

Stickers were used to track community preferences on critical issues.

a thorough process to evaluate citizen-initiated amendment requests (CARs) and a public meeting to present the draft plan. Public involvement is ongoing and the City expects that citizens will remain involved in this update and future revisions to the Comprehensive Plan.

The vision activities helped staff understand citizen priorities and develop themes to guide policy development. Those themes are presented below.

Community Character

The citizens and other stakeholders who participated in the visioning workshops felt that community character was important and should be an emphasis of the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, the feedback from these workshops encouraged the City to focus on the new City Hall and create special places, define and improve the identity of the community, expand, maintain, and leverage local trail systems, parks, and other critical amenities.

Economic Opportunity

Participants reaffirmed the importance of economic opportunity for all Spokane Valley residents, urged the City to support existing commercial and industrial areas, use public facilities to create economic development opportunities, and leverage community assets for broad economic benefit. Participants also felt it was important that the City maintain its current policy of fiscal responsibility and tackle concerns over code enforcement.

Housing

Housing is a key issue for many Spokane Valley residents and participants in the visioning workshops highlighted housing affordability, housing for seniors, and housing diversity as important challenges for the City to address. Participants also expressed an interest in having close, convenient access to amenities in neighborhoods and the preservation of the character of the City's neighborhoods.

Transportation

Participants affirmed that the Level of Service policy is working for transportation in Spokane Valley, but asked the City to improve multimodal connections and transportation safety, to focus on maintenance of infrastructure and the integration of new technology, to ensure freight mobility and safety, and to invest in the appearance of streetscapes and the character of the community's transportation corridors.

AGENCY AND JURISDICTION OUTREACH

In addition to the public involvement process, the City extensively coordinated with adjacent jurisdictions and key agencies in the development of this Comprehensive Plan update. City staff worked with the City of Spokane, Spokane County, the Town of Millwood, and Liberty Lake on regional land use planning and growth allocations that informed the growth scenarios considered with this Comprehensive Plan Update. Additionally, City staff coordinated with WSDOT and surrounding jurisdictions on potential transportation improvements, transportation level-of-service impacts, and coordination on major regional projects like the North Spokane Corridor project and Barker Road interchange improvements.

Toward a Vision for Spokane Valley

The City has an adopted statement that represents the community's vision and guides its planning and economic development efforts for the 20-year planning period. That vision was vetted and reaffirmed by citizens and other stakeholders throughout the community engagement process. Through that process, several key themes related to the vision were also identified, which are listed below and incorporated into the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

> *A community of opportunity where individuals and families can grow and play and businesses will flourish and prosper.*

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK.

CHAPTER 2

Goals, Policies & Strategies

Goals and Policies

The statutory goals and requirements of the GMA, Ch. 36.70A RCW, guide the development of the City's Comprehensive Plan. This chapter presents the City's goals, policies, and strategies that will achieve the GMA goals and requirements and guide the City's efforts in realizing the community's vision. For the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan, goals are broad statements of purpose, policies provide specific direction to City staff, and strategies represent initial, concrete actions to direct implementation. Strategies are not binding components of the Comprehensive Plan, but rather offer opportunities for action and linkages to other plans and policies.

Economic Development

GOALS

ED-G1   Support economic opportunities and employment growth for Spokane Valley.

ED-G2   Create and cultivate a City brand that supports economic growth and leverages existing community, economic, and natural assets.

ED-G3   Balance economic development with community development priorities and fiscal sustainability.

ED-G4   Collaborate with relevant economic development stakeholders, including the business community, to grow a strong and healthy regional economy.

ED-G5   Support and encourage the development of a strong workforce that is globally competitive and responds to the changing needs of the workplace.

ED-G6   Maintain a positive business climate that strives for flexibility, predictability, and stability.

POLICIES

ED-P1   Work collaboratively with the private sector to support catalytic development projects that are consistent with the City's vision.

ED-P2   Identify and encourage business and employment growth in new and innovative industries and occupations.

ED-P3   Encourage businesses that provide jobs and grow local markets.

ED-P4   Promote key retail, office, and industrial opportunity sites, as identified in the City's economic development studies and other planning documents (e.g. Certified Sites).

ED-P5   Promote Spokane Valley as a great place to work, visit, and do business.

ED-P6   Promote the development or redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties, particularly those with potential to serve as a catalyst for economic development.

ED-P7   Implement strategies that are intended to create new attractions and events that assert Spokane Valley's presence as a tourist destination.

STRATEGIES

> Undertake a comprehensive branding process to create and market an identity for Spokane Valley that sells the City's inherent assets to would-be residents, employers, and visitors

> Participate in regional tourism-promotion efforts and increase the City's presence in regional events

> Evaluate the return on investment of potential tourism anchors and allocate available funds according to the findings

ED-P8 Provide and maintain an infrastructure system that supports Spokane Valley's economic development priorities.

ED-P9 Invest in long-term improvements to make the City a more attractive tourist destination.

ED-P10 Enable the creation and retention of home-based businesses that are consistent with neighborhood character.

ED-P11 Leverage federal, state, and regional economic development resources and programs for City economic development purposes.

ED-P12 Leverage community assets (e.g. trails, natural amenities, and facilities) to grow the local economy.

ED-P13 Implement strategies that are intended to sustain Spokane Valley's existing high value and high volume tourism segments.

ED-P14 Pursue opportunities for creating public-private partnerships that will advance the City's economic development goals.

ED-P15 Pursue technology-based solutions that improve assistance to businesses.

ED-P16 Support local educational institutions in the development of educational and training programs that meet the needs of businesses.

ED-P17 Engage local businesses to understand their needs and to assist in future growth.

ED-P18 Provide positive, accessible, and customer-oriented City and public services.

Land Use

GOALS

LU-G1   Maintain and enhance the character and quality of life in Spokane Valley.

LU-G2   Provide for land uses that are essential to Spokane Valley residents, employees, and visitors.

LU-G3   Support the transformation of commercial, industrial, and mixed-use areas into accessible districts that attract economic activity.

LU-G4   Ensure that land use plans, regulations, review processes, and infrastructure improvements support economic growth and vitality.

POLICIES

LU-P1   Enable neighborhood-scale commercial uses in residential areas.

LU-P2   Support unique, high-quality, and locally-owned retail in appropriate locations.

LU-P3   Preserve the public natural features and amenities that make Spokane Valley attractive to residents and business owners.

LU-P4   Enable the creation of common open spaces in neighborhoods.

LU-P5   Ensure compatibility between adjacent residential and commercial or industrial uses.

LU-P6   Support neighborhood efforts to sustainably cultivate produce.

LU-P7   Protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible land uses and adverse impacts associated with transportation corridors.

LU-P8   Ensure that neighborhoods are served by safe and convenient motorized and non-motorized transportation routes.

LU-P9   Provide supportive regulations for new and innovative development types on commercial, industrial, and mixed-use land.

LU-P10   Ensure that freight-intensive operations have convenient access to designated truck routes and intermodal terminals.

LU-P11   Support the remediation of environmentally-contaminated sites to return the land to productive use.

STRATEGIES

> Streamline permitting procedures based on feedback from business and landowners, developers, etc.

> Evaluate parking standards and reduce the amount of required parking if feasible

> Collaborate with the private sector to ensure the succesful redevelopment of vacant land at Mirabeau Point

LU-P12   Maintain a robust supply of productive industrial land.

LU-P13   Work collaboratively with landowners and developers that seek to provide mixed-use residential projects.

LU-P14   Enable a variety of housing types.

LU-P15   Encourage development in commercial and mixed-use zones by reducing parking requirements.

LU-P16   Maximize the density of development along major transit corridors and near transit centers and commercial areas.

LU-P17   Enable voluntary efforts by local home and business owners to improve energy performance and produce or use sources of renewable energy.

LU-P18   Enable public open spaces.

LU-P19   Develop criteria to identify, process, and assess the annexation of land into Spokane Valley.

LU-P20   Identify land designations for potential annexation areas in the Comprehensive Plan for the adjacent Urban Growth Areas to the City.

Transportation

GOALS

T-G1   Ensure that the transportation system and investments in transportation infrastructure are designed to improve quality of life or support economic development priorities.

T-G2   Ensure that transportation planning efforts reflect anticipated land use patterns and support identified growth opportunities.

T-G3   Strive to reduce the number of serious injury/fatality collisions to zero.

T-G4   Provide for safe and efficient freight mobility.

T-G5   Maintain and enhance a comprehensive multimodal transportation system that promotes, supports, and improves the safe, efficient, and reliable movement of people, vehicles, and goods.

POLICIES

T-P1   Continue to pursue funding for the BNSF mainline separation projects of Bridging the Valley program to reduce rail/vehicle collisions, improve emergency access, eliminate vehicle waiting times, reduce noise, and improve traffic flow.

T-P2   Consider neighborhood traffic and livability conditions and address potential adverse impacts of public and private projects during the planning, designing, permitting, and construction phases.

T-P3   Ensure that a robust street preservation program is funded and implemented.

T-P4   Support voluntary efforts to beautify local and regional transportation corridors.

T-P5   Restrict high-speed traffic from residential neighborhoods.

T-P6   Work collaboratively with developers to ensure that areas experiencing new development are well served by motorized and non-motorized transportation options.

T-P7   Provide access to sources of current information about transportation options in Spokane Valley and the region.

T-P8   Support local, regional, state, and federal transportation safety programs.

STRATEGIES

> Coordinate transportation planning efforts with other jurisdictions to ensure that Spokane Valley retailers and neighborhoods are well served

> Identify and fund key areas for beautification and coordinate capital improvement projects

> Work with Spokane Transit Authority (STA) to provide bus shelters at strategic locations

> Seek opportunities to continue to fund grade separations on Pines Road and Barker Road

T-P9   Provide and maintain quality street, sidewalk, and shared-use path surfaces that provide a safe environment for all users.

T-P10   Develop a citywide trail system that provides improved access and linkages between Spokane Valley's existing trails, neighborhoods, and community amenities.

T-P11   Designate appropriate freight corridors to ensure that streets/intersections are designed to safely accommodate trucks and other modes.

T-P12   Provide alternate truck routes to minimize the effects of congestion in major commercial and industrial areas.

T-P13   Evaluate opportunities to improve multimodal connectivity in all transportation planning projects.

T-P14   Identify and implement opportunities to improve data collection and performance monitoring for transportation in Spokane Valley.

T-P15   Encourage all Commute Trip Reduction employers in the City to achieve travel reduction goals.

T-P16   Provide a supportive transportation network for expansion of general aviation and freight uses at Felts Field.

T-P17   Use transportation demand management techniques and technologies to move people, vehicles, and goods safely and efficiently throughout the City's transportation system.

T-P18   Invest in infrastructure beautification, including landscaping, art, and walking paths.

T-P19   Coordinate with Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) and Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency on actions to reduce vehicle air pollution emissions through regular vehicle inspections and to lobby federal agencies for appropriate air pollution standards that balance public health and economic growth.

T-P20   Consider evaluating multimodal level of service for citywide planning efforts, particularly focusing on the quality of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities.

Housing

GOALS

H-G1   Allow for a broad range of housing opportunities to meet the needs of the community.

H-G2   Enable the development of affordable housing for all income levels.

H-G3   Allow convenient access to daily goods and services in Spokane Valley's neighborhoods.

H-G4   Work collaboratively with local stakeholders to develop a Homeless Response System specific to the needs of the Valley.

H-G5   Work closely with and support the Regional Homeless System to ensure continuity of care for community members that are unsheltered and unstably housed in the Valley and throughout our region.

STRATEGIES

> Identify low- and moderate-income housing needs

> Continue to evaluate new housing typologies to meet market needs

> Develop regulations that provide for the safe, efficient, and equitable provision of supportive housing services within the City.

POLICIES

H-P1   Support voluntary efforts by property owners to rehabilitate and preserve buildings of historic value and unique character.

H-P2   Adopt development regulations that expand housing choices by allowing innovative housing types including tiny homes, accessory dwelling units, pre-fabricated homes, co-housing, cottage housing, and other housing types.

H-P3   Support the development of affordable housing units using available financial and regulatory tools.

H-P4   Enable the creation of housing for resident individuals and families needing assistance from social and human service providers.

H-P5   Enable a variety of housing types at increased densities within ½ mile of funded high performance transit networks.

H-P6   Preserve and enhance the city's established single-family neighborhoods by minimizing the impacts of more dense housing typologies such as duplexes and cottage development.

H-P7   Work with service providers to bring additional resources to Valley residents.

H-P8   Ensure the provision of homeless and housing services have commensurate on-site support to maintain the character of neighborhoods and minimize public service calls.

H-P9   Support community resource hubs where service providers can co-locate in areas in close proximity to public transportation.

H-P10   Ensure equal access for Valley residents to publicly funded programs, transportation, job opportunities and housing.

H-P11   Engage in active recruitment of service providers that desire to serve Valley residents through targeted programs focused on homeless service delivery.

H-P12   Support the implementation of the Continuum of Care Five-Year Strategic Plan to End Homelessness.

H-P13   Continue as active members on regional committees that address homelessness and housing instability such as the Continuum of Care Board and the Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee.

H-P14   Leverage federal, state and local funds, when appropriate, to bolster existing programs provided to Valley residents.

H-P15   Encourage and support new projects and programs which seek to assist in maintaining housing stability or provide exits from homelessness to housing.

H-P16   Analyze and collect data through our local Community Management Information System and use this data to help drive homeless and housing policy.

H-P17   Continue to support and participate in the Coordinated Entry implementation.

Capital Facilities

GOALS

CF-G1   Coordinate with special districts, other jurisdictions, and the private sector to effectively and affordably provide facilities and services.

CF-G2   Provide public facilities and services necessary to promote Spokane Valley's economic development goals and community priorities.

CF-G3   Ensure efficient and cost-effective public safety and emergency services.

CF-G4   Pursue a diverse set of capital funding sources.

POLICIES

CF-P1   Seek a balance between the quality and cost of providing public facilities and services.

CF-P2   Optimize the use of existing public facilities before investing in new facilities.

CF-P3   Coordinate the construction of public infrastructure with private development to minimize costs.

CF-P4   Require adequate emergency vehicle road access and water supply/pressure for new development within the City.

CF-P5   Coordinate with a fire services provider to disseminate information about fire-wise development to property owners and land developers.

CF-P6   Ensure that facilities and services meet minimum Level of Service standards.

CF-P7   Maintain a comprehensive emergency management plan that meets the needs of the City and coordinates with regional emergency planning efforts.

CF-P8   Coordinate sewer planning with Spokane County.

CF-P9   Support continued planning for domestic water needs.

CF-P10 Require new development to connect to public sewer and water.

STRATEGIES

> Identify needed capital facilities improvements that are critical to economic development

> Update wayfinding and signage for the entire City, and incorporate a consistent aesthetic or theme based on the outcome of the City's branding process

> Execute a citizen-supported vision for the redevelopment of the area surrounding the new City Hall

> Improve new and existing access points to the Spokane River

> Establish criteria for prioritization of capital investments

> Establish a Facilities Condition Index (FCI) to provide information for planned maintenance with set priorities and cost estimates

CF-P11   Identify opportunities to reduce waste and increase recycling in City facilities and at City-sponsored events.

CF-P12   Plan and build infrastructure to support the development of high quality retail and commercial projects.

CF-P13   Coordinate with school districts in land use planning processes.

CF-P14   Coordinate with school districts to use school facilities as community centers and public facilities where appropriate.

CF-P15   Evaluate a variety of capital funding sources including, but not limited to, grants, local improvement districts, latecomer agreements, and impact fees to fund projects and programs.

CF-P16   Plan and coordinate the location of public facilities and utilities in potential annexation areas, including identifying the fiscal impacts of providing the facilities, utilities, services, and maintenance.

CF-P17   Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions in developing capital improvement programs.

CF-P18   Ensure that adequate library services are available.

CF-P19   Collaborate with Spokane County jurisdictions in determining the best locations for public and private essential public facilities.

CF-P20   Prioritize public investments necessary to support catalytic economic development and redevelopment projects.

CF-P21   Support State legislative and municipal water system efforts to convert irrigation rights to municipal water rights.

CF-P22   Reassess the Land Use Element and relevant goals and policies if probable funding falls short of meeting existing needs.

Public and Private Utilities

GOALS

U-G1   Coordinate with utility providers to balance cost-effectiveness with environmental protection, aesthetic impact, public safety, and public health.

POLICIES

U-P1   Promote the efficient co-location of new utilities.

U-P2   Promote the development of citywide communication networks using the most advanced technology available.

U-P3   Promote the undergrounding of utility distribution lines.

U-P4   Coordinate with utility service providers to prevent obstructions to regional utility corridors.

U-P5   Require the placement of cellular facilities, substations, and antennas in a manner that minimizes adverse impacts on adjacent land uses and utilizes existing structures.

U-P6   Coordinate with utility providers to ensure that sizing, locating, and phasing of utility systems are appropriate for planned growth.

U-P7   Participate in regular updates of the Inland Northwest Regional Pavement Cut Policy.

U-P8   Encourage the construction and maintenance of utility, communications, and technology infrastructure that will help attract business and industry.

STRATEGIES

> Extend sewer infrastructure to support industrial development

> Extend water infrastructure to support industrial development

Parks and Open Space

GOALS

P-G1   Develop, grow, and maintain a diverse and accessible park, recreation, trail, and open space system that enhances community character.

P-G2   Recognize and support local artists.

POLICIES

P-P1   Support performing arts, community events and relevant facilities.

P-P2   Acquire land for the development of parks or the preservation of open space within the City's boundaries and adjacent UGAs.

P-P3   Using the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, periodically assess recreational facilities to identify potential gaps and improvements.

P-P4   Implement innovative strategies for park maintenance, park safety, and park accessibility to reduce operating costs.

P-P5   Design parks and community facilities to provide easy access for pedestrians, bicycles, autos, and public transit.

P-P6   Seek grants, private land donations, and other funding sources for land acquisition and recreational facilities development.

P-P7   Identify and protect regional open spaces and natural areas to form a connected network of active and passive recreation areas.

P-P8   Plan for access to parks, trails, and other open spaces in all neighborhoods.

P-P9   Support the inclusion of artwork from local artists in public places.

P-P10   Support the voluntary inclusion of common open space and public art in new development.

P-P11   Partner with public and private entities to encourage, sponsor, and support a range of public activities and special events within appropriate open spaces.

P-P12   Identify opportunities to transform land located in neighborhoods into pocket parks.

STRATEGIES

> Leverage the Appleway Trail to improve adjacent business opportunities and create spillover effects

> Seek funding to develop north-south trail connections between key east-west corridors

> Evaluate the feasibility of constructing a whitewater course on the Spokane River

> Evaluate the feasibility of developing a public park along the Spokane River

> Evaluate the feasibility of an arts venue in Spokane Valley

> Identify locations to incorporate public art in new developments or City facilities

Natural Resources

GOALS

NR-G1   Pursue flood hazard reduction while providing predictability for landowners.

NR-G2   Protect the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie sole source aquifer from contamination and maintain high quality groundwater.

NR-G3   Ensure that Critical Areas and Shoreline Master Program regulations are based on best available science and are consistent with required environmental policy.

NR-G4   Regularly update stormwater management plans for sensitive riparian areas.

NR-G5   Enhance riparian and large wooden areas throughout the City on public lands.

NR-G6   Review, as appropriate and based on changing circumstances, the need for mineral resource land designation within the urban setting of the City.

STRATEGIES

> Expand the trail network in the former "Walk in the Wild Zoo" property

POLICIES

NR-P1   Model and delineate floodplain/floodway boundaries to correct inaccurate delineations.

NR-P2   Prepare and/or regularly update watershed plans for Chester Creek, Glenrose Channel, Saltese Creek, Forker Draw, and Central Park Basin.

NR-P3   Prepare an accurate, updated map of areas expected to be inundated by a 100-year flood, particularly in the Spokane River, Forker Draw, and Glenrose Channel areas.

NR-P4   Work with state agencies to improve natural resource inventory data within the City.

NR-P5   Coordinate with regional collaborators to protect and improve regional water quality.

NR-P6   Ensure that emergency response resources are available in the event of a spill.

NR-P7   Educate the public about the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie and Spokane River's susceptibility to contamination.

NR-P8   Maintain compliance with state underground injection control and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit.

NR-P9   Ensure that wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, and critical aquifer recharge areas are identified, designated, and protected.

NR-P10   Maintain stormwater plans to include inventory and maintenance of stormwater facilities.

NR-P11   The City has determined that a mineral resource land designation is not appropriate at this time, but the City will enable existing mineral extraction and mining operations that are currently in lawful operation within the City.
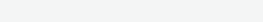
Strategies for Implementation

The strategies included on the previous pages are compiled here for reference. For each strategy, the implementation matrix provided below also explores the relationship between each strategy and the various elements of the Comprehensive Plan, designates lead staff or organization for implementation activities, outlines a time table for completion, and provides a rough sense of relative priority. Though the strategies are not mandatory for the City, they are an important window into Spokane Valley's approach to the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and they merit continued evaluation by City staff.

Legend

- ● Economic Development
- ● Land Use
- ● Transportation
- ● Housing
- ● Capital Facilities
- ● Public & Private Utilities
- ● Parks & Open Spaces
- ● Natural Resources

STRATEGY	PRIMARY ELEMENT	RELATED ELEMENT(S)	LEAD & PARTNERS	TIMING	PRIORITY
Undertake a comprehensive branding process to create and market an identity for Spokane Valley that sells the City's inherent assets to would-be residents, employers, and visitors.	● Economic Development	○ ○ ○ ○ ● ● ○	**E.D. Division**; Visit Spokane	Ongoing	**HIGH**
Continue participation in regional tourism-promotion efforts and increase the City's presence in regional events using space at CenterPlace.	● Economic Development	○ ○ ○ ○ ● ● ○	**E.D. Division**; ValleyFest, Visit Spokane, Sports Commission	Ongoing	**HIGH**
Seek opportunities for funding and improvements for tourism related improvements such as the CenterPlace West Lawn improvements.	● Economic Development	○ ● ● ○ ● ● ●	**E.D. Division**	Ongoing	**HIGH**
Continue to advance GIS and web-based technologies to assist business development.	● Economic Development	○ ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	**E.D. Division**	Ongoing	**HIGH**
Continue to implement the Retail Recruitment Plan.	● Economic Development	○ ● ● ● ● ○ ○	**E.D. Division**; Consultant	Ongoing	**MEDIUM**
Identify opportunities for the formation of a Farmers' market at CenterPlace.	● Economic Development	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ● ○	**E.D. Division**; Parks	2019	**MEDIUM**
Revise and update the City's website to meet accessibility standards, increase search engine optimization, improve user experience and streamline and simplify content.	● Economic Development	○ ● ● ● ● ● ○	**E.D. Division**	Ongoing	**HIGH**

STRATEGY	PRIMARY ELEMENT	RELATED ELEMENT(S)	LEAD & PARTNERS	TIMING	PRIORITY
Evaluate and develop criteria to assist in the evaluation of annexations.	Economic Development	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**E.D. Division**	2019	HIGH
Streamline permitting procedures to advance our business friendly environment based on feedback from business and landowners, developers, etc.	Land Use	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**Building Division**	Ongoing	HIGH
Collaborate with the private sector to facilitate the successful redevelopment of Mirabeau Point.	Land Use	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**E.D. Division**	2020	HIGH
Coordinate transportation planning efforts with other jurisdictions to ensure that Spokane Valley businesses and neighborhoods are well served.	Transportation	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**E.D. and Engineering Divisions**; adjacent jurisdictions, STA	Ongoing	HIGH
Evaluate and where feasible, implement traffic impact fees in areas of the City where detailed traffic studies have been completed.	Transportation	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**Engineering**	2020	HIGH
Work with STA to improve and expand transit service in the City.	Transportation	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**E.D. and Engineering Divisions**; STA	2022	MEDIUM
Evaluate and consider amendments to the municipal code that enhance grant eligibility for projects that improve safety and accessibility.	Transportation	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**E.D. and Engineering Divisions**; Health District	2019	HIGH
Seek opportunities to continue to fund railroad grade separation on Pines Road.	Transportation	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**Engineering**; Chamber of Commerce, GSI	2023	HIGH
Identify low- and moderate-income housing needs.	Housing	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**E.D. Division**; Spokane Housing Authority	2024	LOW
Explore and potentially adopt a Multi Family Tax Exemption in key areas.	Housing	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**ED Division**	2020	MEDIUM
Continue to evaluate new housing typologies to meet market needs.	Housing	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**E.D. Division**; Homebuilders Association	2024	LOW
Develop regulations that provide for the safe, efficent, and equitable provision of supportive housing within the City.	Housing	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**Administration** E.D. Division	2022	HIGH
Identify any gaps or duplication in services provided in the City and help facilitate community wide discussion on how to streamline services offered.	Housing	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**Administration** E.D. Division	2021	HIGH
Identify siting locations for community resource hubs in close proximity to public transportation.	Housing	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	**Administration** E.D. Division	2024	MEDIUM

STRATEGY	PRIMARY ELEMENT	RELATED ELEMENT(S)	LEAD & PARTNERS	TIMING	PRIORITY
Update wayfinding and signage for the entire City, and incorporate a consistent aesthetic or theme based on the outcome of the City's branding process.	Capital Facilities	●●●○○○○○	**E.D. Division**; Downtown Partnership	2024	LOW
Identify opportunities for the expansion of Balfour Park.	Capital Facilities	●●●●○○●○	**Parks and Rec Dept. and E.D. Division**	2020	MEDIUM
Improve new and existing access points to the Spokane River.	Capital Facilities	●●●○●○○●	**Parks and Rec Dept** and Dept of Ecology	2020	MEDIUM
Create a 20-year transportation project list to inform the 6-year transportation improvement program.	Capital Facilities	●●●●●○○●	**Engineering and E.D. Divisions**	2019	HIGH
Implement an asset management program for the street and stormwater maintenance programs.	Capital Facilities	●●●○●○○●	**Administration, Engineering, Street Maintenance**	2022	MEDIUM
Work to extend and improve water, sewer, and road infrastructure in the Northeast Industrial Area to support industrial development.	Public and Private Utilities	●●○○●●○	**Engineering and E.D. Divisions**; Spokane County; Consolidated Irrigation District	2022	HIGH
Coordinate with utility providers on the timing of capital improvement projects.	Public and Private Utilities	●●○○●●○	**Engineering and E.D. Divisions**; Spokane County; Water Districts	2022	HIGH
Identify and implement opportunities, like the Parklet and Streeteries ordinance that take advantage of proximity and access to the Appleway and Centennial Trails.	Parks and Open Space	●●●○●○○	**E.D. Division**; adjacent businesses	2020	LOW
Identify and seek funding to develop north-south trail connections between the Appleway and Centennial Trails.	Parks and Open Space	●●●○●○○	**Parks and Rec Dept.; E.D. Division**; and Resource Conservation Office	2020	MEDIUM
Develop an arts master plan that identifies locations to incorporate public art in new developments or City facilities.	Parks and Open Space	●●●●●○○	**E.D. Division**	2022	LOW
Expand the trail network in the former "Walk in the Wild Zoo" property.	Natural Resources	●○○○●○●○	**Parks**; Department of Natural Resources	2022	LOW

Economic Development
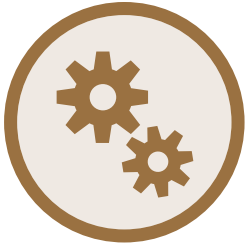
Introduction

WHY THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT IS IMPORTANT

Economic development creates living wage jobs, builds valued community amenities, and generates additional municipal revenues that can be used to maintain service levels, infrastructure, and facilities. All other Comprehensive Plan elements play a role in attracting and retaining companies, increasing their productivity, and growing the local and regional economy. In that sense, the Economic Development Element is integrative and depends on effective land use regulations, quality parks and recreation amenities, efficient transportation infrastructure, reliable utilities and infrastructure, affordable housing opportunities, sustainable resource management, and responsible fiscal policy. Put simply, economic development is intertwined in all of the City's services and roles and is reliant on a dynamic and thoughtful approach to land use planning.

Proactive and innovative economic development efforts are responsible for attracting, recruiting, and retaining office, industrial, and commercial and residential uses within a city. This element is therefore focused on harnessing market forces to encourage the implementation of Spokane Valley's vision. The Economic Development Element therefore provides a comprehensive overview of Spokane Valley's economy, sets policy direction for economic growth, and identifies strategies, programs, and projects to improve the economy.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Economic development is one of the fundamental goals under the GMA. As a whole, the Economic Development Element attempts to merge the efforts of the public and private sectors—the public sector has the ability to mold and influence development, but it is often the private sector that implements the community vision through private investment. Moreover, the GMA stipulates that the Economic Development Element promote economic opportunity for all citizens, particularly individuals who are unemployed or otherwise disadvantaged. Lastly, the GMA also prescribes a balance between economic growth and the efficient use of land and natural resources, which means that economic development efforts must be based in sustainable planning paradigms.

The Countywide Planning Policies (CWPP) for Spokane County build upon the statewide economic development goals by calling for additional cooperation

REFERENCES KEY

- **Refers to other section in plan**
  X-XX

- **(SV)** Refers to other Spokane Valley plans and official documents

- **(&)** Refers to other non-Spokane Valley references for further reading

between regional stakeholders, including adjoining eastern Washington and northern Idaho counties. Engagement with the widespread community fosters economic development in central business areas, and facilitates collaboration in planning for housing and regional transportation facilities.

In the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, the City acknowledged that the local economy is largely dependent on retail and service sectors. That iteration of the Comprehensive Plan focused on the diversification of the City's economy and increasing economic stability. Continued efforts are needed to achieve these goals and to create positive externalities in housing, transportation, and other related areas.

Current Conditions

Spokane Valley has a diverse economy with a robust retail sector. Understanding this economy is essential to identifying challenges and opportunities for economic development in the City.

SPOKANE VALLEY'S ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Spokane Valley's share of jobs by sector is comparable to Spokane County as a whole (Figure 3). Both the City and the County economies are dominated by services, accounting for 54% and 56% of jobs in Spokane County and Spokane Valley in 2014, respectively. The City and the County also had similar shares of jobs in the wholesale trade, transportation, utilities, and construction sectors. Compared to Spokane County overall, Spokane Valley had a notably larger share of retail jobs in 2014—15% versus 20% in the City.

Looking at the County as a whole, which provides important context for local data, the number of jobs in Spokane County remained steady despite some minor fluctuations between 2005 and 2014 (Figure 4). The difference between the nine-year high and low—2008 and 2010, respectively—was approximately 13,000 jobs. In 2014, the County had a total of 205,700 jobs.

In addition to minimal fluctuation in the number of jobs in the County, the mix of employment also remained relatively constant between 2005 and 2014. During the nine years represented in the data, the number of service jobs increased by more than 9,700 and government jobs increased by 1,400. In contrast, Countywide manufacturing and construction jobs decreased by 2,000 and 1,700, respectively. Focusing on Spokane Valley, the top three employment sectors in the City were retail, health care and social assistance,

Figure 3. Share of Jobs by Sector, Spokane Valley and Spokane County, 2014

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics QCEW (2014)
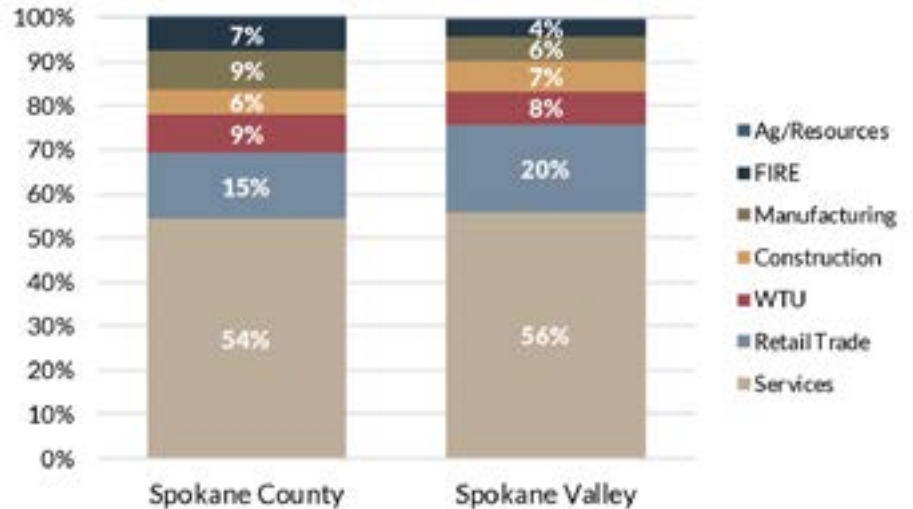
Note: Above employment is delineated by 2-digit NAICS, where 'FIRE' represents Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate activities and 'WTU' represents Wholesale Trade, Transportation, and Utilities activities. The 'Services' sector encapsulates 13 different 2-digit NAICS that include service industries related to transportation, warehousing, and utilities as well as professional, educational, and health care services, among others.

Figure 4. Total Employment by Industry Sector, Spokane County, 2005-2014

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics QCEW (2014)
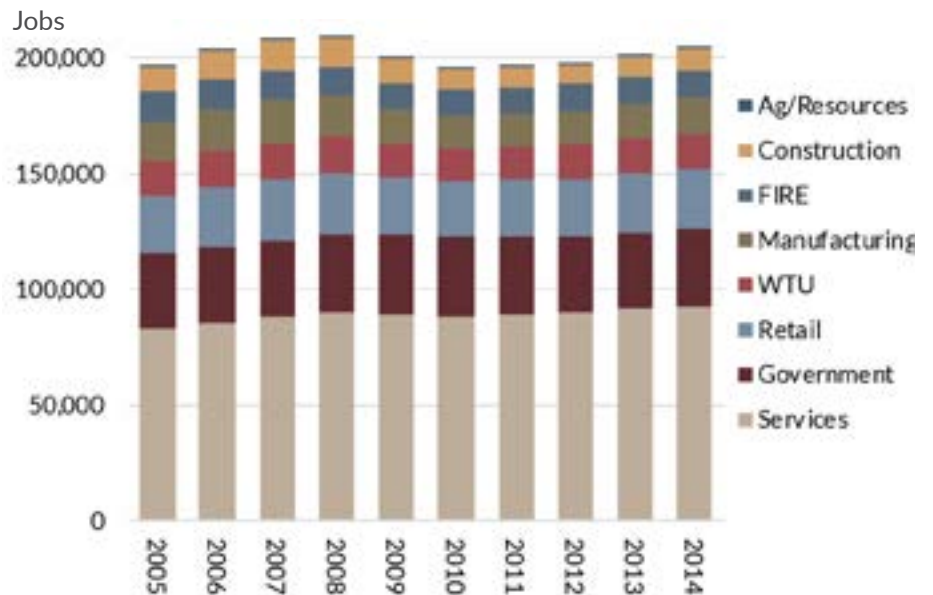
and manufacturing. In 2014, these three industries together accounted for 48.4% of employment in the City.

Employment gains and losses are excellent regional economic indicator and provide a sense of the region's economic trajectory. Unemployment in the U.S. Census-defined Spokane-Spokane Valley metropolitan statistical area (MSA) mirrored many regions of the state over the last decade, with a dramatic loss of jobs starting in 2008 and a steady, if not consistent, recovery beginning around 2011 (Figure 5). At the peak of the recession, 27,300 individuals were unemployed (in 2010), accounting for an unemployment rate of 10.4%. In 2015, the unemployment rate was comparable to the 2004 rate—6.6% in 2015 compared to 6.8% in 2004.

Spokane Valley has a major retail presence in the region, which includes a diverse range of establishments. In terms of the number of establishments within the City, the largest percentage (19%) of retail offerings in Spokane Valley are food service and drinking places (Figure 6). Miscellaneous store retailers (representing a broad mix of typically smaller-footprint retailers) and motor vehicle and parts dealers also accounted for sizable portions of Spokane Valley's retail mix—13% and 12%, respectively.

Another valuable economic indicator is taxable retail sales, which is not only a good measure of a City's retail environment, but also benefits municipal revenues. Motor Vehicles and Parts is the largest retail spending category in Spokane Valley measured by retail sales per capita (Figure 7). General Merchandise stores are also a major spending category within the City, representing purchases made at national-brand and big-box retailers like Target and Fred Meyer. These two categories combined represent two-thirds of all retail sales in Spokane Valley. For comparison, General Merchandise stores also generate significant taxable retail sales in the City of Spokane. However, the largest spending category in the City of Spokane is Food Services and Drinking Places, thus illustrating a stark difference in terms of retail offerings between the two cities.

REAL ESTATE MARKET CONSIDERATIONS

Between 2007 and 2016, commercial square footage in Spokane Valley increased by roughly 700,000 square feet (Figure 8). Industrial square footage has increased nominally, with development in retail and office-zoned space driving the commercial growth in the City.

Figure 5.   Average Unemployment by Year, Spokane-Spokane Valley MSA, 2005-2014

Source: Washington State Employment Security Department (2015)
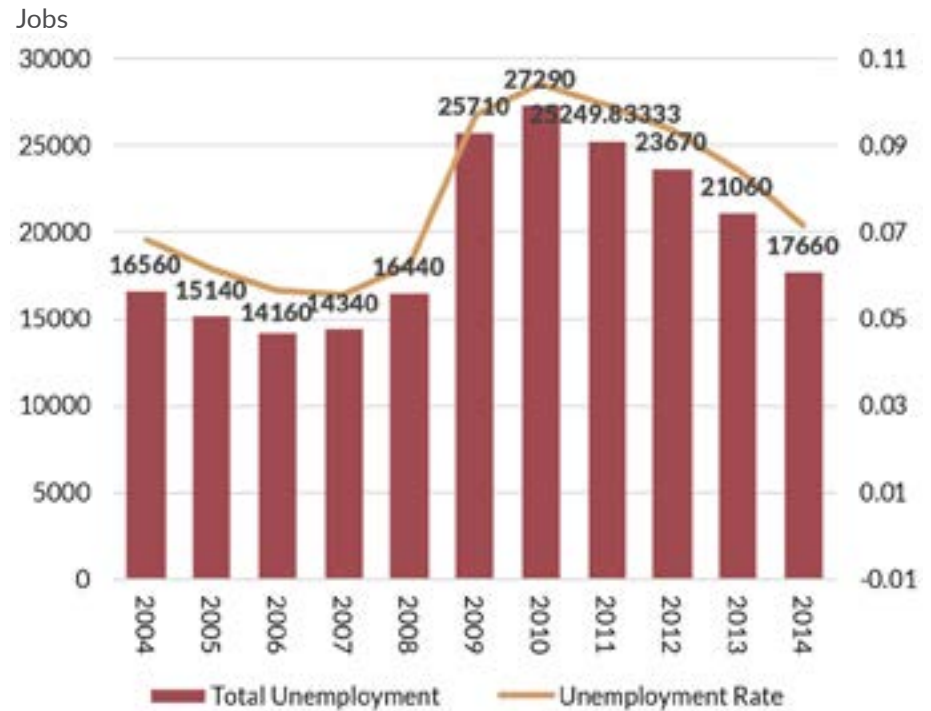
Office

Historically, office rents in Spokane Valley have been higher compared to Spokane County (Figure 9). In the first quarter of 2016, however, the City's average office rent was slightly lower than in the County—roughly $14 compared to about $16 per square foot.

Similarly, the vacancy rate for office buildings in Spokane Valley has been much higher and more volatile than the countywide vacancy rate for office property. Immediately after the 2008-2009 recession, the Spokane Valley office vacancy rate jumped from about 20% to over 32% and remained at that level until the third quarter of 2009. Since then, the office vacancy rate has fluctuated between 17% and 25%. Conversely, the office vacancy rate across the County has generally remained between 10% and 13%.

High vacancy indicates there may be an oversupply of office space in Spokane Valley. To address this oversupply, the City's existing areas zoned exclusively for office may be modified to allow a broader range of market-driven uses.

Figure 6. Retail Establishment Mix, Spokane Valley. 2015

Source: Hoovers (2015)

Pie chart legend:
- Food Services & Drinking Places
- Misc. Store Retailers
- Motor Vehicles Parts and Dealers
- Performing Arts, Spectator Sports & Related Industries
- Food & Beverage Stores
- Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores
- Building Material & Gardening Equipment Supplies Dealers
- Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores
- Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores
- Electronics & Appliance Stores
- Accommodation
- Health & Personal Care Stores
- Nonstore Retailers
- General Merchandise Stores
- Gas Stations

Values shown: 0.19, 0.13, 0.12, 0.08, 0.07, 0.06, 0.06, 0.06, 0.05, 0.04, 0.04, 0.04, 0.03, 0.02, 0.02

Industrial

Industrial vacancy in Spokane Valley has been volatile compared to the County overall. (Figure 10). Between 2009 and 2012, the vacancy rate in the City was subject to considerable seasonality—the rate peaked in the first two quarters and dipped in the final two of the year. Additionally, between the latter half of 2012 and the end of the 2015, the industrial vacancy rate in the City dropped from 15% to 5%. In the first quarter of 2016, the rates countywide and in the City were 3% and 5%, respectively.

Industrial rents have historically been lower in Spokane Valley compared to the County. Between 2013 and 2015, industrial rents in Spokane Valley and the County remained within $0.50 of each other per square foot. By the first quarter of 2016, the countywide rent was a little over a $1 per square foot higher than in Spokane Valley. While still low compared to the County, industrial rents in Spokane Valley have generally been rising incrementally since 2010, with the exception of a drop in early 2015.

Despite indications of demand, with rising rents and dropping vacancy, Spokane Valley has seen little new industrial development since 2008. This may indicate that current new demand is utilizing excess existing space, and that new industrial development may occur if these trends continue. There is

a significant quantity of vacant and underutilized industrial land, concentrated mostly in areas formerly designated exclusively heavy industrial. Vacant land in both industrial designations accounts for 46.4% of Spokane County's total commercial and industrial capacity, climbing to 68.2% when including underutilized industrial land. By updating industrial designations to be more flexible, the City can be more competitive in attracting new businesses that may have previously been limited in finding space appropriate for their needs.

Figure 7.   Retail Sales per Capita by Retail Type, Spokane Valley, Spokane, and Washington State, 2014 (2014$)

Source: WA Department of Revenue (2014)
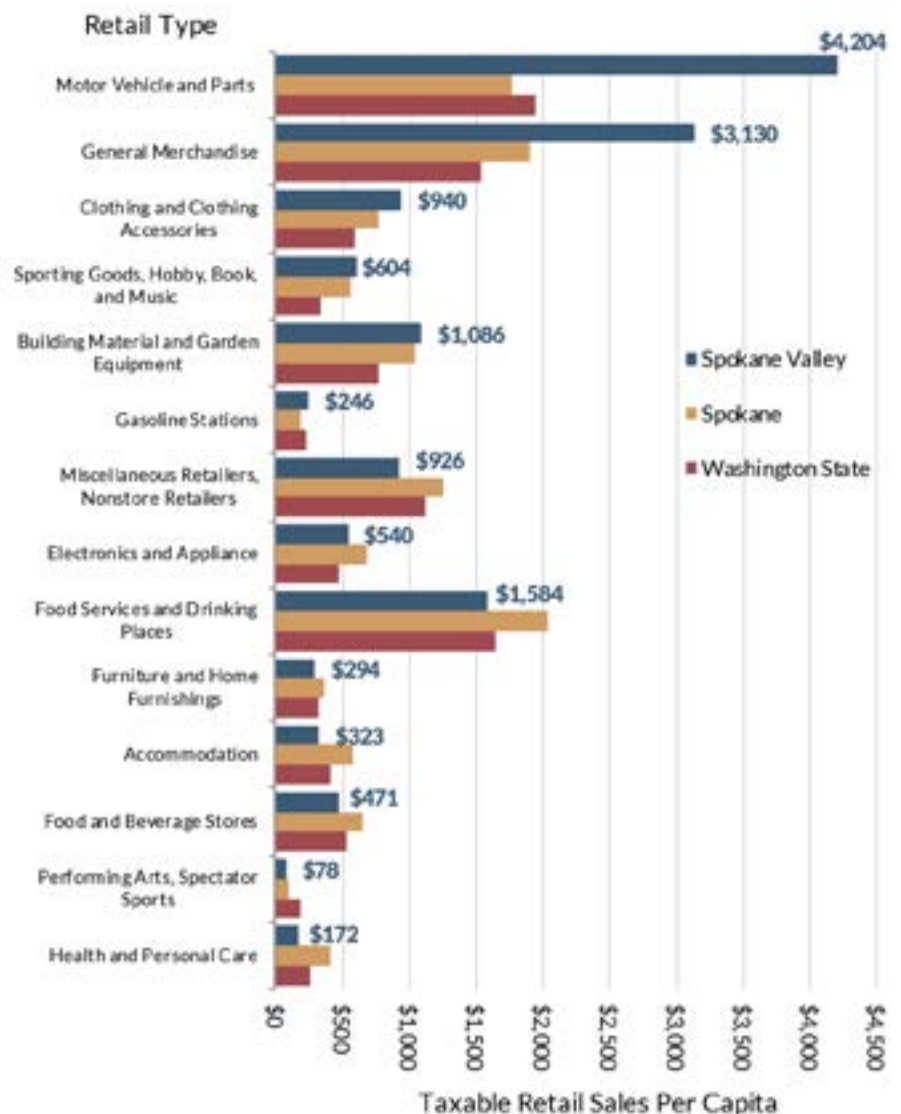
Retail

Spokane Valley features several major retail centers along Sprague Avenue and I-90, including the Spokane Valley Mall, with additional retail space spread throughout the City along arterial streets. Although the City is home to a number of larger format retailers and major national brands are well represented, the most prevalent type of retail in terms of locations and space are smaller scale restaurants, bars and other miscellaneous retailers. Almost half of Spokane Valley's food service establishments are considered fast food restaurants.

Figure 8.   Commercial Square Footage by Type, Spokane Valley, 2007-2016

Source: CoStar Group (2016)
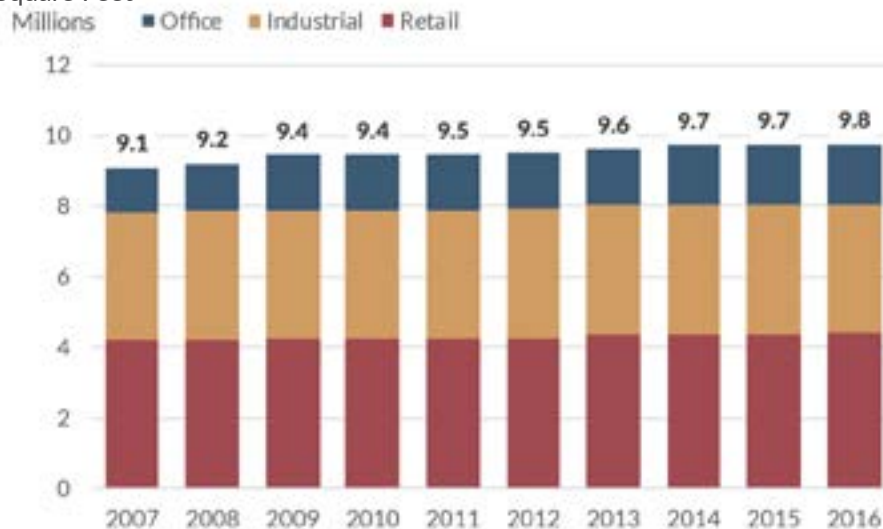
Between 2007 and the first quarter of 2016, the rent associated with retail space was lower in Spokane Valley than it was in Spokane County as a whole (Figure 11). At its lowest, in the first quarter of 2007, the retail rent in Spokane Valley was roughly $2.50 per square foot cheaper than in Spokane County overall. From 2007-2011, retail vacancy rates in Spokane Valley were higher than the County overall. However, after spiking at 11% in 2012, vacancy has dropped to 6%, below the countywide vacancy rate. Retail rents in Spokane Valley have also been climbing since 2013, and while they remain slightly lower than the countywide rate, the countywide rate has been relatively flat. These two points in tandem indicate a demand for more retail space within Spokane Valley. Despite this demand, there are areas where retail space is underdeveloped or in poor condition.

Figure 9.   Office Rents and Vacancy Rates, Spokane Valley and Spokane County, 2007-2016

Source: CoStar Group (2016)

The retail sector in Spokane Valley employed more than 9,600 individuals—almost 19% of total employment—in 2014, making it the largest industry by employment in the City (though not all of these employees are Spokane Valley residents). Spokane Valley's retail is spread throughout the City's major travel corridors where larger clusters are anchored by big-box retailers, such as Target, Costco, Fred Meyer, and Home Depot as well as the Spokane Valley Mall (Figure 12).

Previous trade capture analyses (which measures the ability of local retailers to capture local spending power) indicate that Spokane Valley's retail establishments draw shoppers from throughout the region and demand for retail space is strong. At the same time, the local retail market is dominated by centers anchored by big-box tenants and retail sales have been relatively slow to recover from the recession. The community also desires more small scale, neighborhood retail establishments, which may struggle to compete with existing national chains. Generating "more rooftops" through increased residential density near commercial areas can help support neighborhood retail by increasing local demand.

Figure 10. Industrial Rents and Vacancy Rates, Spokane Valley and Spokane County, 2007-2016

Source: CoStar Group (2016)

The Capital Facilities Element identifies specific improvements slated for industrial areas.

Tourism

Spokane County has a significant tourism industry and tourism represents a major component of the regional economy. For example, direct visitor spending in Spokane County in 2015 was $947 million, generating $322 million in earnings, 10,040 employees, $23 million in local taxes, and $41 million in state taxes. Although many well-publicized tourism amenities and events are associated with the neighboring City of Spokane, the Spokane Valley's ability to attract visitors and outside spending is an important component of the local economy.

In Spokane Valley, employment in sectors related to tourism and visitation accounted for a larger share of overall employment than in the City of Spokane or Spokane County—31% compared to 23% and 26%, respectively (Figure 13).

Overall employment in tourism-related sectors is much less in Spokane Valley than in Spokane and Spokane County. However, the share of total employment is much greater. In Spokane Valley, this is due to a thriving retail trade sector, representing more than 18% of total employment in the City; the food and drinking services sector also represents a larger portion of overall employment in Spokane Valley than in Spokane or Spokane County.

The Spokane Valley Mall is a major retail destination for the region.

Figure 11. Retail Rents and Vacancy Rates, Spokane Valley and Spokane County, 2007-2016

Source: CoStar Group (2016)

Spokane Valley's environment and natural resources are some of the most valuable tourism assets the City has to offer. Critical recreation amenities include the Spokane River, mountain bike parks at Camp Sekani, hiking trails in Dishman Hills, the Appleway and Centennial Trails, Mirabeau Park, and more distant features such as Mt. Spokane and Lake Coeur D'Alene. These recreation amenities draw numerous visitors each year, and provide a distinctive identity for Spokane Valley destinations.

The Spokane River/Centennial Trail corridor provides a major recreational opportunity for regional visitors, and the new Appleway Trail extensions present opportunities to link recreational amenities with businesses along East Sprague, the City Hall site, the Heritage Museum, and other community resources. Additionally, there is a significant amount of meeting space at CenterPlace, which is utilized for conferences and major gatherings. Many amenities and facilities lack connections, a notable example being the lack of lodging facilities within a walkable distance of CenterPlace or the Spokane County Fairgrounds.

Spokane Valley's restaurants and retail offerings are essential amenities for visitors. Visitors seeking convenience or a more curated experience turn to the clustering of retail and services around other tourist draws. The geographic distribution of these amenities can provide insight into successful existing concentrations as well as areas that may be in need of amenities for tourists and residents alike. Many of these amenities are represented on the map in Figure 14.

Figure 12. Map of Retail Land Use Concentrations & Trade Areas, Spokane Valley, 2016

Source: Spokane County Assessor (2015); Community Attributes Inc. (2016
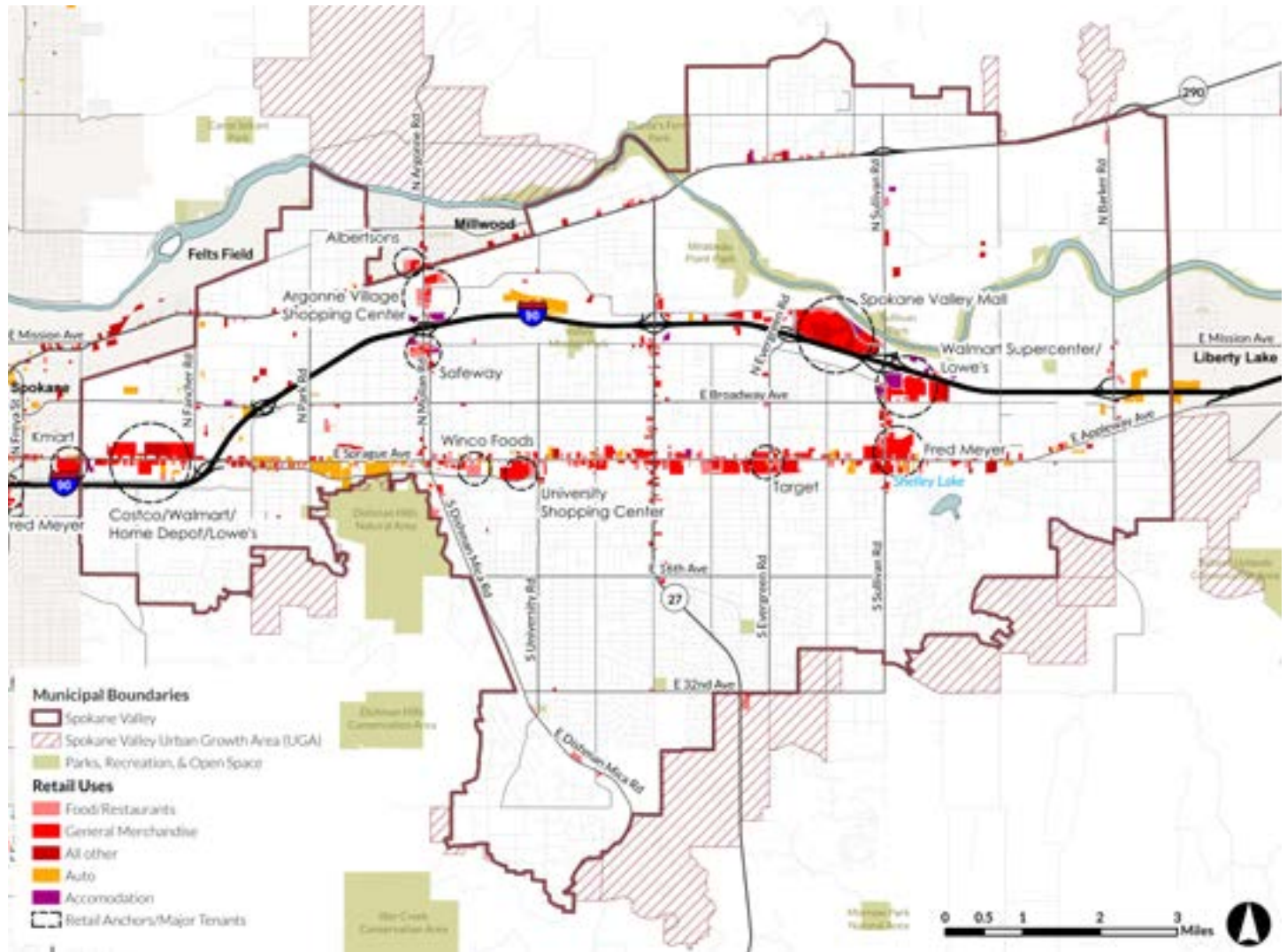
The Spokane Valley Mall is a major retail draw for the region, and has a wide capture area that draws visitors to the community. The East Sprague Avenue corridor offers a significant number of retail options, including a notable number of locally-owned businesses. The restaurants located near the highway, particularly on North Sullivan Road, focus on limited service options that are co-located with an array of lodging options.

Figure 13. Tourism-Related Employment, Spokane Region, 2014
Source: WA Employment Security Department (2015)
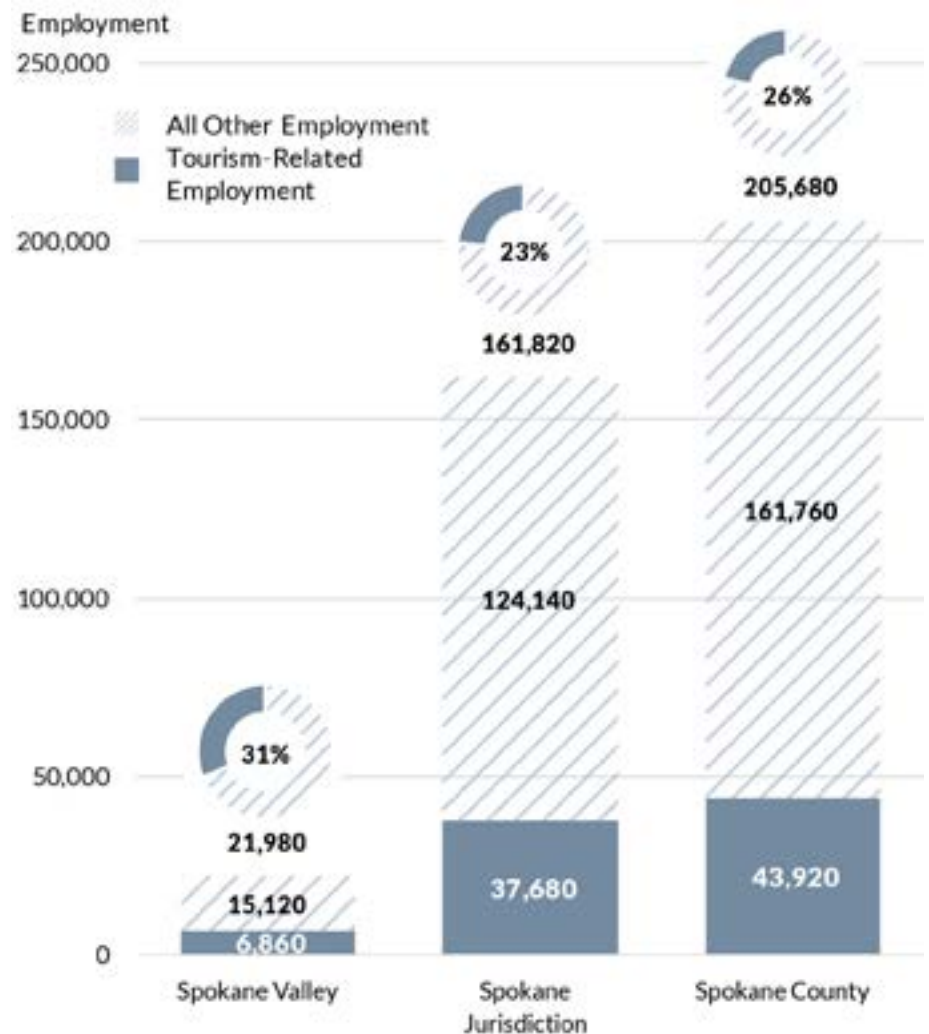
Approach to the Economic Development Element

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Developing and Disseminating a Brand

Many stakeholders have suggested that the City lacks a cohesive, marketable identity for economic development purposes. A branding process is currently underway, but this creates both the challenge and the opportunity to disseminate this brand, incorporating it into City marketing and promotional materials and building regional traction.

Figure 14. Map of Community Assets and Tourism Opportunities

Source: Community Attributes Inc. (2016)
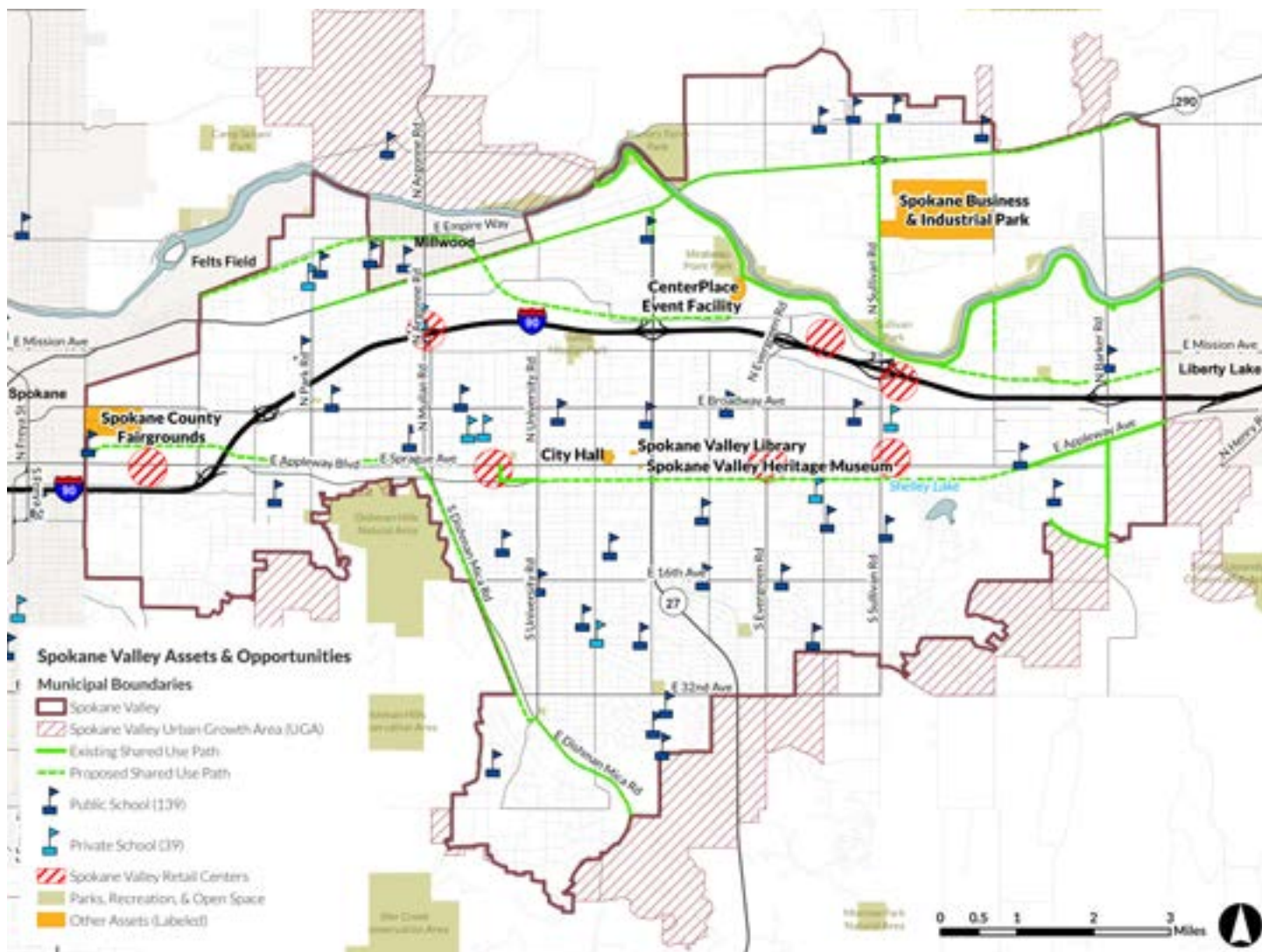
Leveraging Interstate 90 Access

Spokane Valley has strategic access to Interstate 90, as well as proximate air and container freight and rail terminals. Furthermore, the City has an ample supply of industrial and commercial land, some of which is located within a 325,000 square foot Foreign Trade Zone in the Spokane Industrial Park on SR 290. Spokane Valley has an opportunity to continue to leverage these assets when recruiting businesses to the City and should compete strongly for regional industrial development.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Expanding Tourism Offerings

Detailed market data indicate that there is an opportunity to improve capture of Spokane Valley's existing high-volume and high-value tourist segments while expanding to reach new customer bases. This requires investment in local amenities and the development of new attractions. Ongoing strategic planning for tourism in Spokane Valley can complement this update of the Comprehensive Plan and provide suggestions for targeted investments with high return-on-investment for the City and its residents.

Capitalizing on Outdoor Recreation

The prevalence of outdoor recreation options should be an economic advantage for the City, in addition to a quality of life feature. The area's vast hiking, biking, climbing, fishing, and skiing options should drive overnight stays in the City, and strategic investments in recreation infrastructure, as well as marketing of local assets, can bolster economic development efforts.

Improving the Retail Cluster

Retail is a leading sector for Spokane Valley, but many residents feel that the City lacks smaller, neighborhood-oriented and locally-owned retail and dining options. Updates to the development regulations will provide retailers with additional flexibility, but the City can increase its efforts to grow and attract new and unique retail options that differentiate Spokane Valley from other cities in the area.

Supporting Commercial Growth

The City of Spokane Valley serves as a major regional employment center and should continue to do so. There is opportunity to capture regional growth and to encourage development of high quality industrial, flex, and office space to attract new companies looking for more affordable and strategically located space to grow and expand in. The City should focus on positioning itself as a cost effective alternative in the region and identify areas where office and commercial development can complement each other and take advantage of the City's unique suite of amenities.

BEST PRACTICES

Engaging Partners and Stakeholders

Spokane Valley's economic development priorities rely, in part, on regional events and attractions. Beyond these attractions, though, attempts to work with local and regional economic development partners and other stakeholders, including the local business community, may be a force-multiplier for the City's economic development efforts.

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK.

Land Use

Introduction

WHY THE LAND USE ELEMENT IS IMPORTANT

Land use regulations determine what can be built, at what density, and in which location. In considering Spokane Valley's anticipated growth over the next 20 years, the Land Use Element provides a framework to accommodate future development while enhancing the community's quality of life. In many ways, the assumptions in the Land Use Element form the basis for growth-related planning found in the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The GMA establishes the Land Use Element as the required foundation to the Comprehensive Plan. This chapter includes a map that designates the proposed general distribution, general location, and extent of various uses of land. Additionally, it identifies population densities and building intensities for new land use designations, and is designed to accommodate estimates of future population growth. More specifically, the GMA requires cities to regulate the location and intensity of land uses, and to establish a framework that can accommodate 20 years of anticipated growth within a specified urban growth area. Specific regulations are included in the Spokane Valley Municipal Code (SVMC) that implement the Land Use Element.

The City's previous Comprehensive Plan focused on encouraging more compact, diverse forms of commercial and residential development. This goal signaled a transition from a purely suburban, auto-oriented development pattern to one that fosters more diverse, mixed-use neighborhoods. At the same time, this goal has not been fully realized; an economic recession and continued market support for single family housing has slowed the transition. However, community members reaffirmed a desire for more compact and convenient residential and commercial centers, where diverse amenities are located nearby. To continue moving toward this vision and to meet the goals of the GMA, this Comprehensive Plan streamlines zoning and development regulations to allow greater flexibility in commercial and mixed-use zones and maximize responsiveness to the local market.

REFERENCES KEY

●
X-XX   Refers to other section in plan

(SV)   Refers to other Spokane Valley plans and official documents

(&)   Refers to other non-Spokane Valley references for further reading

Current Conditions

Modern Spokane Valley, which was incorporated in 2003, began as a diffused collection of agricultural communities. Residential areas were characterized by large lots, and commercial areas cropped up along highways and major arterials that connected residents to other towns throughout the Spokane River valley and, later, up and down the Interstate 90 corridor. This original rural development pattern persists today, with single family homes and auto-oriented commercial uses predominating. Though development patterns in the City are changing, future land use patterns evolve from this historic point of departure.

Typically, individual development projects financed and built by private landowners and developers compose the large majority of urban areas, but those development projects are constrained by the land use and zoning regulations adopted by public entities. These regulations balance the need to protect the health, safety, and public welfare of residents with the constitutional duty to maintain individual liberties. Broadly, adopted regulations respond to demographic, economic, and market trends to align Spokane Valley's land use framework with current and anticipated conditions.

CONTINUED POPULATION GROWTH

Development in the Spokane River valley predates Spokane itself, beginning thousands of years ago with people of the Interior Salish tribe. In the 19th century, several fur trading settlements also grew along the Spokane River. After the area was irrigated in the early 20th century, Spokane Valley's orchards thrived, and the population grew, creating townships like Opportunity, Veradale, Greenacres, and Dishman. Several of Spokane Valley's current neighborhoods take their names from these early communities.

In years when agricultural production waned, local farmers began to sell land for housing development. When population growth rapidly accelerated following World War II, the majority of Spokane Valley's remaining orchards were replaced with housing and low-intensity commercial development. This decentralized suburban growth pattern continued through incorporation in 2003.

Today, the City offers a mix of residential and commercial uses, including office, retail, and industrial properties. Commercial uses are located primarily along major arterials, particularly Sprague Avenue, Argonne Road, Mullan Road, Sullivan Road, and Pines Road. The residential neighborhoods between these

Figure 15. Current Land Use by Acreage, Spokane Valley

■ Exempt/Utilities
■ Multi-family
■ Industrial
■ Vacant Land
■ General Commercial
■ Single Family Residential

Economic Development Element contains additional real estate data.

3-41
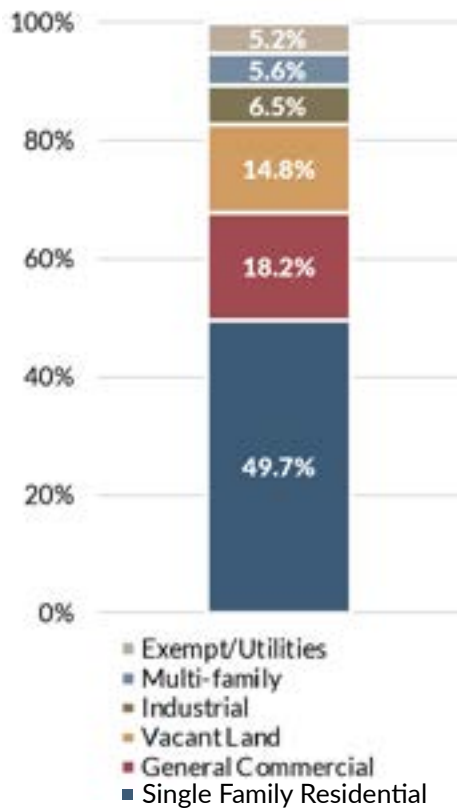
corridors consist largely of single family dwellings. At the same time, the City is poised to become more urban, with a growing stock of multifamily housing. Single family residential is still the City's dominant land use, encompassing 49.7% of its area. Almost 15% of the City's land is characterized as vacant. Figure 15 provides a breakdown of land use by acreage for major land use categories.

Spokane Valley has experienced steady, but modest population growth since its incorporation, growing at a rate of about 1% per year. The City's estimated 2016 population was 94,160 according to the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM), making Spokane Valley the ninth-largest city in Washington.

Under the GMA, Spokane County makes a projection of the total countywide population and employment in 2037, and allocates anticipated population growth to its incorporated cities. The cities, in turn, must then adopt regulations that can accommodate this allocated growth. The County's current population allocation assumptions anticipate Spokane Valley's modest growth pattern to continue, resulting in a 2037 population of 109,913 in Spokane Valley. Growth may occur steadily over time or in concentrated bursts; annexation, for example, often accelerates overall growth.

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

As noted earlier, private businesses and residents are typically responsible for the financing and construction of the development projects that execute the City's land use vision. Therefore, there are several market-based factors that affect the way a city grows. As Spokane Valley sees renewed interest in development opportunities after the Great Recession, these factors become increasingly important in understanding how land use regulations affect development opportunities.

Generally, new real estate products have infiltrated many cities in the United States over the last several years. These products, which are less challenging to finance and build now than they have previously been, require that regulations offer flexibility to developers that hope to create innovative projects. The following sections describe some of these innovations for each major use category, though additional real estate data is located in the Economic Development Element. The changes described below may or may not be clearly visible in Spokane Valley, but many are also consistent with the themes espoused by City residents during the stakeholder engagement process.

Residential

Many Spokane Valley residents have expressed a desire to maintain a stock of large-lot single family homes, and adopted zoning and development regulations ensure that this typology will continue to be available within the City. However, the largest shift in housing over the last decade has been renewed interest in multifamily development. This shift is a response to demand for apartments from young and old alike. Often, younger people value the flexibility of rental agreements (compared to the long-term commitment of a mortgage); older individuals increasingly seek to downsize to minimize property maintenance requirements. Both populations have developed a well-documented preference for living in close proximity to amenities like arts and entertainment, restaurants, parks and open spaces, public transportation, and even employment centers. This requires higher-density housing in centrally-located areas.

Multifamily housing doesn't meet the needs of every consumer, however. For individuals and families that require the space of a single family home but still want some of the neighborhood amenities mentioned above, new housing products offer a compromise. Specifically, *traditional neighborhood* or *new urbanist* development styles have increased in popularity. These styles are characterized by well-connected streets that are safe for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles, varied housing types at moderate densities and robust public spaces. In Spokane County, Kendall Yards offers the most prominent example of this type of development, though Spokane's Perry District also illustrates some of these concepts.

To improve access to amenities and affordability for residents, detached single family products like cottages and tiny homes are also on the rise. These small units typically offer a private space that shares a yard and are designed to increase densities in existing single family neighborhoods while blending in with the architectural scale and character of the neighborhood. These increased densities, in turn, improve the feasibility of small-scale, neighborhood-serving retail projects like coffee shops and corner stores.

Retail

Retail uses are also changing in response to some of the trends described above. As consumers increasingly prefer to live close to certain amenities, retailers are rewarded for embracing more urban models. This trend is visible across all retail scales, from the corner store to the regional mall. In fact, many shopping malls across the country have undergone extensive remodeling efforts to create a network of internal, pedestrian-oriented streets and to add

housing opportunities. The Spokane Valley Mall is still a retail anchor for the region and is very effective in its current form, but anecdotal evidence from malls in other cities suggests that, over time, some of the City's retailers may look to find spaces that are more easily accessible to consumers. Land use and zoning regulations must offer the flexibility to accommodate this range of retail development styles.

Office

Office development is increasingly shaped by two conflicting trends: many employees want to work in lively, connected areas that offer nearby food and entertainment, while others are using advances in telecommunications to work outside of and away from their offices. The market has responded by building offices in concentrated mixed-use hubs, where workers can meet social and professional goals, but also by developing new typologies, like co-working spaces, that provide a place for telecommuting workers to gather and share the use of conference facilities, printers, and other expensive equipment. Again, providing flexibility in the land use code will allow landowners and developers to respond to these emerging market demands.

Industrial

For many reasons, industrial uses still remain less integrated into the fabric of surrounding neighborhoods. However, many modern industrial uses no longer resemble the smokestack-adorned factories typical of 20th century industry, and industrial employees also have many of the same desires as their office-bound peers. One way that new industrial development has responded to these changes is through the development of self-contained industrial campuses. These campuses offer a well-maintained and landscaped environment that rewards workers and attracts prospective tenants; noxious and unsightly economic activities are well-screened, and workers are provided with some retail amenities so that they don't need to leave the campus to meet their daily needs.

More discreetly, existing industrial areas have also begun accommodating non-industrial uses that are compatible with industrial operations. For example, breweries require on-site production, but often have a tasting room that offers retail sales; small, independent furniture manufacturers may choose to sell directly to customers out of a workshop or warehouse; a garment manufacturer may consolidate repair, distribution, and retail in one facility. Though these changes are already occurring in an ad-hoc manner, it is becoming increasingly important to address mixed-industrial districts in land use regulations.

FUTURE LAND USE PATTERNS

In light of stakeholder input and these macroeconomic trends, as well as GMA requirements, the City is revising its land use regulations to implement the community's vision, increase flexibility for landowners and developers, and respond to market opportunities. These changes are discussed in detail in the following section.

Changing Designations, Increasing Flexibility

Spokane Valley desires a safe, clean, and vital community, and its residents also value fiscal responsibility, economic growth, and flexibility for the business community. These preferences very clearly inform the changes to the land use code that are advanced in this Comprehensive Plan. Nevertheless, changes must first and foremost accomplish the mandates of the GMA, which relies on the concept of channeling expected growth into existing urban areas.

The revised land use regulations therefore provide a physical framework for the City's goals of expanding housing choices and enhancing neighborhood character while minimizing barriers to development and meeting GMA goals and requirements. Some previous designations have been merged, and additional land uses have been allowed in new areas of the City. The Comprehensive Plan is required to include a future land use map, which depicts these land use patterns (Figure 16).

Calculating Land Capacity

To meet GMA requirements, Spokane Valley must demonstrate that there is sufficient capacity within its UGA to accommodate future development. To assess the City's theoretical development capacity, a Land Capacity Analysis (LCA) has been completed. The table in Figure 18 details the results of the LCA, providing calculations of buildable land, dwelling unit capacity, and population capacity for each of the zoning designations that will change with this Comprehensive Plan update.

Spokane Valley has estimated capacity for 21,852 residents and 9,784 homes, giving it sufficient capacity to meet its 2037 growth target of 14,650 additional residents.

The LCA is performed by first identifying developable parcels – vacant, partially-used, and underutilized. Next, parcels which cannot be developed due to physical, environmental, or social reasons are removed. After applying a safety factor, the capacity is estimated, and is shown in "Net Developable Acres" in Figure 18. However, out of total development capacity, partially-used

and underutilized parcels may be more expensive or otherwise less feasible to develop than vacant land. A significant portion of Spokane Valley's current capacity is in underutilized and partially-used land.

Spokane Valley currently has 4,349 acres of commercial and industrial land capacity, with the greatest concentration in its Industrial designation. There is a higher portion of vacant land across these designations compared to residential designations.

Figure 16. Future Land Use Map
Source: City of Spokane Valley (2019)
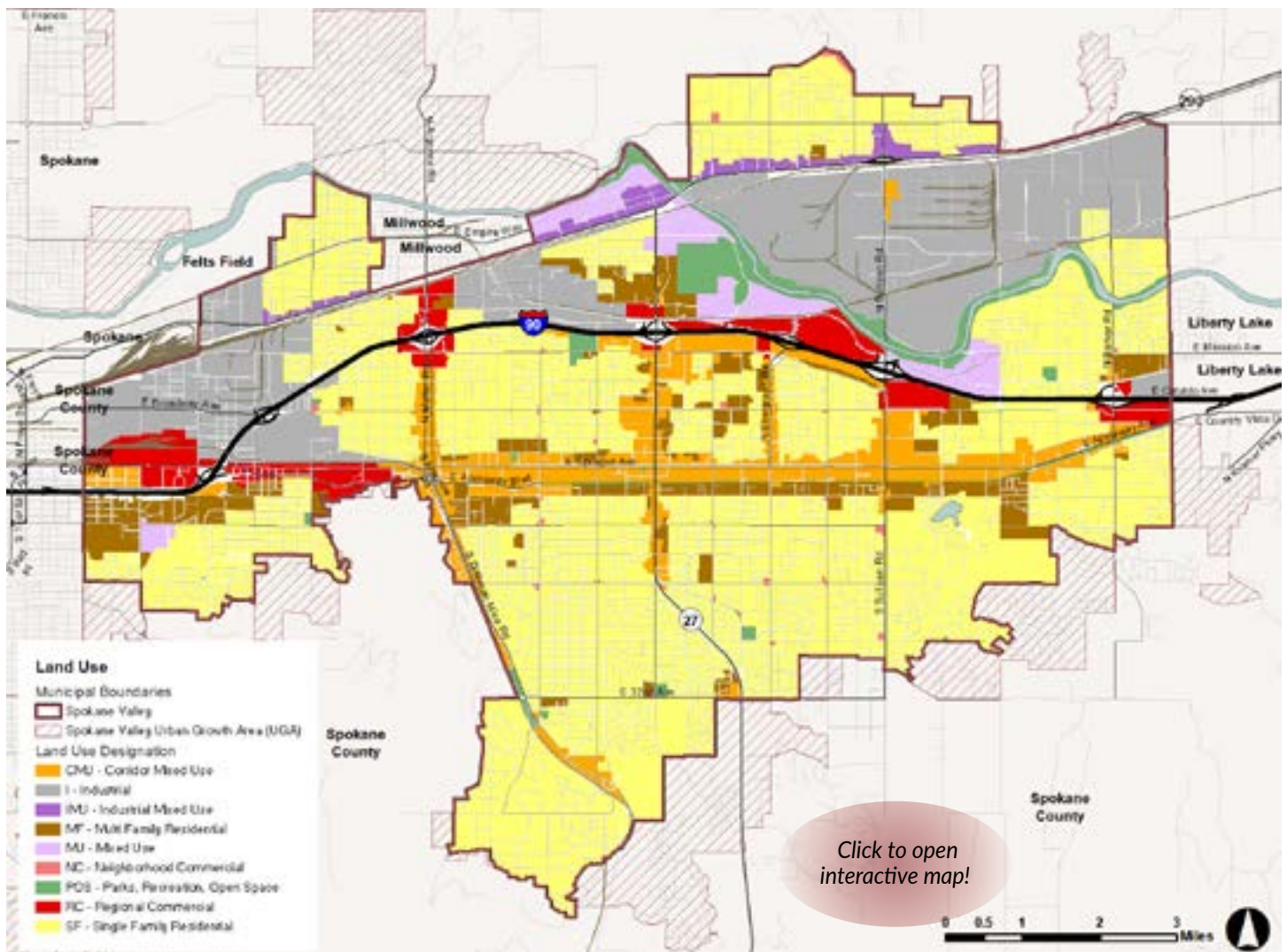
The designations depicted in the Future Land Use Map are also described in detail in Figure 17.

Figure 17. Future Land Use Designation Descriptions, Spokane Valley

DESIGNATION	DESCRIPTION
Single Family Residential (SFR)	Single Family Residential (SFR) addresses a range of single family residential densities. This designation would be implemented through a series of zoning districts that would allow a range of minimum lot sizes.
Multifamily Residential (MFR)	Multifamily Residential (MFR) allows for multifamily development. Generally, this designation is located near business and commercial centers, the arterial street system, and public transit. The implementing zone would protect the single family designation through transitional standards.
Neighborhood Commercial (NC)	Neighborhood Commercial (NC) designates areas for small-scale neighborhoods serving retail and office uses. Neighborhood business areas should not be larger than two acres in size, and should be located as business clusters rather than arterial strip commercial developments.
Regional Commercial	Regional Commercial (RC) allows a large range of uses. A wide range of development types, appearance, ages, function, and scale. It covers the "strip" retail areas along Sprague Avenue which includes the automobile dealerships located along the western end of the Sprague Avenue corridor and the "big box" retail area found in the Sullivan Road area from Sprague Avenue north to the Interstate 90 interchange, and includes the Spokane Valley Mall and Wal-Mart.
Corridor Mixed-Use (CMU)	Corridor Mixed-Use (CMU) allows for light manufacturing, retail, multifamily, and offices along major transportation corridors. CMU recognizes the historical low-intensity, auto-dependent development pattern. It is primarily used along Sprague Avenue, and the north-south arterials.
Mixed Use (MU)	Mixed-Use (MU) would allow for two or more different land uses within developments under this designation. Mixed-use developments can be either vertical or horizontally mixed, and would include employment uses such as office, retail, and/or lodging along with higher density residential uses, and in some cases community or cultural facilities.
Industrial Mixed-Use (IMU)	Industrial Mixed-Use (IMU) allows for light manufacturing, retail, offices, and lighter industrial types of uses such as contractor yards.
Industrial (I)	Industrial (I) would allow all types of industrial development like manufacturing, processing, fabrication, assembly, disassembly, and freight-handling. Those industrial uses that may have significant noise, odor, or aesthetic impacts, are subject to buffering and transitional provisions. Non-industrial uses should be limited to preserve industrial land viability but ancillary uses should be permitted to serve the industrial uses.
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (POS)	Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (POS) is intended to provide area for parks, open space, and other natural physical assets of the community

Figure 18. Residential Land Capacity, Spokane Valley
Source: City of Spokane Valley (2016)

ZONING	NET DEVELOPABLE ACRES	POTENTIAL NEW DWELLING UNITS	POTENTIAL POPULATION INCREASE
Corridor Mixed-Use	1,073	502	753
Industrial	3,456	1	3
Multifamily	717	3,062	6,124
Mixed Use	169	575	863
Single Family	6,891	5,643	14,109
Total	**13,199**	**9,784**	**21,852**

Managing Land Use Compatibility

Streamlining the land use regulations will, at times, allow different development types to locate in close proximity to each other. The City recognizes that without proper planning, this could create the potential for incompatibility between adjacent parcels. To manage this challenge and facilitate integration, the City is advancing a series of transitional standards that require development to respond to nearby properties. For example, an apartment building that is built near single family homes may be required to meet additional regulatory standards. The specific transitional provisions are included in the revisions to the SVMC. These standards will ensure that Spokane Valley's neighborhoods and commercial corridors continue to demonstrate quality and character.

Approach to the Land Use Element

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of challenges and opportunities that have shaped goals and policies for land use in Spokane Valley. These provide some reasonable limits as to what the market can be expected to provide moving forward, as well as some opportunities to improve performance.

Encouraging Neighborhood-Scale Commercial Development

Spokane Valley currently lacks small scale, walkable neighborhood commercial areas, and the community has expressed a strong desire to encourage this type of development, but it faces significant barriers.

First, Spokane Valley's commercial areas are dominated by national "big box" chains which draw regional shoppers. Small, independent retailers may not be able to compete with these larger retailers, and will depend upon local shoppers, often on foot or on bike, instead of the regional shoppers driving in to the national chains. This requires a greater density of households in the immediate proximity of small retail areas, and Spokane Valley's residential areas near commercial corridors do not yet have this density.

In addition to making sure there are sufficient people living near retail areas, the streetscape can provide enjoyable places for people to walk and gather. With wide street widths and large parking areas oriented on the street side, Spokane Valley's commercial areas are often not pedestrian friendly. Planning for neighborhood retail should work in concert with planning for open space, pedestrian, and bicycle improvements. The City's 2016 Retail Improvement Strategy (RIS) provides a number of aspirational strategies for expanding the types of retail provided in Spokane Valley. While the City is not obligated to implement the recommendations of the RIS, it offers opportunities to encourage economic development that are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Attracting New Development In New Areas

In several areas of the City, parcels are underdeveloped and redevelopment has been slow to occur, particularly along Sprague Avenue. Sprague Avenue is part of the Sprague/Appleway Urban Transportation Corridor as identified by the SRTC. Urban Transportation Corridors are corridors suitable for multimodal travel and can accommodate higher-density mixed use development. SRTC encourages jurisdictions to plan for land use growth along these corridors. Increasing the development intensity along the Sprague Avenue corridor is a key feature of the City's land use strategy.

In certain industrial areas there is a good supply of vacant land, but very little new development. In all of these cases, there are certain economic realities preventing new development at this time. By allowing greater flexibility in its zoning, and allowing more mixed-use development along commercial corridors, the City is laying the groundwork to unlock the potential of these underperforming neighborhoods.

Creating Catalytic Development

The development of a new City Hall for Spokane Valley represents an opportunity to generate additional private development. Development regulations must allow for the appropriate mix of uses and the intensities that would create unique and diverse place surrounding City Hall. City Hall development would also further the goal to increase development activity on the Sprague Urban Transportation Corridor by providing a strong public investment in the corridor.

Furthermore, the City has other large developable sites that offer opportunities to advance the City's vision and spur economic development. Land use regulations should provide the flexibility needed to find partners to lead private development that is consistent with the City's vision, particularly on these large, strategically-located sites.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC PRIORITIES

Supporting Economic Vitality and Diversity

- **Support neighborhood retail.** The market trend indicating demand for more retail space is mirrored by the community's desire for an increased number of neighborhood amenities. Spokane Valley residents reported significant demand for walkable retail options within the community, both to enhance the quality of life and develop distinctive neighborhood identities.

- **Support a mix of land uses.** Spokane Valley's industrial areas are an important economic resource for the City, and should be supported. At the same time, land uses should be flexible to allow for changes in market demand and innovative development approaches.

Maintaining Strong Quality of Life

- **Enhance local identity.** The community has expressed a desire to develop more unique neighborhood character. This includes encouraging the types of development that support small, independent businesses, including mixed uses and greater density of housing in certain areas. At the same time, the quality of the City's single family neighborhoods must be preserved.

- **Celebrate valued public spaces and facilities.** The Centennial Trail, which runs through the City, is a treasured local amenity. Improving access to and amenities on the trail and other public facilities will help strengthen a sense of community, along with encouraging physical activity. New open spaces are welcomed, and create a more beautiful city. The Spokane River, and other natural features, are important to the community.

The Transportation Element includes specific recommendations for multimodal planning, which reinforces land use planning for physical activity.

● 5-77

The Parks and Open Space Element focuses on improved recreation opportunities for Spokane Valley residents.

● 9-148

BEST PRACTICES

Protecting Natural Resources

Land use patterns must not exhaust the capacity of local resources. Specifically, water-related resources and air quality are explicitly tied to land use patterns and the behaviors they engender.

Promoting Health and Wellness

Promoting physical activity is important and land use patterns affect the extent to which people choose to walk or bike for transportation and leisure. The Land Use Element increases mixed-use designations and residential designations, thereby bringing people into closer proximity to their destinations and giving them better opportunities to walk and bike in Spokane Valley.

Creating Public Space

Public spaces are important community amenities and allow residents to create meaningful social connections. The City has an opportunity to improve existing public spaces and create new spaces with the ongoing redevelopment of public properties and through revisions to the development regulations.
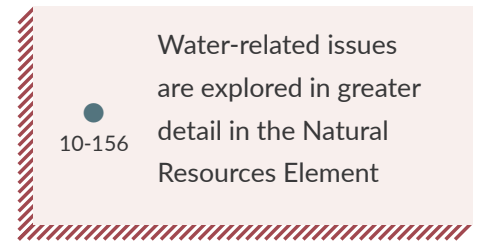
THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK.

Transportation

Introduction

WHY THE TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT IS IMPORTANT

Spokane Valley's diverse mix of land uses requires a robust and well-planned transportation network so that people can travel efficiently for work, shopping, medical, recreational, and other uses. This chapter summarizes the existing state of the transportation system and identifies future challenges related to continued demographic and economic growth. This analysis is a required component of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan and identifies how the transportation network and the surrounding land uses influence the way people travel and how convenient that travel is for local residents, workers, and visitors. Based on this analysis and an extensive public outreach component, challenges and opportunities for the transportation network are identified that will be addressed as part of the ongoing Comprehensive Plan update.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The Transportation Element is shaped by several important state and regional laws and policies, as described below:

- The GMA identifies transportation as one of the required elements of a Comprehensive Plan. The GMA encourages efficient multimodal transportation systems that are consistent with the land use assumptions in the Comprehensive Plan, identify level of service standards, forecast future transportation growth, identify new projects, and coordinate with other Comprehensive Plan elements to identify a feasible financing strategy.

- CWPP are defined by Spokane County, SRTC, and local jurisdictions. Related to transportation, the CWPP require that jurisdiction plans be consistent with each other, and include roadway, pedestrian, bicycle, rail, and air facilities. Additionally, the Transportation Element shall identify a transportation concurrency standard to ensure growth and transportation investments are synchronized.

- SRTC Congestion Management Program (CMP) identifies several corridors of regional importance in Spokane County, including the Interstate 90, Argonne/Mullan, and Sullivan Road corridors in Spokane Valley. The CMP defines a set of strategies to address and manage congestion on these major

corridors. The CMP is intended to encourage economic vitality, maximize the use of existing infrastructure, improve travel choices and access for all residents, and improve safety.

- Horizon 2040 is the Metropolitan Transportation Plan developed by SRTC. Horizon 2040 is a long-term, multimodal "blueprint" for transportation aimed at meeting the mobility needs of the area through 2040. It is based on projections for growth in population, housing, and jobs and considers all modes of transportation, such as private vehicles, public transit, bicycling, walking, freight movement, rail, and air travel.

As this Transportation Element was prepared, close attention was paid to these overarching laws and policies to ensure that Spokane Valley's transportation system and vision are integrated and coordinated with the regional transportation network.

Current Conditions

TRAVEL PATTERNS IN SPOKANE VALLEY AND THE REGION

Since incorporation in 2003, the City has witnessed significant growth in population and employment. With more people living and working in the City, there are also more people traveling to and from Spokane Valley on a daily basis. On face, these general trends emphasize the importance of investing in transportation infrastructure and transportation demand management (TDM) strategies, but understanding how people currently travel to and through the City is also important to establish planning frameworks that respond efficiently to future transportation challenges.

One of these frameworks relates to the arrangement of uses throughout the City, and is represented in the City's land use map. For example, clusters of commercial land uses are likely to generate higher traffic volumes during peak morning and evening travel times, while retailers may attract additional trips on weekends, when many workers use their discretionary time for shopping, dining, and entertainment. Residential uses, at the other end of the spectrum, may prefer to be located away from major transportation corridors, or may have infrastructure needs that scale with residential densities. In this way, there is a dynamic relationship between land use patterns and transportation networks, with each affecting the development of the other. Other planning frameworks detailed in the elements of the Comprehensive Plan (e.g. capital

facilities planning, economic development strategies) also espouse a similarly dynamic relationship with transportation.

Based on current land use patterns, population densities in Spokane Valley tend to be higher south of Interstate 90 and between Argonne Road and Sullivan Road. However, some areas north of Interstate 90 and east of Sullivan Road have areas with dense housing as well. In some cases, these areas are part of larger Census tracts that include parcels of undeveloped land, leading to lower population density area-wide.

Employment-generating uses in Spokane Valley are generally concentrated at major Interstate 90 interchanges, in the Spokane Business and Industrial Park and industrial areas south of Felts Field, and in and around the Spokane Valley Mall. The jobs in areas north of Interstate 90 tend to be more industrial in nature while south of Interstate 90 office and retail jobs are more prevalent. The map in Figure 19 illustrates the relationship between residential and commercial land use patterns.

The map in Figure 19 provides some context for how land use patterns affect travel patterns in Spokane Valley, and it implies that transportation challenges may be alleviated when there are opportunities to live and work in transit-accessible or other concentrated mixed-use clusters. However, many residents live outside Spokane Valley but commute to jobs within the City and vice versa. For these residents and workers who need to make regular trips into and out of Spokane Valley, the locations that they travel to and from are important context for decision makers as they prioritize improvements to transportation infrastructure. The maps in Figures 20 and 21 represent data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics dataset, and illustrate the number of all Spokane Valley residents that commute to jobs in other places, as well as all Spokane Valley workers who live in other places. In 2014, approximately 38,800 people commuted *into* Spokane Valley for work, approximately 22,800 City residents commuted *out* of the City for work, and about 13,800 residents *stay* in the City for work. Where clear transportation corridors emerge for these commuting workers, effective transportation planning is particularly important. This travel pattern highlights the need for network development, as the freeway system alone cannot accommodate this demand in the future. Travel demand strategies will also be an important aspect in dealing with increasing traffic. To understand how well current transportation infrastructure responds to these land use patterns, this element will explore and assess the various components of Spokane Valley's transportation network.

Figure 19. Map of Employment Density vs. Housing Density, Spokane Valley, 2015

Sources: WA OFM (2015); WA ESD (2015); Community Attributes Inc. (2016)
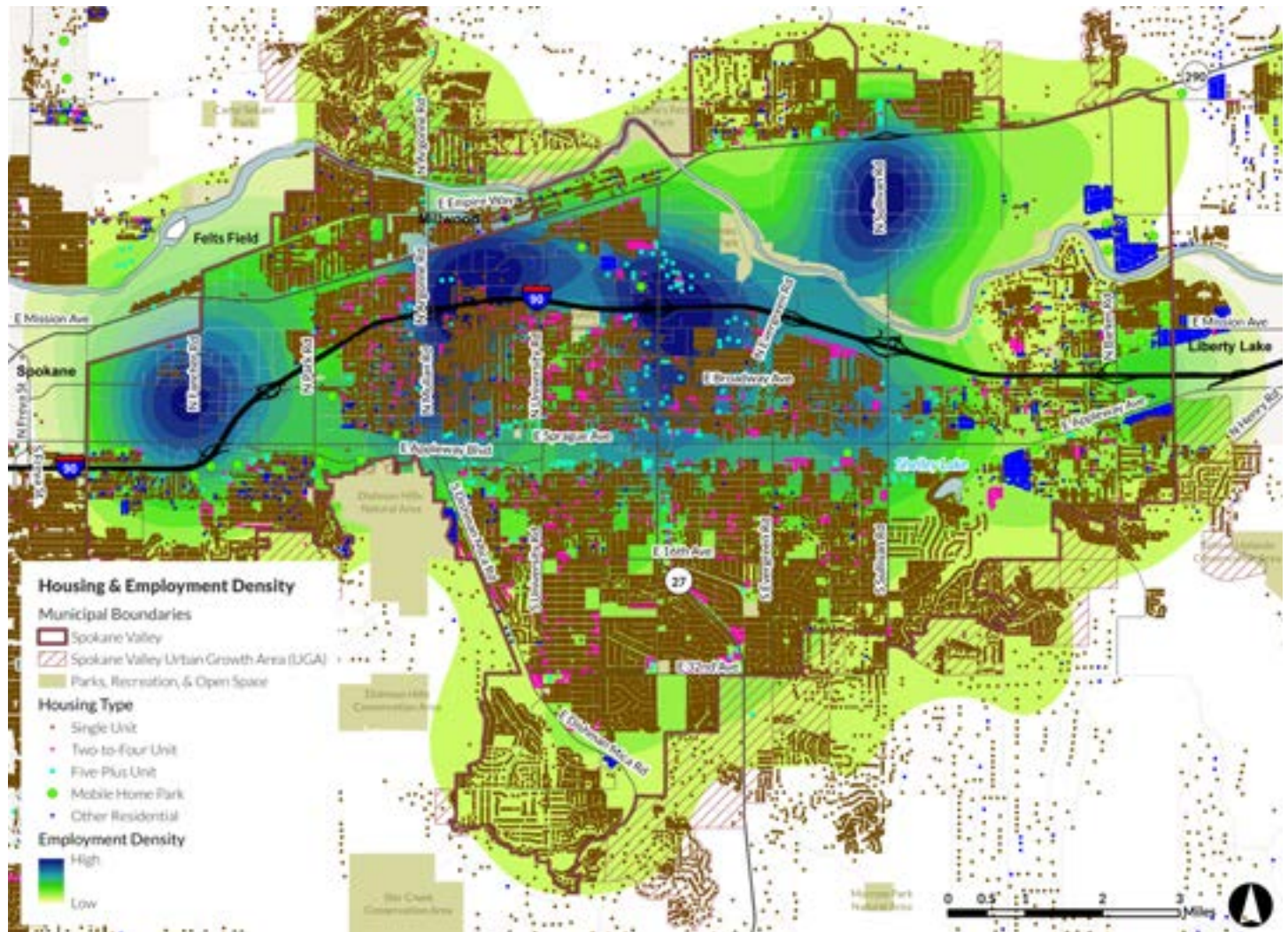
SPOKANE VALLEY'S TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

A transportation network includes infrastructure to support several modes of transportation, including motor vehicles like cars, motorcycles, and buses, as well as bicycles and walking. For the network to function efficiently, investments must be targeted to ensure that residents and workers have multiple transportation options that offer affordable and effective ways to get around the area.

Figure 20. Journey to Work: Where Spokane Valley Employees Live, 2014

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (2014); Community Attributes Inc. (2016)
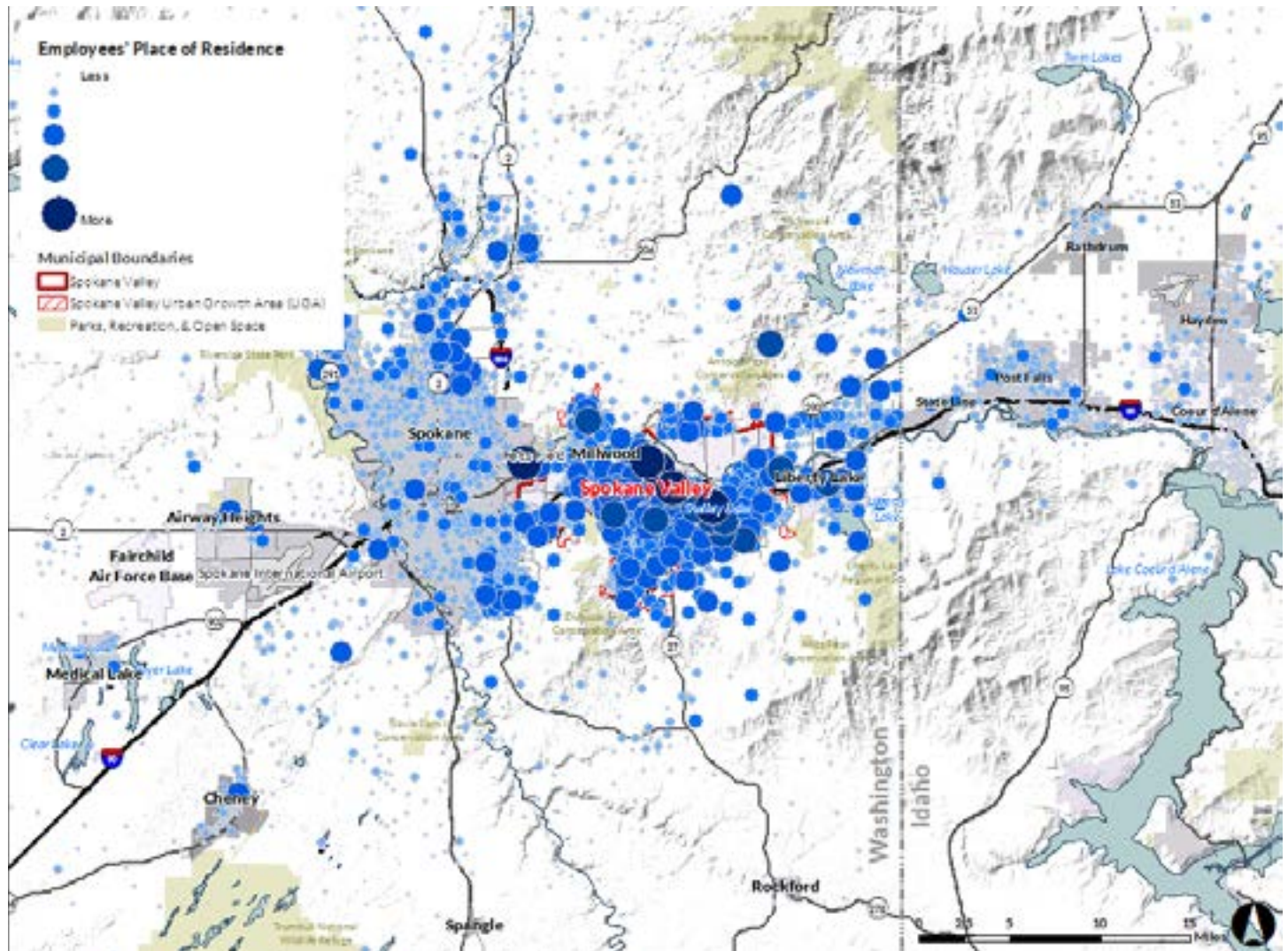
The U.S. Census Bureau tracks how Spokane Valley residents travel to work—a statistic known as mode share. As shown in Figure 22, 80.4% of Spokane Valley residents drove to work alone (SOV), while an additional 10.7% carpooled (HOV, 3.1% of Spokane Valley workers rode public transit to work. Of the remaining 5.8% of workers who reside in Spokane Valley, most worked from home while others walked, biked, took taxis, rode motorcycles, or used other means.

Figure 21. Journey to Work: Where Spokane Valley Residents Go to Work, 2014

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (2014); Community Attributes Inc. (2016)
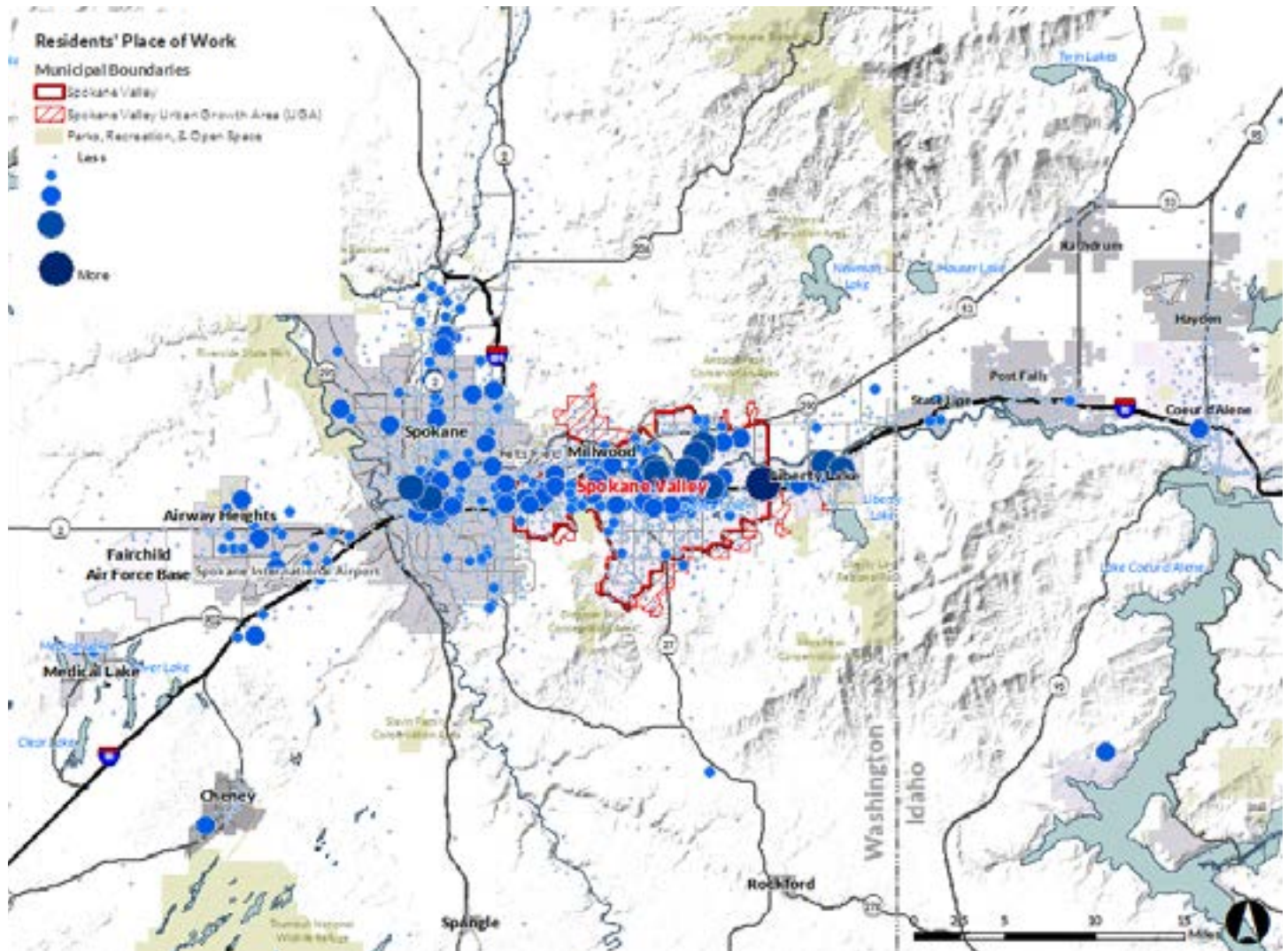
Functional Classification Of Roadways

Streets function as a network. The efficiency of a street network is dependent upon how the streets are able to complement each other to serve different trip types. A gridded network typically provides improved connectivity for all forms of transportation by reducing the distance necessary to travel and providing alternative routes.

Streets are described by a functional classification, which is a system of categories for streets and highways based on the character of service they are intended to provide. A proper balance of road classifications is necessary to effectively serve a mix of land uses and modes of travel. Spokane Valley currently classifies its roadways into principal arterials, minor arterials, collector arterials, and local streets. Descriptions and examples of these classifications are located in Figure 23.

Figure 22. Spokane Valley Transportation Mode Share
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2014)
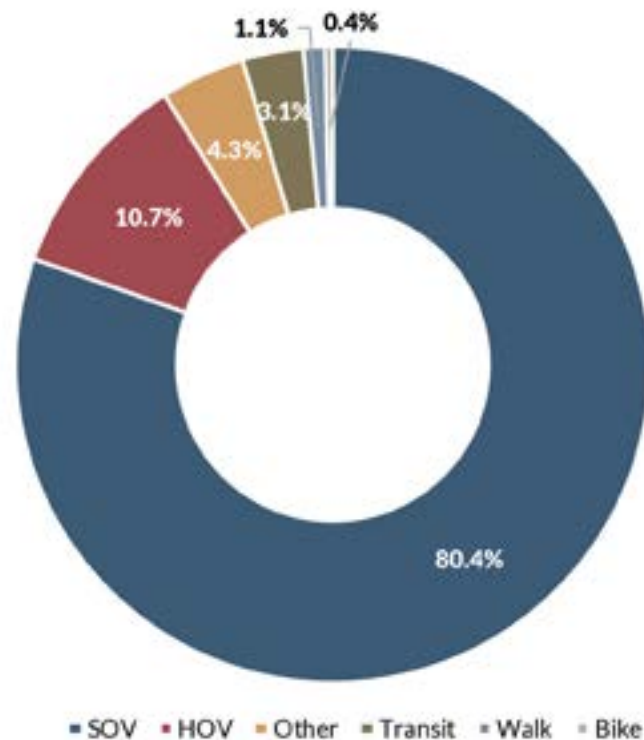
In general, the roadway network in central and south Spokane Valley is composed of gridded streets, a reflection of the urban form typical during Spokane Valley's early development. Outside the major commercial corridors, the network is primarily connected via principal and minor arterials, with large gaps between streets and many unconnected residential cul-de-sacs and loop roads. This layout of large blocks creates a less friendly environment for walking, bicycling, and public transit since it can greatly increase the distance between a home and a destination or transit stop. The map in Figure 24 depicts Spokane Valley's roadways by classification, as well as other critical transportation infrastructure.

Figure 23. Functional Classification of Roadways

ROADWAY TYPE	DESCRIPTION / PURPOSE	EXAMPLE
Interstate/ Highway	Provide high speed, free flow travel between regional destinations.	• Interstate 90
Principal Arterial	A roadway that serves through trips and connects Spokane Valley with the rest of the area.	• E. Trent Ave. • Pines Rd./ SR 27 • E. Sprague Ave.
Minor Arterial	Minor arterial streets provide inter-neighborhood connections, transit access, and serve both local and through trips. Can accommodate pedestrian and bicycle travel if there are sidewalks and bike lanes/paths.	• E. Broadway Ave. • S. Evergreen Rd. • E. 16th Ave.
Collectors Arterial	Collectors distribute trips between local streets and arterials. Can be good for pedestrian and bicycle travel if there are sidewalks and bike lanes/paths.	• Vista Rd. • E. 4th Ave. • E. 24th Ave.
Local Streets	Local streets provide circulation and access within residential neighborhoods. Good for bicycle and pedestrian travel.	• E. Valleyway Ave. • Long Rd.

Pedestrian Facilities

Residents and visitors in Spokane Valley walk as part of their daily travel for many reasons. Children attending school, commuters taking the bus or connecting with a carpool to get to work, and senior citizens making midday trips all require safe pedestrian amenities. Sidewalks, crosswalks, curb ramps, and small curb radii are all key features in creating a safe and welcoming environment for people to walk. Furthermore, research suggests that people are more likely to walk to their destinations when those destinations are within a reasonable walking distance and when the trip offers an engaging and aesthetically pleasing, strolling environment. To that end, providing buffers between sidewalks and lanes of traffic, such as landscaping or on-street parking, can also increase safety and comfort for pedestrians, particularly on arterial streets. The images in Figure 25 show some of these features on Spokane Valley streets.

Figure 24. Spokane Valley's Transportation Network

Source: City of Spokane Valley (2016); Community Attributes Inc. (2016)
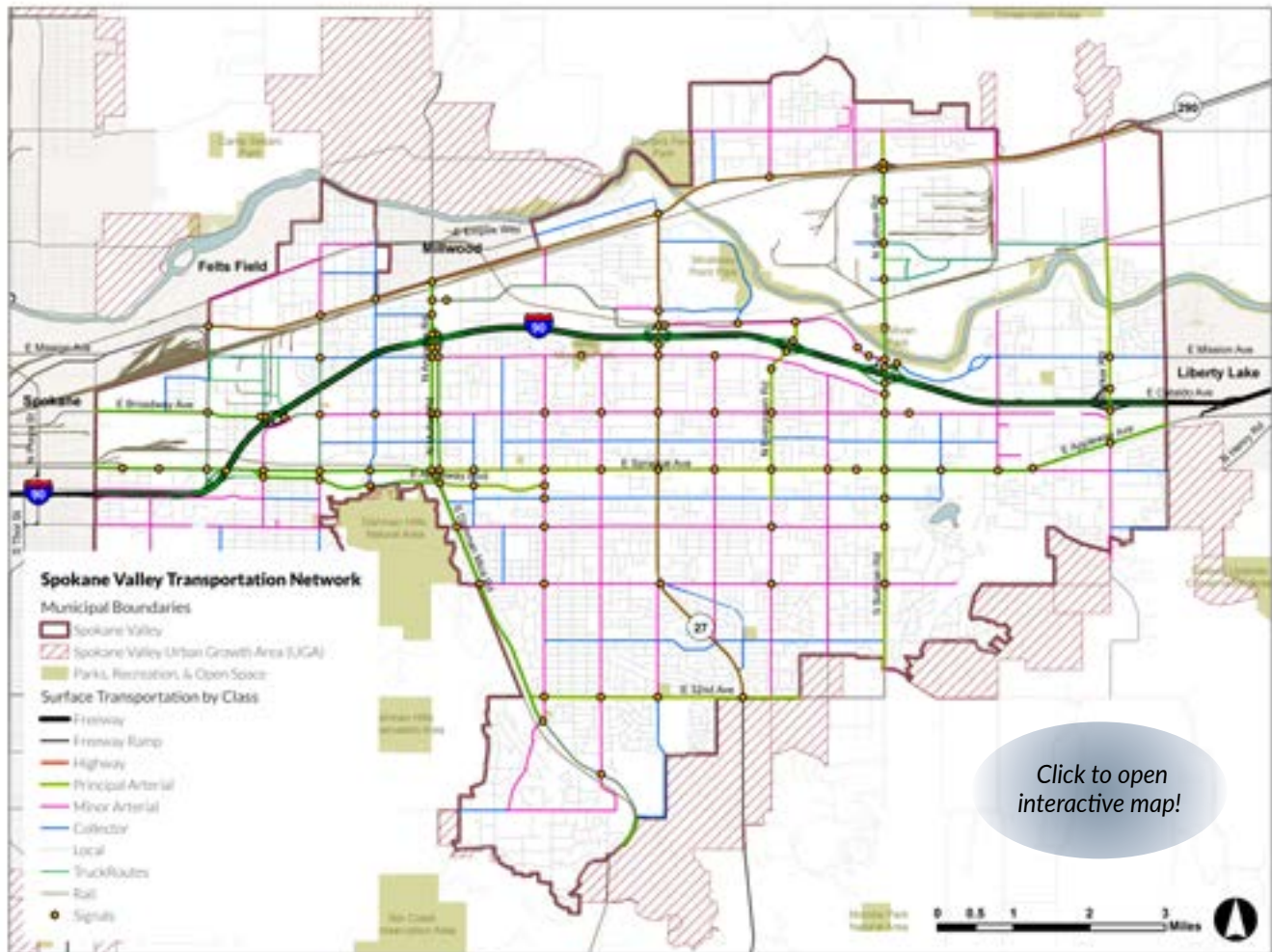
Sidewalks are present on both sides of most principal and minor arterials in Spokane Valley as well as some collectors. The City has also prioritized providing sidewalks near schools, libraries, transit locations, and trailheads. While quiet residential streets may not require sidewalks for a safe pedestrian environment (with the exception of key routes to schools), some arterials lack sidewalk coverage, such as Mission Avenue, 4th Avenue, and Adams Road. Plans for adding to the sidewalk network generally focus on filling existing gaps on arterials.

In addition to sidewalks and crosswalks along streets, Spokane Valley also has paved shared-use paths for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Centennial Trail provides a dedicated east-west connection along a shared-use path. The trail

Figure 25. Photos of Existing Pedestrian Facilities in Spokane Valley

Source: Fehr and Peers (2015)
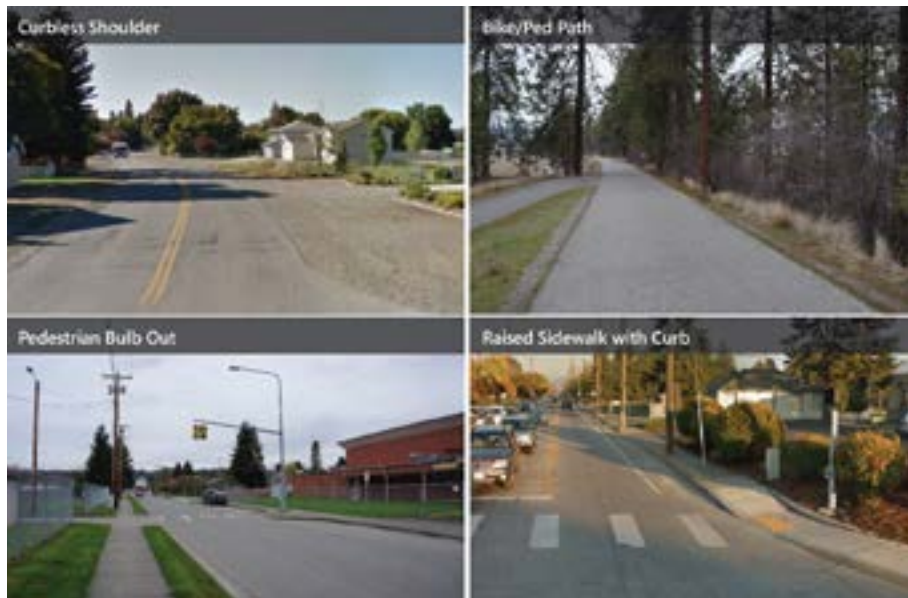
is part of a regional connection through Spokane and to the Washington-Idaho state border. The new Appleway Trail provides an additional east-west corridor for pedestrians and bicyclists along the former Milwaukee Railroad right-of-way. Spokane Valley is actively working on extending the Appleway Trail, and the City has also identified other opportunities for shared use paths along former and active rail lines. The planned network will eventually create an interconnected system linking the Appleway Trail, the Centennial Trail, and Dishman Hills Natural Area as part of a regional pathway network.

Spokane Valley has a well-developed grid of arterial streets spaced roughly one-half mile apart, which is typical of communities built in the post-World War II era. While this system is efficient for vehicle travel, crossing major streets like Sprague Avenue or Pines Road can be difficult on foot or bike since signalized crosswalks are spread far apart. Additionally, crossings of Interstate 90 and Trent Avenue are limited and are often located at busy interchanges or intersections. These gaps in safe crossing locations isolate parts of Spokane Valley and lead to people driving for short trips that they could typically make on foot or via transit. The map in Figure 26 illustrates a range of pedestrian facilities in Spokane Valley, as well as recommended improvements from the Bike and Pedestrian Master Program, which is the City's adopted long-term bicycle and pedestrian plan. The City's long-term sidewalk network prioritizes improvements in areas with high numbers of short trips and concentrations

of employment and housing. Recommendations also prioritize sidewalks along Safe Routes to School and in low-moderate income areas. Finally, the recommended network prioritizes sidewalks in locations with a high risk for serious-injury or fatal pedestrian-auto collisions.

Existing Bicycle Facilities

Similar to sidewalks, bicycle facilities are an important element in the transportation network that provide a safe and identifiable bicycling environment. Bicyclists in the Spokane Valley can utilize a variety of facilities, including shared-use paths, bike lanes, and bike friendly routes to reach their destination as shown in Figure 27. However, gaps in the network create an environment in which cyclists must navigate through vehicle traffic or difficult

Figure 26. Map of Existing and Recommended Pedestrian Facilities
Sources: City of Spokane Valley (2019)
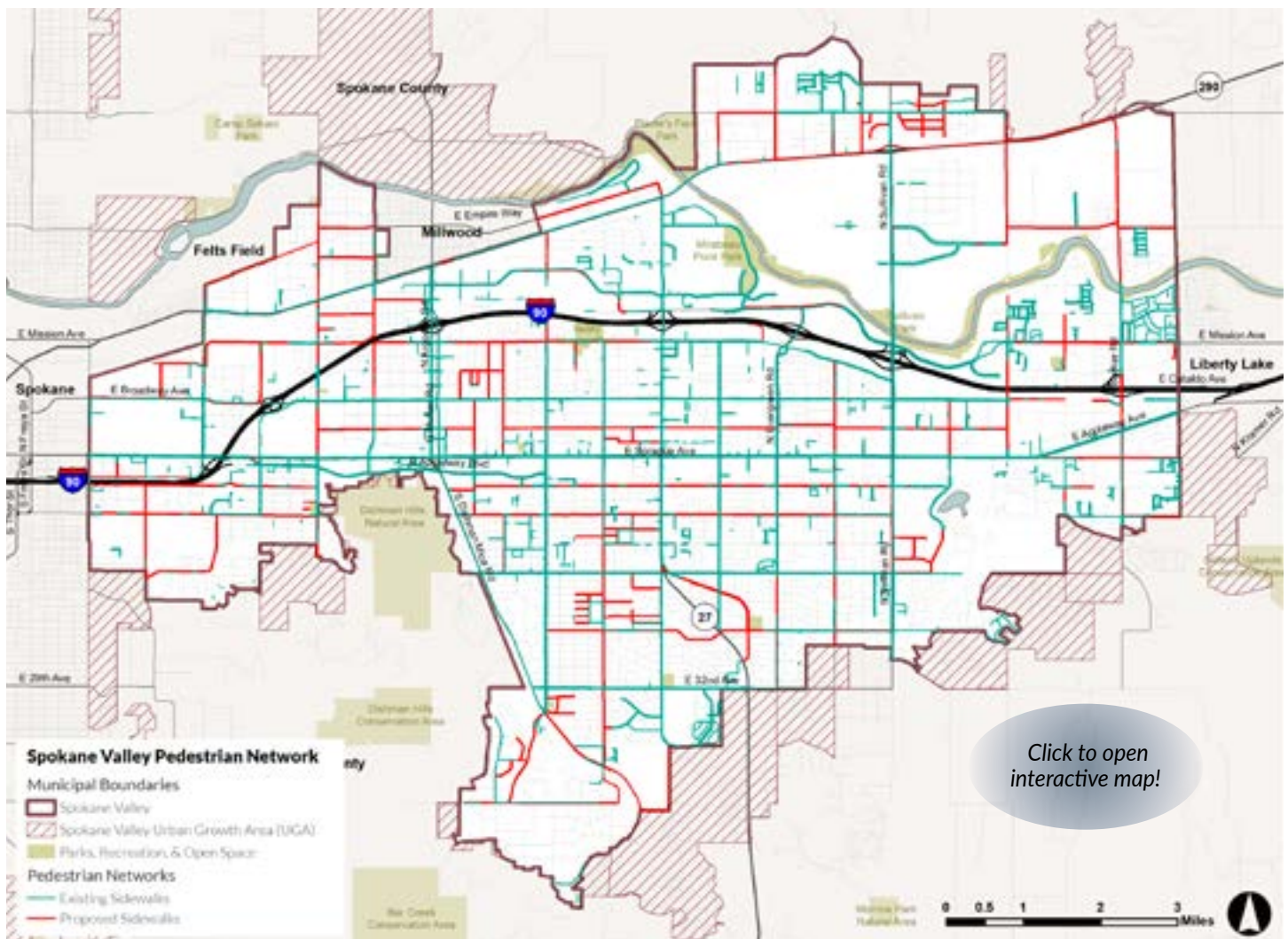
arterial crossings to complete their journey, decreasing safety for motorized and non-motorized travelers alike. While the City has trails and bike lanes that form a spine of north-south and east-west connections, some of these facilities are not continuous and require bicyclists to merge in and out of traffic. Figure 27 also shows Spokane Valley's long-term plan for the bicycle network to address the gaps described above.

The existing roadway geometry in many parts of Spokane Valley includes wide lanes, on-street parking, and a high number of driveways, which make many bicyclists feel uncomfortable riding in the street. Some corridors, such as Sprague Avenue and Mission Avenue, have striped bike lanes but also high vehicle speeds and volumes. The long-term bikeway network recommendations prioritize facilities in locations with the greatest potential for improving safety, accommodating local trips, and mitigating traffic congestion.

Figure 27. Map of Existing and Recommended Bicycle Facilities
Sources: City of Spokane Valley (2019)
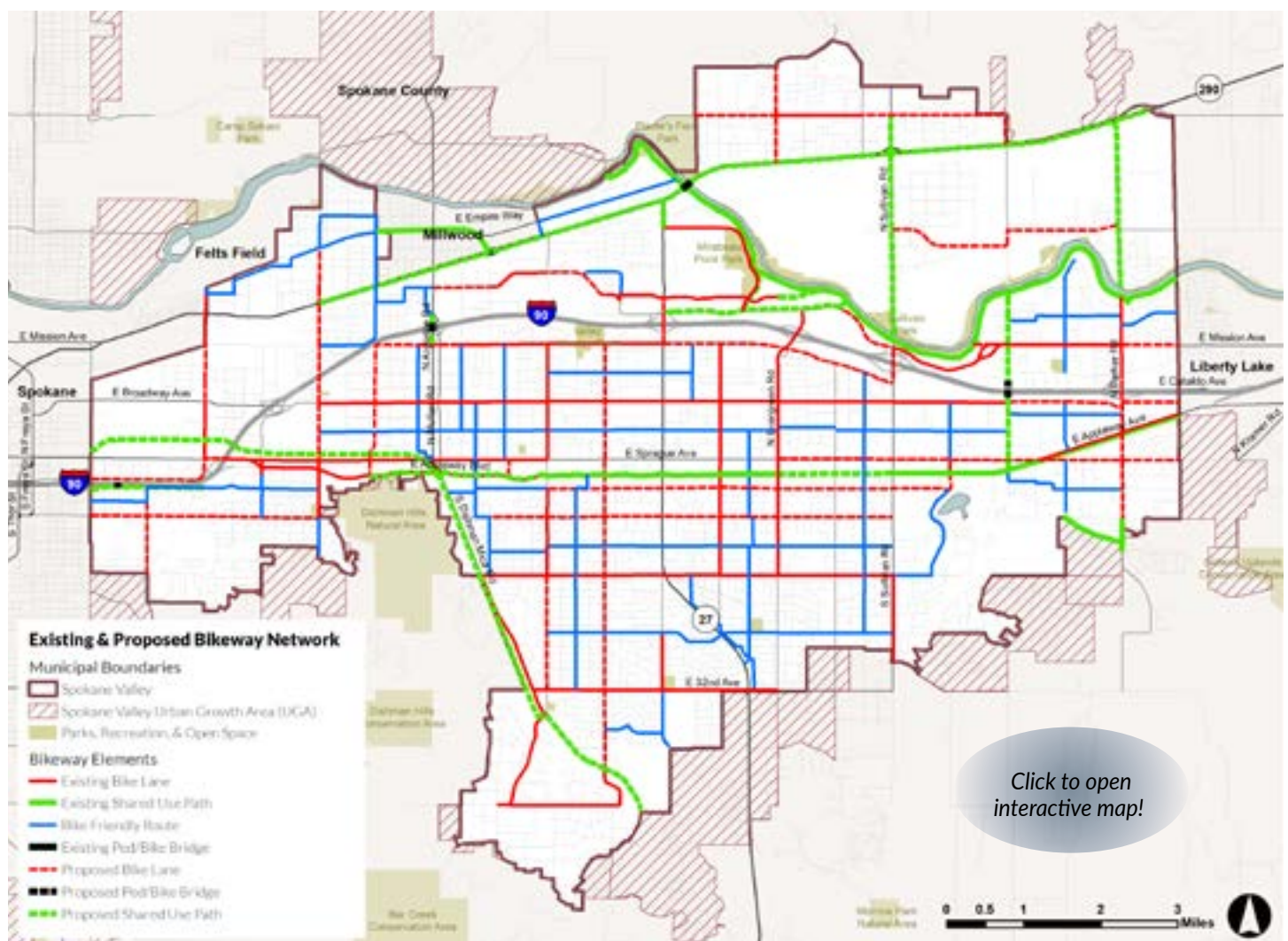
Public Transit

Public transit, provided by STA via buses and vans, serves as a key component of the transportation network that connects residents with employment centers, public places, and regional destinations. Many Spokane Valley residents and employees use public transit for trips around and outside of the City. Figure 28 highlights the route and stop coverage of STA in Spokane Valley. Additionally, the map highlights the Pence-Cole Valley and Mirabeau Point transit centers and park-and-ride facilities that provide links to the regional transit system.

STA operates one frequent bus route between downtown Spokane and Spokane Valley that runs every 15 minutes during weekday peak and day times. This route, number 90, is the second busiest route that STA operates, with nearly 3,300 passengers on an average weekday. STA also has five basic routes serving Spokane Valley and providing connections to Spokane, Millwood, and Liberty Lake. Two express routes provide direct, high-speed connections between downtown Spokane, the Valley Transit Center, and Mirabeau Point Park–and-Ride.

These routes serve 7,000 riders per day during the week and cover most of Spokane Valley's major destinations, including the Spokane Valley Mall, the University Shopping Center, the Valley Hospital Medical Center, the Argonne Village Shopping Center, the Spokane Industrial Park, and many area schools.

Movement of Freight

Freight and goods movement is a vital element of the transportation network. Everyone is directly impacted by how goods are delivered to distribution centers, stores, and homes. Spokane Valley is central to a high volume of freight movement owing to the City's major retail and industrial properties. Trucks move millions of tons of freight via Interstate 90 and Trent Avenue throughout the region and across the state. Several arterials in Spokane Valley also support high levels of freight traffic, including Argonne Road, as well as portions of Sprague Avenue, Appleway Boulevard, Sullivan Road, Fancher Way, and Broadway Avenue.

These corridors are all rated at T1 or T2 based on the annual freight tonnage they support. Enough freight travels over many other arterials and some collectors to qualify them as T3 freight corridors. These classifications are based on the following amount of goods:

- T-1: More than 10 million tons per year.

Figure 28. Map of Existing and Recommended Transit Facilities
Sources: City of Spokane Valley (2016); Community Attributes Inc. (2016)
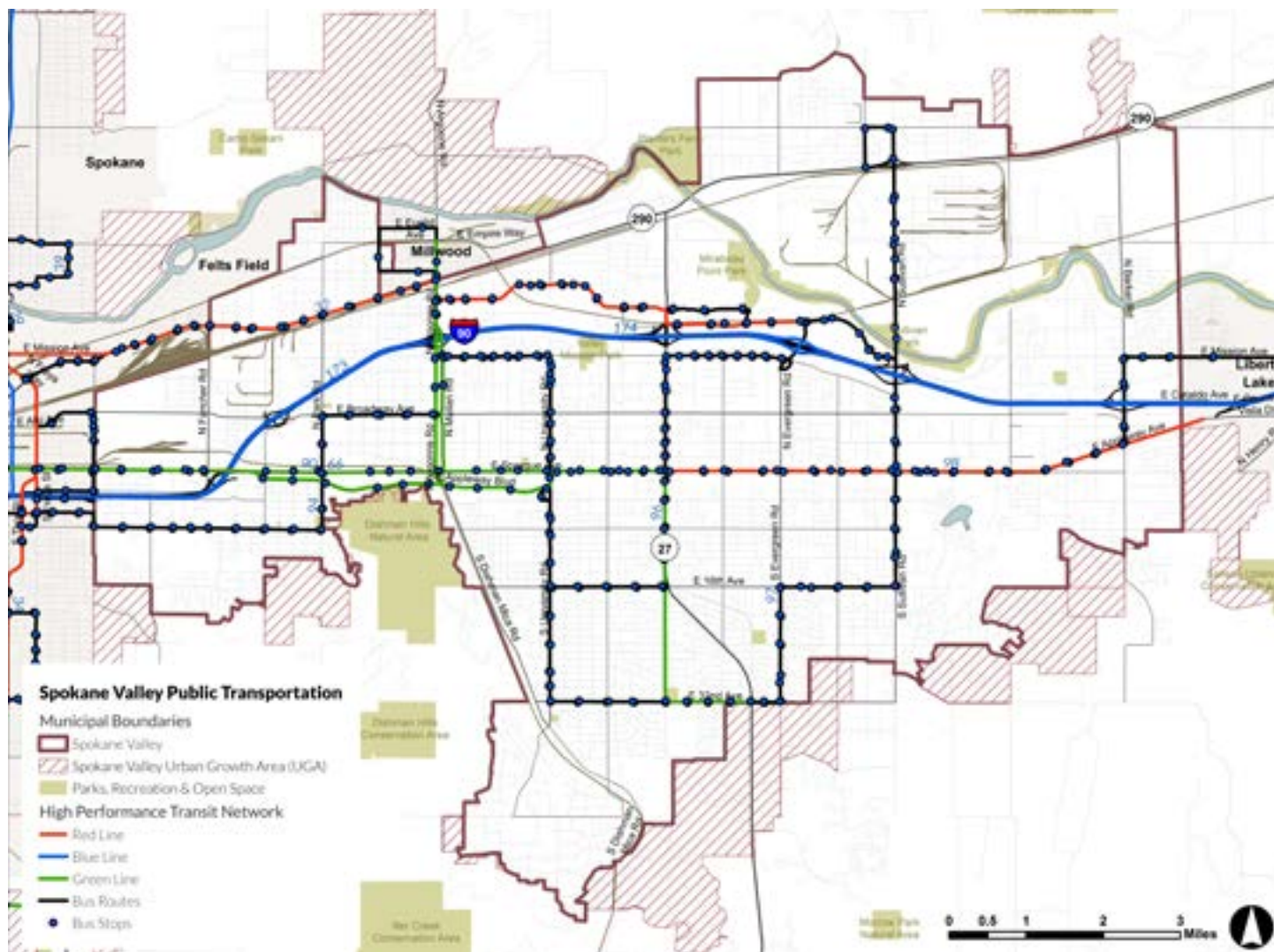
- T-2: Between 4 to 10 million tons per year.

- T-3: Between 300,000 to 4 million tons per year.

Spokane Valley has street design standards that support freight movement and are consistent with SRTC's regional freight network. Any proposed changes to access or roadway design along the regional freight network are reviewed to ensure they do not hinder freight movement.

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) and Union Pacific Railroad (UP) operate the primary rail lines within the City. Both companies have connections to the Washington-Idaho border while BNSF's route represents the company's main transcontinental line connecting the West Coast to Chicago

and the Midwest. These rail lines help form the industrial corridor north of I-90 that supports many jobs in Spokane Valley, in addition to the UP line that runs north of Sprague and along Dishman-Mica Road south through the City limits.

To support freight mobility and improve safety at railroad crossings, the SRTC developed the Bridging the Valley (BTV) project in 2006. The ultimate goal of BTV is to separate vehicle traffic from train traffic in the 42-mile corridor between Spokane, Washington and Athol, Idaho. The separation of railroad and roadway grades in this corridor—which includes 75 railroad/roadway crossings—is intended to promote future economic growth, improve traffic movement, and traffic safety. BTV is integrated into the Horizon 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. While BTV is a long-term, unfunded project, Spokane Valley continues to strongly support the grade separation projects of the BNSF mainline at major roads like Park, Pines, and Barker.

Aviation

Most air travel in the Spokane Region is handled through the Spokane International Airport, located between Spokane and Airway Heights. Felts Field, a general aviation airport, is located at the north end of Fancher Way at the western edge of Spokane Valley. Felts Field currently handles about 59,000 annual take-offs and landings and is served by a number of charter services.

In 2007, the City adopted development regulations to establish an airport overlay zone to protect Felts Field from encroachment from incompatible uses. The airport overlay zone imposed height restrictions, land use restrictions, noise impact restrictions on certain uses, and provided for the continuing presence of lawful non-conforming uses. The Comprehensive Plan does not purport to modify the allowable uses within the airport overlay zone and the City intends to maintain the airport overlay zone protections as part of the updated development regulations that are ancitipated to be adopted in conjunction with this Comprehensive Plan. Accordingly, the City has met GMA requirements related to general aviation airports.

Motor Vehicles

Most Spokane Valley residents (about 90%) use motor vehicles as their primary mode of transportation to work. Moreover, many non-resident travelers pass through Spokane Valley via Interstate 90 or park at the Pence-Cole Valley Transit Center or Mirabeau Point Park-and-Ride and take public transit into Spokane.

The analysis of Spokane Valley's congestion for motorists is based on traffic

counts collected in 2014. Each of the major roadways in Spokane Valley was evaluated based on its ability to accommodate P.M. peak hour demand with its existing width and lane configuration. Figure 30 displays average daily traffic counts.

The corridors were scored into one of six level of service (LOS) categories based on the volume of traffic they support during the P.M. peak hour compared to typical volume thresholds for urban arterial roadways. Levels from LOS A to LOS F correspond to a range of completely uncongested to highly-congested conditions. Figure 29 describes the LOS definitions laid out in Chapter 16 of the Highway Capacity Manual (Transportation Research Board, 2010), which is the methodology applied to Spokane Valley's transportation network.

The LOS standards that must be met within the City are as follows:

- LOS D for major arterial corridors:

    > Argonne/Mullan between Trent Avenue and Appleway Boulevard.

> ● 7-118 — Additional detail about the City's LOS policies, as well as its ability to pay for transportation improvements, is located in the Capital Facilities Element.

Figure 29. Level of Service Definitions
Source: Highway Capacity Manual (2010)

LEVEL OF SERVICE	DESCRIPTION
A	Free-flowing conditions.
B	Stable operating conditions.
C	Stable operating conditions, but individual motorists are affected by the interaction with other motorists.
D	High density of motorists, but stable flow.
E	Near-capacity operations, with speeds reduced to a low but uniform speed.
F	Over capacity, with long delays.

> Pines Road between Trent Avenue and 8th Avenue.

> Evergreen Road between Indiana Avenue and 8th Avenue.

> Sullivan Road between Wellesley Avenue and 8th Avenue.

> Sprague Avenue/Appleway Boulevard between Fancher Road and Park Road.

- LOS D for signalized intersections not on major arterial corridors.

- LOS E for unsignalized intersections (LOS F is acceptable if the peak hour

traffic signal warrant is not met).

For the arterial corridors, individual intersection LOS results will be monitored, but intersection LOS will not form the basis for evaluating transportation concurrency or SEPA impacts. Rather, the corridor LOS along its entire length will form the basis for evaluating the performance of these congested corridors. The rationale for evaluating corridor LOS is to align with the SRTC CMP and to acknowledge that while some intersections along the corridor may operate at LOS E or F conditions, the overall corridor performance will be improved to be LOS D overall. This approach avoids the severe cost and property impacts associated with some intersection improvements, when other more

Figure 30. Average Daily Traffic, Spokane Valley

Sources: City of Spokane Valley (2016); Community Attributes Inc. (2016) ; Fehr and Peers (2016)
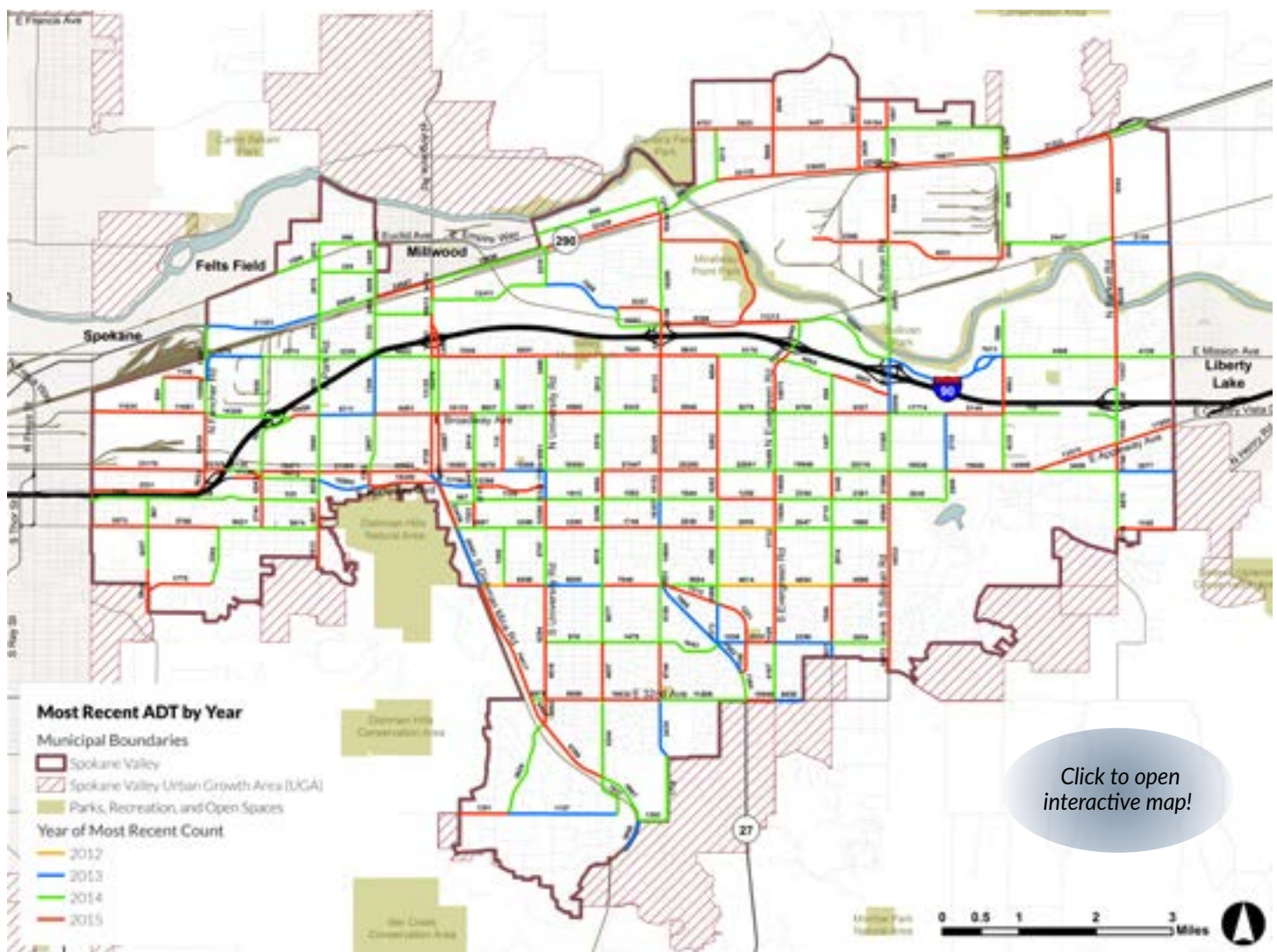
cost-effective approaches could be employed elsewhere on the corridor. The LOS for major arterial corridors should be analyzed using the methodology defined by the SRTC as part of the CMP or similar method approved by Spokane Valley.

A key question that often comes up is why the City's Transportation Element would reduce the LOS standard in some places. The answers aren't simple. While Spokane Valley is committed to mobility for all, there are practical considerations related to cost constraints, right-of-way limitations, and additional multimodal requirements that the City may not be in position to provide. Furthermore, the State's concurrency requirement means that the City must be able to maintain its stated LOS policy in order to allow for development. Setting an LOS standard that is unrealistic for the above reasons puts Spokane Valley in jeopardy of being able to permit development, which would be counter to the economic development goals outlined in this Comprehensive Plan.

As *highways of statewide significance* (HSS), Interstate 90 and the ramp intersections with local streets, have LOS standards set by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). The City's LOS standards do not apply to these State facilities.

While the City's LOS standards are based on intersection operations, it is impractical to calculate intersection LOS for the hundreds of intersections around the City. Therefore, as is typical for many Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements, LOS is summarized at the street-segment level. In general, the intersections along the street segments can be expected to operate at the same LOS as the segment.

Spokane Valley's roadways generally operate with moderate congestion on some arterials during the P.M. peak hour. Interstate 90 can be congested during peak hours, and some motorists may choose to take City streets instead of Interstate 90 to avoid congestion. This overflow can lead to congestion on roadways that serve interchanges, such as Argonne Road, Mullan Road, Pines Road (SR 27), Sprague Avenue, Sullivan Road, and Barker Road. Except for these few instances of more severe congestion, most roadways operate within Spokane Valley's LOS standards. Figure 31 shows the existing LOS results for Spokane Valley.

These congestion levels around the City are fairly common for suburban arterials during the PM peak hour. The delay will be disruptive for a brief portion of the day, but is also indicative of a well-used roadway network. Principal

Figure 31. Existing Level of Service for Spokane Valley Roadways, 2015

Sources: City of Spokane Valley (2016); Community Attributes Inc. (2016) ; Fehr and Peers (2016)
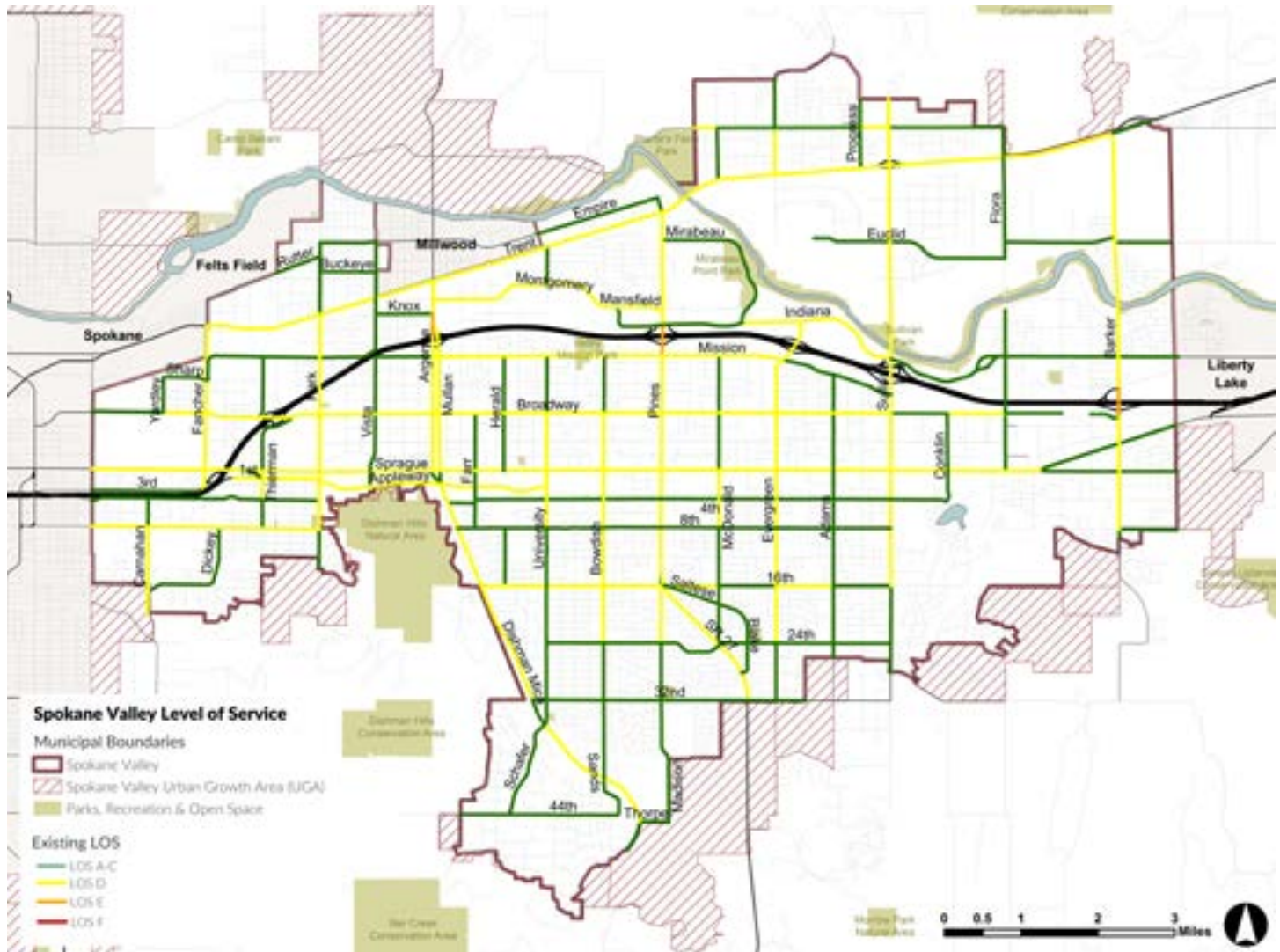
arterials that operate at LOS A through C during the peak period may be a sign of an overbuilt system, which can be costly for a community to construct and maintain. These large, underutilized streets also can be a deterrent for other modes because of high speeds, perceived safety concerns, and difficulty crossing.

In addition to evaluating current conditions, this Transportation Element forecasts future traffic volumes assuming the development described in the Land Use Element. Figure 32 shows the forecast (year 2040) average daily traffic (ADT) on the streets in Spokane Valley. Overall, traffic volumes are

Figure 32. Forecast Average Daily Traffic for Spokane Valley Roadways, 2040

Sources: City of Spokane Valley (2016); Community Attributes Inc. (2016) ; Fehr and Peers (2016)

expected to increase as there is additional development both in Spokane Valley and the surrounding communities. Growth in traffic is expected to be particularly pronounced in the southern and eastern sections of the City. In addition to growth in vehicle traffic, there is also expected to be significant growth in pedestrian, bicycle, and transit usage in the future. In fact, due to the planned expansions of the non-auto infrastructure, we anticipate somewhat higher growth rates for non-auto modes compared to auto traffic, which is consistent with the expectations of Horizon 2040, the SRTC's long range transportation and land use vision.

Figure 33. Forecast Level of Service (LOS) for Spokane Valley Roadways, 2040

Sources: City of Spokane Valley (2016); Community Attributes Inc. (2016) ; Fehr and Peers (2016)
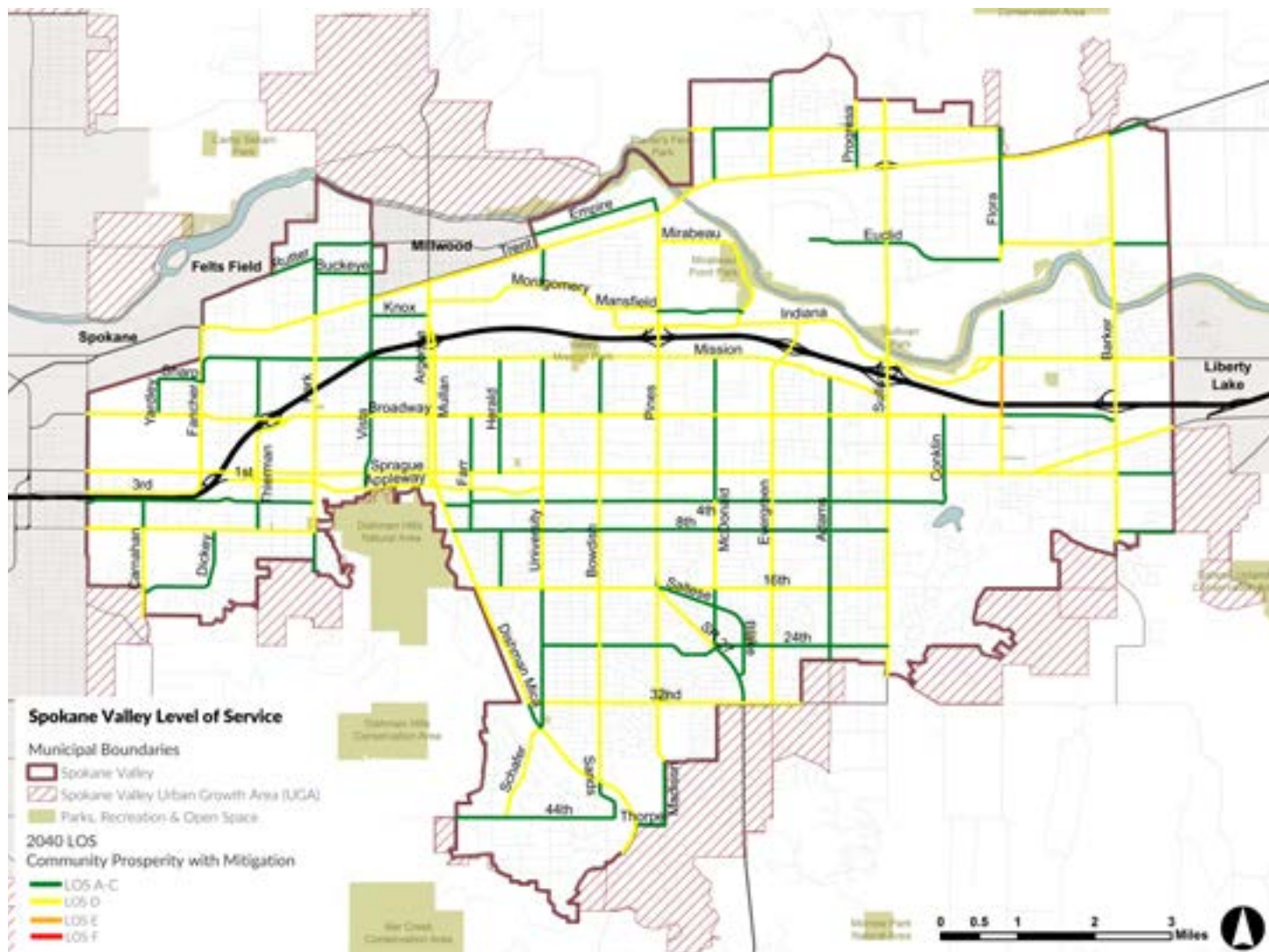
Figure 33 shows the 2040 LOS conditions on Spokane Valley's roadways assuming completion of the improvement projects listed in the Environmental Impact Statement prepared for the Comprehensive Plan. As shown, LOS in 2040 conditions is forecast to be similar to today's condition as Spokane Valley is committed to managing traffic congestion in the future.

Approach to the Transportation Element

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In the spring of 2015, Spokane Valley hosted a series of public meetings to solicit feedback from the public on a variety of topics, including the performance of the transportation system. During this public feedback period, the City collected considerable feedback on what parts of the transportation system is working well, transportation problems/concerns, and what Spokane Valley's transportation future should look like. This feedback, combined with the results of the existing conditions analysis, highlights challenges and opportunities for the transportation system, as listed below.

Improving Transit Accessibility

STA provides public transit in Spokane Valley. However, transit service is minimal in parts of the City, requiring that people drive to reach their destinations. Several members of the public expressed a desire for more extensive transit coverage.

Relieving Traffic Congestion

The public identified concerns over traffic congestion in some corridors, including Argonne Road, Pines Road, Sullivan Road, and Barker Road, particularly around the Interstate 90 interchanges. Despite some traffic congestion around freeway interchanges, many residents consider the Spokane Valley's LOS policy to be working well – successfully balancing traffic congestion, access needs, and costs to build and maintain the system. Overall, it is the City's policy to consider strategies such as transportation demand management, access restrictions, design modifications, transit enhancements, and intelligent transportation systems prior to adding new lane capacity to the system, particularly for single-occupancy vehicles.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Increasing Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity

Many residential streets do not have curbs, gutters, or sidewalks. While some streets are low-volume and may not need these features, key access routes to schools, transit stops, and civic buildings could benefit from enhancements.

Spokane Valley has a strong pedestrian and bicycle plan. The City has been aggressively expanding the trail network by leveraging regional and federal funding. Long blocks and high traffic speeds can make it difficult to cross major streets like Sprague Avenue or Sullivan Road. This makes traveling by transit, walking/biking to stores, or traveling to parks and schools difficult.

Supporting Economic Development

The City has a robust grid of major streets and can support a considerable amount of additional private development. Good connections to the national freeway and railway network also support economic development opportunities. The City's economic development initiatives requires a transportation network that is efficient and safe and that reflects desired development patterns. There are strong economic development opportunities on Sprague Avenue. This is an Urban Transportation Corridor, as defined by SRTC, and both the City and the Region see Sprague Avenue as an area with higher density development supported by a strong multimodal transportation network that includes high-performance transit, better bicycle/pedestrian connections, and convenient auto access to new infill development.

Accommodating Freight Operations

The region's position on a major freight rail corridor increases the risk of train collisions and delays caused by at-grade crossings. Continuing to invest in rail infrastructure, especially where train and other freight operations interact directly with other travel modes, is essential.

Enhancing Streetscapes

Several members of the public identified desired improvements to the City's "streetscape," which includes landscaping, building frontages, medians, etc. Suggestions to improve the streetscape included more street trees, building frontage improvements/more private landscaping, and "gateway" features in medians and public spaces on the side of streets.

BEST PRACTICES

Modernizing Infrastructure

Identifying any infrastructure that needs or will need updating or replacement prior to the point at which those investments become critical will allow Spokane Valley to budget accordingly and find funding to avoid infrastructure failures. In an era when many pieces of infrastructure have aged and budgets are constrained, this planning is valuable to the City, its residents, and employees.

Maintaining Cost Effectiveness

Compared to other cities in the region, residents highlighted the good state of repair with respect to street and bridge maintenance. This results in lower overall costs to reconstruct streets and more opportunities to invest in other City priorities. The City will continue to prioritize street and bridge maintenance and will continue to make informed decisions about budgeting and capital expenditures.

Linking Multimodal Systems

The effectiveness of a transportation network may be limited by deficiencies in the connections between transportation modes. Identifying and fixing places where there are safety concerns, a lack of facilities, or missing "last mile" connections will ensure that Spokane Valley's network functions cohesively and efficiently for all users. Policies such as a Complete Streets ordinance would guide the completion of these connections in coordination with ongoing capital improvements. Such policies improve grant eligibility and can reduce the cost of making improvements that support safe travel for all roadway users.

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK.

Housing

Introduction

WHY THE HOUSING ELEMENT IS IMPORTANT

Housing is an important component of the economic infrastructure of a community because it ensures a balance of land uses and complements employment-generating uses by providing opportunities for workers to live near their jobs. The availability of housing types that match Spokane Valley's job profile and enhance the livability of local neighborhoods is therefore an important competitive advantage for economic development. The Housing Element leverages key data to inform the development of goals and policies, which will set a course toward the City's vision of quality, affordable housing for all Spokane Valley residents.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) stipulates that the housing element serves to encourage the availability of affordable housing to residents of all economic backgrounds, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage the preservation of existing neighborhoods. Countywide Planning Policies (CWPP) for Spokane County for housing are consistent with these requirements and place additional emphasis on promoting accessibility for residents to commercial and transportation centers.

In previous planning efforts, the City acknowledged the abundance of single family housing, and focused on expanding housing options for residents while increasing the availability of multifamily housing units centrally located to employment centers and commercial amenities. Additionally, Spokane Valley aimed to increase the prevalence of mixed-use retail and residential throughout the City's neighborhoods with the overarching goal of limiting auto-dependency and improving housing affordability.

The Housing Element works in tandem with other elements in this Comprehensive Plan. It includes a data-rich narrative to document existing conditions that affect housing availability, cost, and quality. These include demographic trends and market conditions. The findings indicate challenges and opportunities for housing in Spokane Valley, and ultimately anchor the goals and policies presented in Chapter 2.

REFERENCES KEY

● X-XX   Refers to other section in plan

(SV)   Refers to other Spokane Valley plans and official documents

(&)   Refers to other non-Spokane Valley references for further reading

Current Conditions

Spokane Valley has a similar demographic composition as Spokane County overall. The population in the City will continue to grow in size, and it is anticipated that the population will continue to "age"—meaning that the share of the population 65 and older will increase disproportionately compared to other age segments. Both the average household size and the proportion of households with children are decreasing in Spokane Valley. Additionally, the apartment vacancy rate in the City and County are comparably low, and lease rates for apartments are steadily increasing. Taken together, these recent trends indicate that demand for single family dwellings is decreasing in relation to demand for multifamily units. The key data from this section are summarized below.

- **The majority (60%) of housing units in Spokane Valley are single family dwellings built prior to 2000 (Figure 41).**

- **Spokane Valley's housing growth has been modest**, but steady since it incorporated in 2003, growing at a rate of about 1% per year. About 6,000 new residences were added to Spokane Valley's total housing stock between 2003 and 2015 (Figure 41).

- **Spokane Valley's population is aging**. Between 2005 and 2014, the proportion of the population over the age of 75 increased by 2%, from 5% to 7%. The City's aging trend parallels that of the County—the share of the population 65 or older totaled 15% in 2014 in both Spokane Valley and Spokane County (Figure 35).

- **Compared to Spokane County as a whole, the number of households with children is decreasing more rapidly in Spokane Valley.** The percentage of the City's households with children decreased by 5.6%—from 35.6% to 30%—between 2005 and 2014, while the proportion of households with children in the County dropped by 1.5% during the same time period (Figure 35).

- **The median household income in Spokane Valley was over $2,000 less than the average countywide annual earnings.** Additionally, almost a third of Spokane Valley's residents earned between $25,000 and $50,000 annually in 2014 (Figure 38).

- **Residents in both Spokane Valley and Spokane County are cost-burdened**, meaning that their housing costs account for more than one-third of their income. Renters and homeowners are notably cost-burdened, however, there is a much larger proportion of cost-burdened renters than homeowners, 51% of renters and 26% of homeowners in both locales spend a third or more of their monthly budget on rent or mortgage payments (Figure 39).

- **The vacancy rate for apartments in the City is low and rents are increasing.** According to an apartment market survey executed by the Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies at the University of Washington, the average rent for apartments of any size in Spokane Valley was $827 per month. Furthermore, the average rent for a one-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment was $812 per month. The overall vacancy rate for apartments in Spokane Valley was notably low—0.8% (Studies, 2016; Figure 43).

- The City has historically allowed, and continues to allow, other types of housing to meet community needs, in compliance with state law. These housing options include government-assisted housing, manufactured housing, group homes, and foster care.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The demographic makeup of an area informs the market demand for housing size, type, location, and mix. For example, cities with large numbers of households with children will have high demand for single family housing near schools. Similarly, housing demand in locations with higher proportions of single, young adult populations will be skewed towards smaller, multifamily units proximate to employment centers. As the population of an area evolves over time, the housing market must also adjust to match the needs of its residents.

Increasing Population and Continued Growth

The population in Spokane Valley is growing at a slightly slower rate than the countywide population. Spokane Valley experienced almost 11% growth between 2003 and 2014 compared to the County's 13% population increase during the same time period. By 2037, the City is projected to have 14,650 additional residents. Though increasing population is clearly linked to demand for housing, population trends are only briefly summarized in this element, and more detailed data is contained in the Land Use Element.

Cities, counties, and regions can grow through natural increases (i.e. when births outstrip deaths) and by in-migration. Countywide, births and deaths remained stable between 2005 and 2015 (Figure 34). Therefore, recent fluctuations in population are largely attributable to people moving to and from the County. These "non-natural" fluctuations are referred to as net residual migration, and have been the driving force behind population growth and loss within Spokane County since at least 2005.

Figure 34. Population Change by Natural Increase and Net Residual Migration, Spokane County, 2005-2015

Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management (2015)
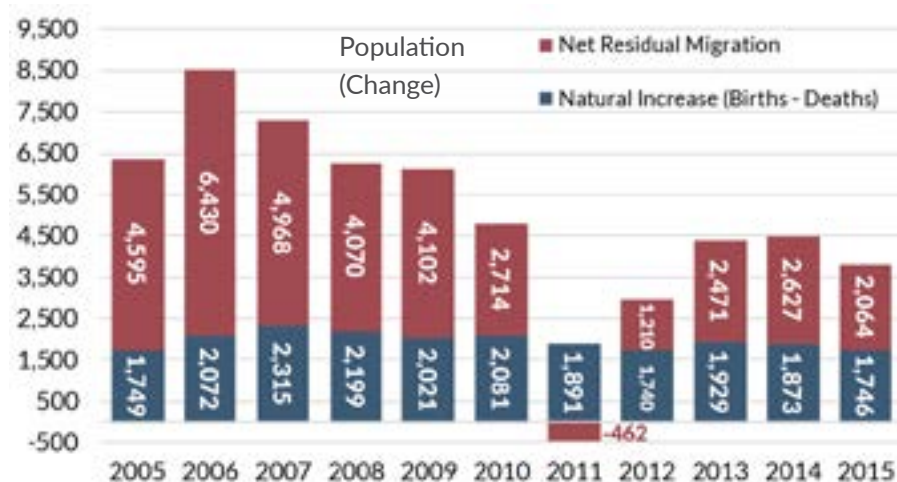
An Aging Population

Overall, Spokane Valley's age segmentation closely resembles that of Spokane County. One notable trend in both the City and the County is that the population is aging. The share of the population 65 or older totaled 15% in 2014 in both Spokane Valley and Spokane County (up from 10% and 12%, respectively, in 2005) (**Figure 35**). This trend is reflected in younger age segments as well, with the residents 19 or younger dropping from 31% (2005) to 26% (2014) in Spokane Valley.

The decreased prevalence of children in Spokane Valley brings the City in line with the larger County, where 25% of the population is 19 or younger. The City, therefore, does not have a significantly larger family presence than the County as a whole. These trends suggest decreasing demand for large, detached single family homes and increased demand for the types of housing that are both desirable and affordable to smaller households, including empty-nesters that may be less inclined to maintain larger properties. Nevertheless, the City will still need to provide excellent facilities, such as schools, for families with children.

Even with increased demand for smaller and attached housing products, new single family homes will continue to be developed throughout the County. However, data suggests that even as all of Spokane County ages, Spokane Valley's population is aging at a particularly fast rate. Multifamily units and smaller, attached single family housing products may therefore be comparatively attractive investments in Spokane Valley for housing developers that are active in the greater Spokane region. This finding is also supported by the fact that while Spokane Valley's average household size has slightly decreased since 2005, the average household size throughout Spokane County has increased (Figure 36).

Figure 35. Distribution of Population by Age Segment, Spokane Valley and Spokane County, 2005 and 2014

Source: Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey (2005-2014)
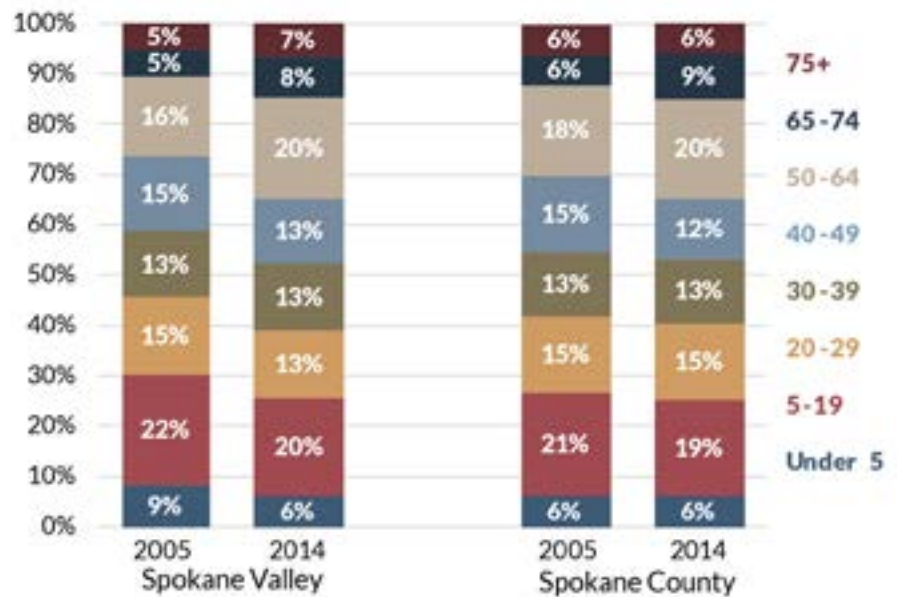
Income and Housing Affordability

In 2005, the median household income in Spokane Valley was roughly $4,000 lower than that of Spokane County as a whole (Figure 38). In 2014, that difference narrowed—there was just over a $2,000 difference in median household income between Spokane Valley and Spokane County.

Median household income has therefore grown at a faster rate in Spokane Valley than in Spokane County. Despite this trend, median household income in Spokane Valley is still lower than in Spokane County as a whole by about $2,200. The share of residents within each income bracket has also remained consistent during this time period in Spokane Valley, while in Spokane

Figure 36. Average Household Size, Spokane Valley and Spokane County, 2005-2014

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey (2014)

AREA	2005	2014
Spokane Valley	2.47	2.44
Spokane County	2.39	2.45

County there has been a marked decrease in the percentage of households making less than $25,000 (from 36% to 25%) and a significant increase in the number of households making $50,000 or more (from 38% to 51%) (Figure 37). This may suggest that residents of the County are experiencing increased upward mobility, or that the County has seen an influx of wealthy residents. This change could also be attributed to the City's older population retiring, and subsequently not growing their annual income. In any case, the fact that increases in median household income in Spokane Valley have not lifted a significant number of households into higher income segments indicates that Spokane Valley's housing must remain affordable to a wider range of income levels.

One of the goals of the GMA is to provide Washington residents with affordable housing options. According to federal and state guidelines, a household is considered cost burdened when 30% or more of its gross income is spent on housing (including rent or mortgage and utility costs).

Figure 37. Income Distribution of Households, Spokane Valley and Spokane County, 2005-2014

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey (2005-2014)

Figure 38. Median Household Income, Spokane Valley and Spokane County, 2005-2014

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey (2014)
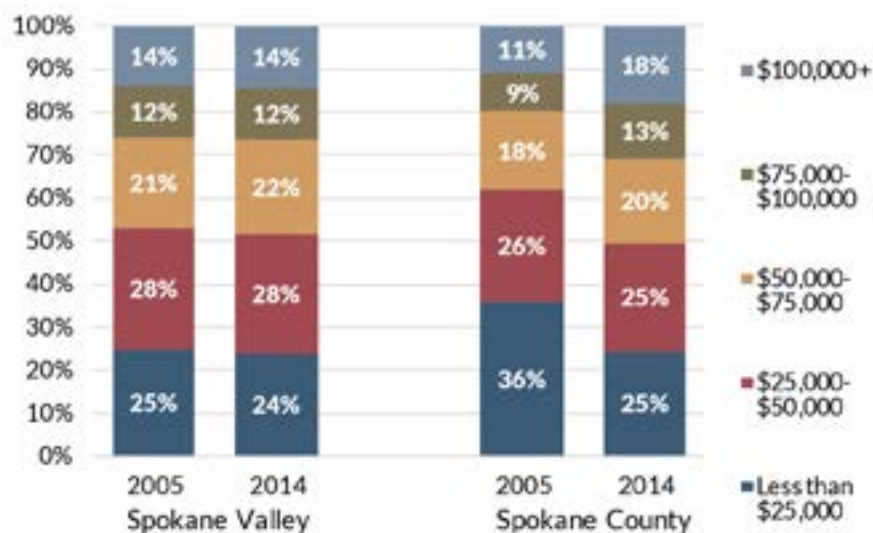
Renters and homeowners in both the City and the County are notably cost-burdened—36% and 35% in 2014, respectively (Figure 39). The percentage of cost-burdened households in Spokane Valley increased by 1% between 2005 and 2014, while the proportion in the County rose by 3% during the same time period. This suggests that other locales in Spokane County are disproportion-ately driving the increase, but that affordability challenges persist within the City.

Figure 39. Cost-Burdened Households by Type, Spokane Valley, 2005-2014

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey (2005-2014)
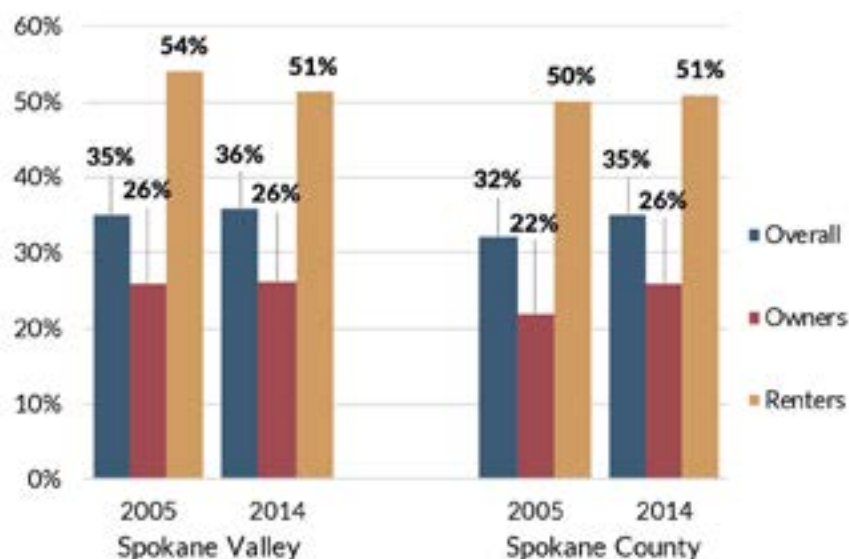
In both the City and the County, there is a much larger proportion of cost-burdened renters than homeowners. In Spokane Valley, however, the share of cost-burdened renters decreased from 54% in 2005 to 51% in 2014 while the percentage of cost-burdened homeowners remained constant. The opposite occurred on the countywide scale—the share of cost-burdened renters increased slightly, from 50% to 51%. The proportion of cost-burdened homeowners countywide also increased by 4%. Given that median household incomes are increasing throughout the County, this indicates that the average home price is increasing in Spokane County at a faster rate than in Spokane Valley.

Though renters are disproportionately cost-burdened, data suggest that Spokane Valley and Spokane County residents are increasingly more likely to rent than buy their housing unit. In the City, the share of renter-occupied housing increased from 35% to 40% between 2005 and 2014. This trend is visible countywide (34% to 38%), as well as nationwide (Figure 40). Several demographic and economic factors—not least the Great Recession—have shifted consumer preferences toward renting, particularly in urban areas.

Figure 40. Owner and Renter-Occupied Housing, Spokane Valley and Spokane County, 2005-2014

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey (2005-2014)
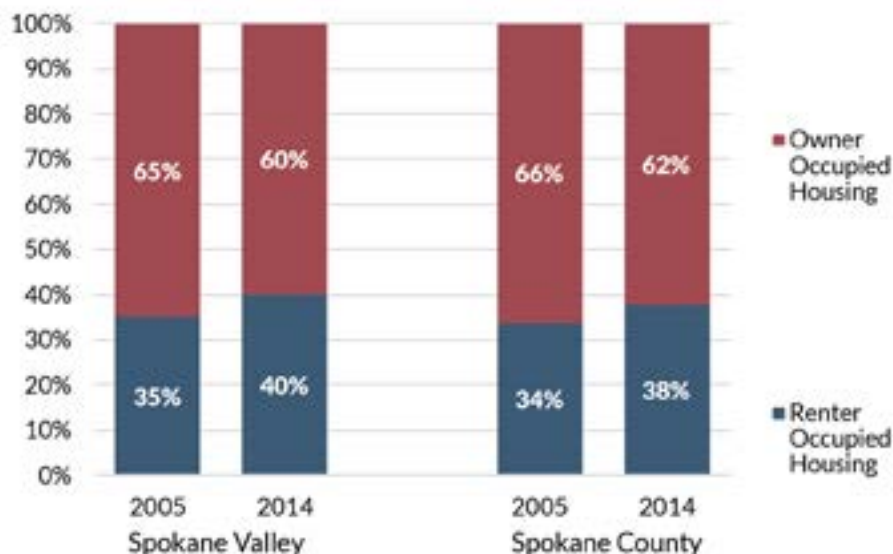
Homeless Response System in Spokane County

There are several ways that a household experiencing homelessness can access community resources that will help them navigate to temporary and permanent housing. These various pathways depend on where the individual is in the County and the existing resources embedded in those communities. Our region helps to alleviate homelessness and housing instability through a coordinated and concerted effort, and we are committed to supporting our Regional Homeless System. We do this through a number of regional boards and committees such as the Continuum of Care and the Housing and Community Development Advisory Committee.

THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING IN SPOKANE VALLEY

While demographic and economic characteristics of Spokane Valley's population provide insight into the demand for housing products in the City and the region, the existing supply of housing in the area is essential to identifying challenges and opportunities facing current and prospective Spokane Valley residents.

The City currently contains about 50,700 total dwelling units. Almost 30,000 of those dwellings were built prior to 1980 (Figure 41). Roughly 15%, or 7,845 units, of the total housing stock was built after 2000.

Continuum of Care Program

The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program seeks to promote the regional effort towards ending homelessness and ensures access to programs to those experiencing homelessness. This Program has several components which outline how a jurisdiction implements their own CoC, but one of the most critical is the creation of the CoC Board. Our CoC is made up of a variety of business leaders, homeless service providers, local government representatives, and individuals that have experienced homelessness.

The CoC sets local priorities around ending homelessness and is the the driver of our Five-Year Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. There are several responsibilities that the CoC must comply with but one of the key components of the CoC is its responsibility in identifying a Collaborative Applicant. The City of Spokane is the designated Collaborative Applicant for our CoC, and they are responsible for applying and managing the various homeless services grants offered by HUD on behalf of the Board. The City of Spokane is also the lead organization that manages the Community Management Information System (CMIS). The CMIS database is a local technology system that service providers are required to use when collecting client-level data when homeless individuals access homeless and housing services in our region. Data collected through this system is designed to help drive regional policy decisions as it relates to the delivery of homeless services. The data provides opportunities to course correct current programs or, in some cases, support new program offerings.

The CoC governance structure is also comprised of various Sub Committees that assist in the carrying out of the mission of the CoC to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief and one time. Each Sub Committee focuses on unique subpopulations that are experiencing housing instability and literal homelessness. These Sub Committees are: Veterans, Young Adults, Families with children, and Single Adults

&

Spokane City/Spokane County Continuum of Care
5-Year Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness
24 Code of Federal Regulations Part 578 Continuum of Care

Figure 41. Housing Units by Type and Year Built, Spokane Valley, 2013

Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey (2005-2013)
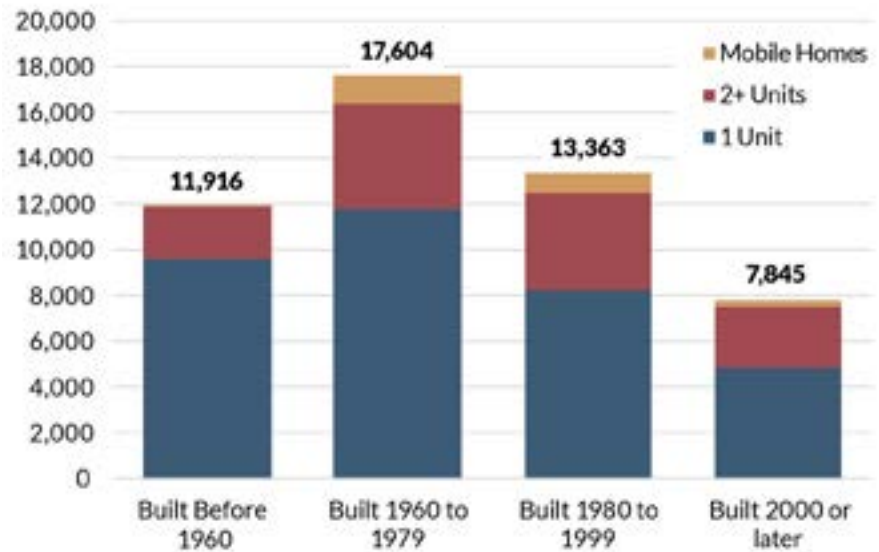
Spokane Valley's housing growth has been modest, but steady since it incorporated in 2003, growing at a rate of about 1% per year. Approximately 6,000 new residences were added to Spokane Valley's total housing stock between 2003 and 2015. This is consistent with the aforementioned data illustrating the age of housing units, which reports a limited number of dwellings built after 2000.

REAL ESTATE CONSIDERATIONS

Though the Great Recession negatively impacted the feasibility of real estate development projects throughout the country, financing for new development is once again available and development activity is again increasing. Macroeconomic conditions will always affect local development trends, and are important since private development will drive any new additions to housing stock in Spokane Valley and the region. Multifamily units, in particular, were difficult to finance in many market areas, and the graph in Figure 42 illustrates this difficulty, as there were no multifamily units constructed in Spokane Valley between the third quarter of 2009 and the second quarter of 2012. Since the third quarter of 2012, however, the multifamily development pipeline has been relatively robust.

Market data also show that, though multifamily vacancy rates are more volatile in the City than in the County, rates in both geographies are quite low.

Figure 42. Multifamily Housing Units Delivered by Quarter, Spokane Valley, 2005-2016

Source: CoStar Group (2016)
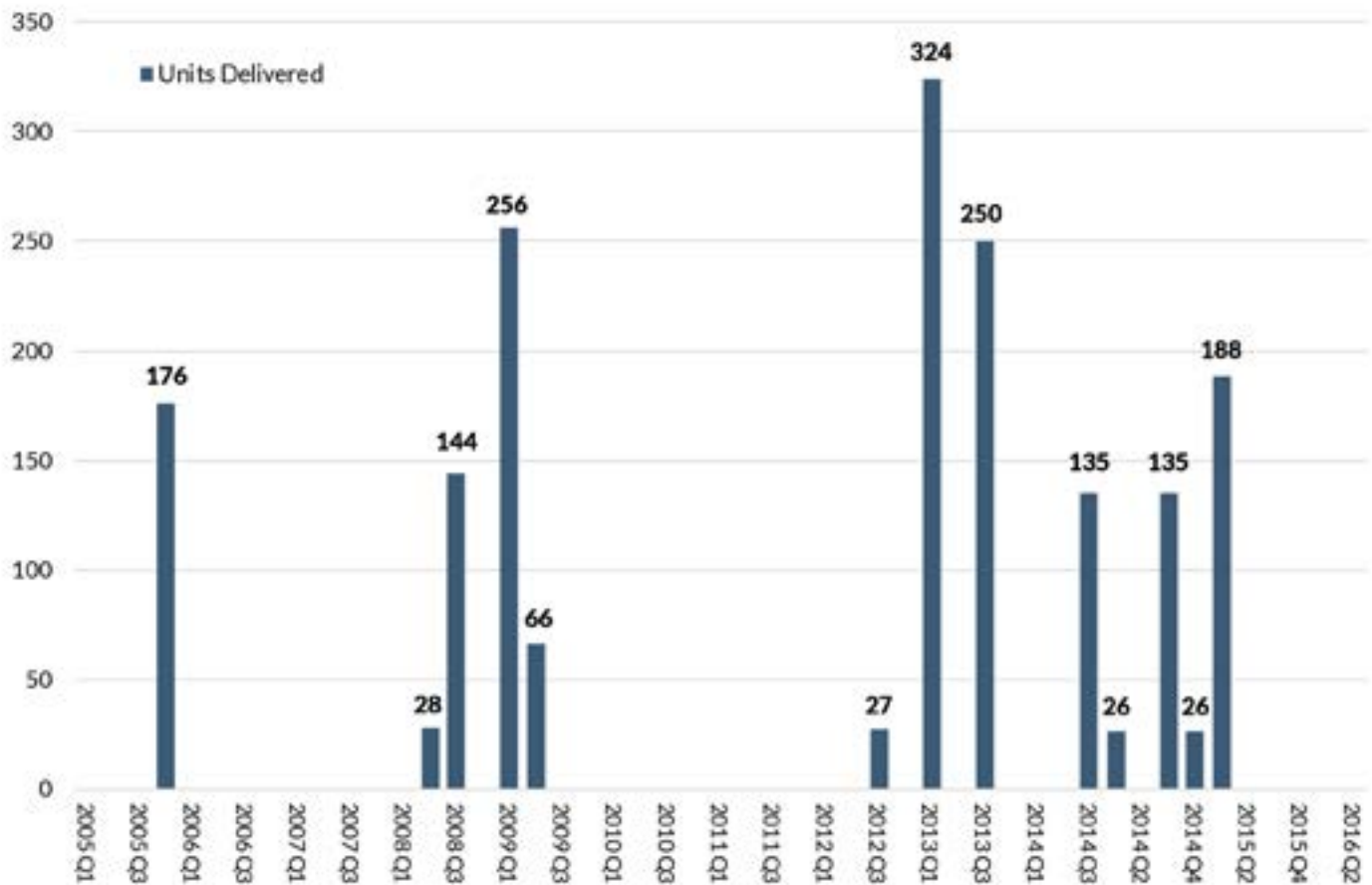
Vacancies spiked to almost 15% in Spokane Valley in 2009, but have since decreased and have remained between 4% and 6% since mid-2010 (Figure 43). Spokane County, as a larger geography, is more insulated from the volatility found in smaller markets; still, vacancies increased during and immediately after the recession, but have since stabilized at about 4%. These rates indicate a tight rental market regionally and potentially suggest unmet demand for multifamily products. Even the aforementioned spikes in vacancy appear to be attributable to concentrated periods of multifamily development, rather than insufficient demand; though vacancy increased by two percentage points in Spokane Valley in early 2015, several hundred units had been delivered in the months prior, and the rapid return to 4% vacancy suggests healthy absorption of the units delivered.

Spokane Valley's neighborhoods are characterized by a predominance of single family homes.

Figure 43. Apartment Rent and Vacancy Rates, Spokane Valley and Spokane County, 2000-2015

Source: CoStar Group (2016)
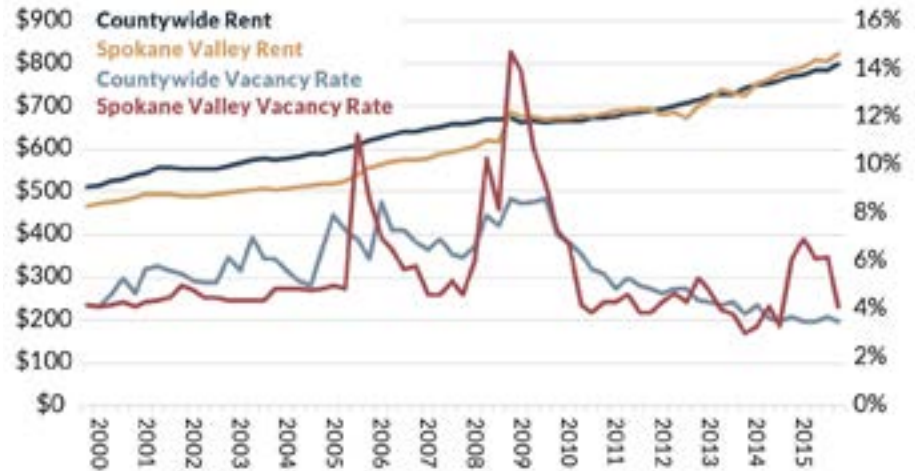
The average apartment rent in Spokane Valley was roughly $100 lower than Spokane County's average rent between 2000 and 2008. Since early 2009, the average rent in Spokane Valley and Spokane County have been generally aligned. As of the first quarter of 2016, the average apartment rent for both areas was approximately $800 per month.

Approach to the Housing Element

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Several challenges and opportunities arise from a careful analysis of these housing data. The following summarize obstacles and impediments to quality, affordable, and diverse housing options, as well as arising opportunities to improve housing in Spokane Valley, and underpin goal and policy development in the Housing Element.

Providing For Cost-Burdened Residents

While the proportion of cost-burdened Spokane Valley renters decreased between 2005 and 2014, more than one-third of all residents—owners and renters together—qualified as cost-burdened in 2014. This suggests a substantial need for more affordable housing units in the City, with a focus on affordable rental units. Smaller multifamily units are less expensive than stand-alone single family units, and an increase in their availability could alleviate some of the cost-burden Spokane Valley residents are currently facing.

More than 50% of Spokane Valley households earned less than $50,000 in 2014. For households earning $25,000 per year, rent and mortgage expenses should be less than $694 per month; at $50,000 annually, housing costs must be less than $1,389 per month. According to an apartment market survey executed by the Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies at the University of Washington, the average rent for apartments of any size in Spokane Valley was $827 per month in 2016, though two and three bedroom units likely exceed this cost by a significant margin. Moreover, when affordable housing units are located further from employment centers and daily needs, like grocery stores, pharmacies, gas stations, restaurants, and other retailers, transportation costs for residents increase significantly through car ownership, insurance requirements, and gasoline purchases. These facts point to the need for affordable housing within walking distance of retailers, employers, and transportation hubs.

Creating Options For Non-Family Households

As the number of households with children decreases, the demand for smaller housing options will likely increase in Spokane Valley and the County overall. Quality higher-density housing products, such as apartments, condominiums, townhouses, tiny homes, or backyard cottages, would be viable opportunities for residents without children and retirees and may offer the added benefit of increasing affordability for workers in retail and services.

Accommodating An Aging Population

Aging individuals experience a decrease in mobility—many are unable to drive or don't feel comfortable operating a vehicle as their reflexes and eyesight worsen. As a result, aging populations are more reliant upon transportation services and shorter commute times to amenities and health services. Additionally, increasing age often requires homeowners and renters to downsize because of health concerns, physical mobility restrictions, and/or reductions in income (University, 2014). Taken together, the aforementioned forces urge consideration of denser housing opportunities in close proximity to jobs, retail amenities like grocery stores and banks, and public transportation.

Access to Community Services

The City is largely suburban and, in many areas, lack a robust sidewalk network and close proximity to public transportation which is often limited to arterial corridors. The lack of sidewalks and minimal public transit presents a challenge to those with mobility issues, those that are unsheltered, or who lack access to a personal vehicle. The location of facilities that seek to co-locate a variety of community resources needs to be accessible and connected to public transit to ensure equal access.

In addition, the City will need to identify the population(s) that a community resource center seeks to serve. Since the Valley is spread out offering a wide variety of community resources will likely have the best outcome for our Community.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Responding To Community Preferences

The housing stock in Spokane Valley is weighted toward single family units (61%). Low apartment vacancy rates and high rents indicate market demand for more multifamily units. Residents echoed the market status with a community desire for innovative types of multifamily housing, such as cottage housing, tiny homes, and accessory dwelling units.

Improving Housing Diversity and Affordability

ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF MIXED-USE DESTINATIONS

Regionally, Kendall Yards in Spokane has aroused interest as a relatively new style of development that embraces many of the tenets of a movement called *new urbanism*. Residents, as well as investors, have indicated interest in this type of development, which could anchor new regional retail, attract overnight visitors, amplify positive publicity, and create new mixed-use housing options.

IMPROVE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Substantial portions of the renter and homeowner population are cost-burdened by rent and mortgage payments. An increase in multifamily housing options would reduce the average rent for these units countywide, improving the livelihood of cost-burdened residents. Furthermore, providing housing options that meet the needs of local employees is critical to ensuring that local companies continue to have access to capable workers.

ENSURE A RANGE OF HOUSING OPTIONS FOR RESIDENTS

As the City's population ages and the proportion of households with children continues to decrease, the demand for smaller housing options will increase. During conversations with Spokane Valley residents, the desire for new housing typologies—including cottages and tiny homes—repeatedly arose. From an economic development standpoint, these typologies densify existing single family neighborhoods while enhancing neighborhood character, and therefore provide a captive audience for neighborhood-serving retailers that create new jobs in the community and draw visitors from nearby towns.

Neighborhood Character

ENHANCE DISTINCTIVE NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The Spokane Valley community expressed a strong desire for more neighborhood amenities, such as non-chain restaurants, boutiques, and local entertainment. These commercial features thrive in walkable, high density residential communities and may best be provided through mixed-use development, where multifamily units can improve the financial feasibility of the development project.

BEST PRACTICES

Coordinate with Human Services

Housing for individuals and families with a need for human services is important. Planning for these housing types in appropriate areas will reduce barriers to access for these services and may improve the quality of life for those individuals and families.

Incorporating Density, Improving Walkability

Coordinating housing development with planning for commercial uses, transportation improvements, and public space can create vibrant places with high-quality, high-density housing options. Walkable places have been shown to create economic benefits for cities and residents alike, and these walkable destinations may help diversify and improve the City's stock of for-rent multifamily housing.

Co-Location of Homeless and Homeless Prevention Services

The City of Spokane Valley has a strong network of various non-profits, faith-based organizations and school districts that help serve those who are facing housing instability as well as households that are unsheltered. What has historically been missing are locations in the City where access to these services are easily obtainable. Specifically, a high degree of reliance has been on the City of Spokane to physically house these services, which in turn requires City of Spokane Valley residents to travel when resources are needed. The City supports co-location facilities in its jurisdiction within close proximity of public transportation. These facilities would house various providers that seek to serve those experiencing homelessness and housing instability.

Additionally, such services should be well connected to existing systems of care within our region to encourage and support ease of referrals and reduction of duplication in services.

Supporting Affordable Housing for all Households

The provision of Affordable Housing is critical to meet the needs of those households that have special needs or are on fixed incomes. Any build out of Affordable Housing in the City should align with existing programs and systems that seek to serve those that are unsheltered or unstably housed. The City should strive to work with regional providers to streamline and coordinate the distribution of limited resources.

Capital Facilities & Public Services

Introduction

WHY THE CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT IS IMPORTANT

The Capital Facilities Element helps the City manage its investments related to facilities needed for growth, and responds to specific Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements. The element relies on a Capital Facilities Plan (CFP), which helps the City use its limited funding wisely and efficiently, and ensures that facilities are in place when growth occurs. The CFP includes a six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with estimated costs and proposed methods of financing. The plan also anticipates needed investments to support the City's economic development initiatives.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The GMA, specifically RCW 36.70A.070 (3) (a), identifies public facilities that are required to be inventoried. WAC 365-196-415 provides guidance as to which capital facilities should be included in the inventory. At a minimum, they should include water systems, sanitary sewer systems, stormwater facilities, reclaimed water facilities, schools, parks and recreational facilities, police and fire protection facilities. Identified facilities must have a minimum standard Level of Service (LOS), include an inventory, needs assessment, and include or reference the location and capacity of needed facilities. Transportation standards are the only facilities required to have a concurrency mechanism, although a local government may choose to adopt a concurrency mechanism for other facilities.

The Countywide Planning Policies for Spokane County (CWPP) contain a number of goals and policies regarding capital facilities and the provision of urban services. This Element is consistent with the CWPP and the adopted regional LOS standards.

This Element acts as a reference to all the various capital facility plans, comprehensive plans, capital improvement and investment programs, inventories, and studies that together represent the planning and financing mechanisms required to serve the capital facility needs for the City.

The City's approach to capital facilities planning is unique in that special purpose districts and other private utilities provide many of our services. The City, however, provides capital facilities for municipal buildings, streets,

REFERENCES KEY

● Refers to other section in plan
X-XX

(SV) Refers to other Spokane Valley plans and official documents

(&) Refers to other non-Spokane Valley references for further reading

parks and recreation, and stormwater. This Capital Facilities Element therefore provides information about the City's facilities, but also references the functional plans of each external service provider. The Element contains an inventory of capital facilities and service providers, and existing and future LOS for each type of capital facility.

Current Conditions

The City owns and manages a number of capital facilities including roads, parks, police facility, regional event center, a City Hall and a street maintenance facility. There are a number of capital facilities that serve the City of Spokane Valley that are managed by other entities (see table below). In these cases, the City coordinates with the responsible governing bodies and organizations to ensure consistency between capital facility plans. This collaborative review covers the construction of new facilities, improvements to existing facilities, the levels of service provided by those facilities, and the sources of revenues and financing of needed facilities.

SUMMARY OF EXISTING FACILITIES

The following (Figure 44) is a summary inventory of capital facilities providing services within the City of Spokane Valley and references corresponding functional plans and maps. Capital facilities belonging to privately-owned utilities serving the City (electrical, natural gas, liquid or other gas pipelines, and telecommunication) are discussed in the Utilities Element of the Plan.

Figure 44. Summary Inventory of Capital Facilities
Source: City of Spokane Valley (2016)

FACILITIES	INVENTORY DESCRIPTION	FUNCTIONAL PLANS AND MAPS
Water	The City of Spokane Valley does not own or operate a public water supply system. Spokane Valley residences and businesses receive water from special purpose districts, associations, and public and private corporations. The Coordinated Water System Plan (CWSP) identifies service boundaries, establishes minimum design standards and promotes the consolidation of regional water resource management. The Board of County Commissioners or the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) provide updates to the CWSP. Spokane Valley supports regional water supply planning, water use efficiency programs and plans, watershed planning, wellhead protection plans, water quality plans, and planning for reclamation and reuse.	• Spokane County CWSP • Map of Water Districts and Wellheads

FACILITIES	INVENTORY DESCRIPTION	FUNCTIONAL PLANS AND MAPS
Sewer	Spokane County Environmental Services provides sewer service in Spokane Valley. In 2009 an interlocal agreement was adopted which established a wastewater management advisory board and gave Spokane County the exclusive authority to provide sewer service to the City of Spokane Valley.	• Spokane County Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan • Map of Sewer Service
Transportation	Transportation capital facilities include streets, bridges, pathways, and sidewalks. Spokane Valley is responsible for about 439 miles of public roads. Overall, there are approximately 125 miles of major roadways (arterials and collectors) and 314 miles of local roadways, encompassing over 81,000,000 square feet of asphalt and concrete surfacing. The Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) lists all the transportation projects the City of Spokane Valley plans to pursue over the next six years. Spokane Valley coordinates with other agencies, including Spokane County and the WSDOT, when developing the TIP. In addition, the future transportation project list identified in the Comprehensive Plan EIS illustrates the types of projects that may be necessary by 2040 to maintain acceptable LOS in Spokane Valley.	• Transportation Improvement Plan • Map of Arterial Street Plan
Stormwater	Stormwater runoff in Spokane Valley flows to a combination of public and private facilities. The City created a Stormwater Utility to maintain over 18,000 stormwater facilities that support City-owned right of way and properties. Private property owners are responsible for the maintenance of stormwater facilities that retain and infiltrate stormwater collected from their site, or as part of development agreements and easements. The Stormwater Utility updates a Six-Year Stormwater Capital Improvement Program that lists projects that the stormwater utility plans to pursue in the near future. New development and redevelopment projects are required to meet the current standards set forth in the Spokane Regional Stormwater Manual, which ensures that runoff is treated and properly disposed of.	• Spokane Regional Stormwater Manual • Stormwater Utility Capital Improvement Program • UIC Assessment and Retrofit Map • Stormwater Discharge Map
Law Enforcement	The Spokane Valley Police Department provides a safe environment for the citizens, businesses, and visitors of the City of Spokane Valley through a contractual agreement with the Spokane County Sheriff's Department. This unique contracting relationship allows for the sharing of resources, allowing both agencies to operate at peak efficiency without duplicating services.	• Interlocal agreement or contract for services
Libraries	The Spokane County Library District (District) provides library services in Spokane Valley. The District is a municipal corporation established by voters in 1942 under provisions of RCW 27.12.040. This independent special purpose district provides public library services to the unincorporated county and affiliated municipalities.	• Spokane County Library Capital Improvement Plan
Parks and Recreation	The Spokane Valley Parks and Recreation Department provides for a wide range of recreational opportunities available to residents and visitors. City parks, school play fields, trails, County parks, and conservations areas are all within close vicinity to Spokane Valley residents.	• Spokane Valley Parks and Recreation Master Plan

FACILITIES	INVENTORY DESCRIPTION	FUNCTIONAL PLANS AND MAPS
Solid Waste	Private haulers licensed by the Washington Utility and Transportation Commission (W.U.T.C.) through contracts provide solid waste services in Spokane Valley.	• Spokane Valley Solid Waste Management Plan
Fire and Emergency Services	Spokane Valley Fire Department (SVFD) and Spokane County Fire District No. 8 provide fire protection, rescue, and emergency medical services (EMS) in the City of Spokane Valley. SVFD serves over 90% of the City, while District 8 serves a few small areas in the southern part of the City. Both districts serve the City with a full range of fire suppression and EMS.	• SVFD Strategic Plan • Map of Fire Districts
Public Schools	Four public school districts provide service within Spokane Valley: East Valley, West Valley, Central Valley, and Spokane School District 81. Spokane Valley must coordinate with each district to ensure consistency between the City's plan and school districts' plans. Specific information on school district facilities including, but not limited to, enrollment, classroom size, service standards, and financing is contained in each school district's strategic plan.	• CVSD Strategic Plan • EVSD Strategic Plan • WVSD Strategic Plan • Spokane Public Schools Strategic Plan • Map of School Districts
City-Owned Facilities	The City maintains other capital facilities including satellite police precinct, regional event center, city hall and a street maintenance facility (see descriptions below).	• City of Spokane Valley Capital Facilities Plan

Figure 45. Map of Fire Districts
Source: City of Spokane Valley (2016); Community Attributes Inc. (2016)
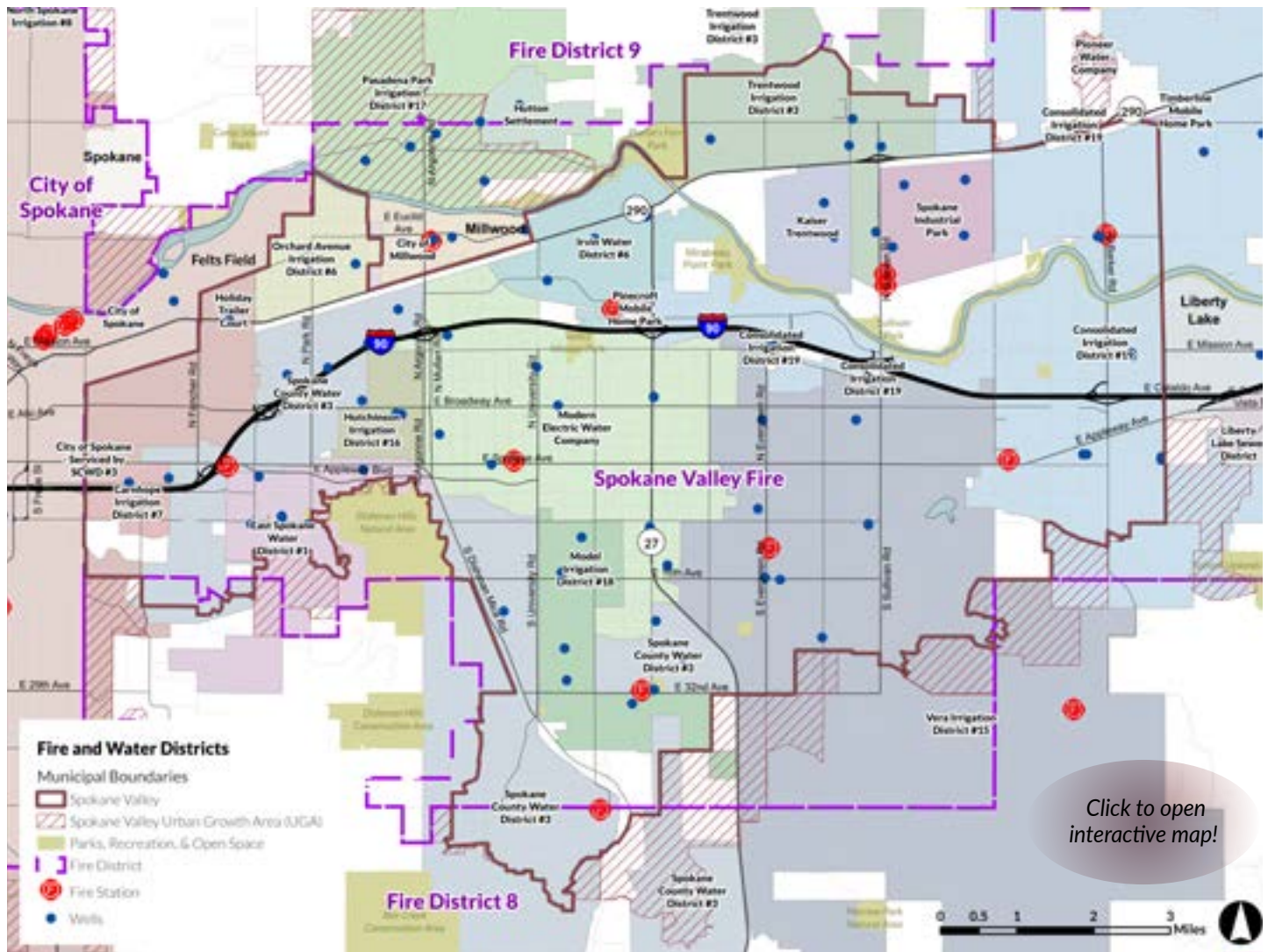
The maps (Figures 45 and 46) depict the facilities related to fire and emergency services and public schools that are located in the City.

CITY-OWNED FACILITIES

This section of the CFP includes civic buildings such as government offices, community centers, and entertainment facilities. As a relatively new City, incorporated in 2003, Spokane Valley does not have a significant inventory of community facilities.

Figure 46. Map of Schools, School Districts, and Safe Routes to School

Source: City of Spokane Valley (2019)
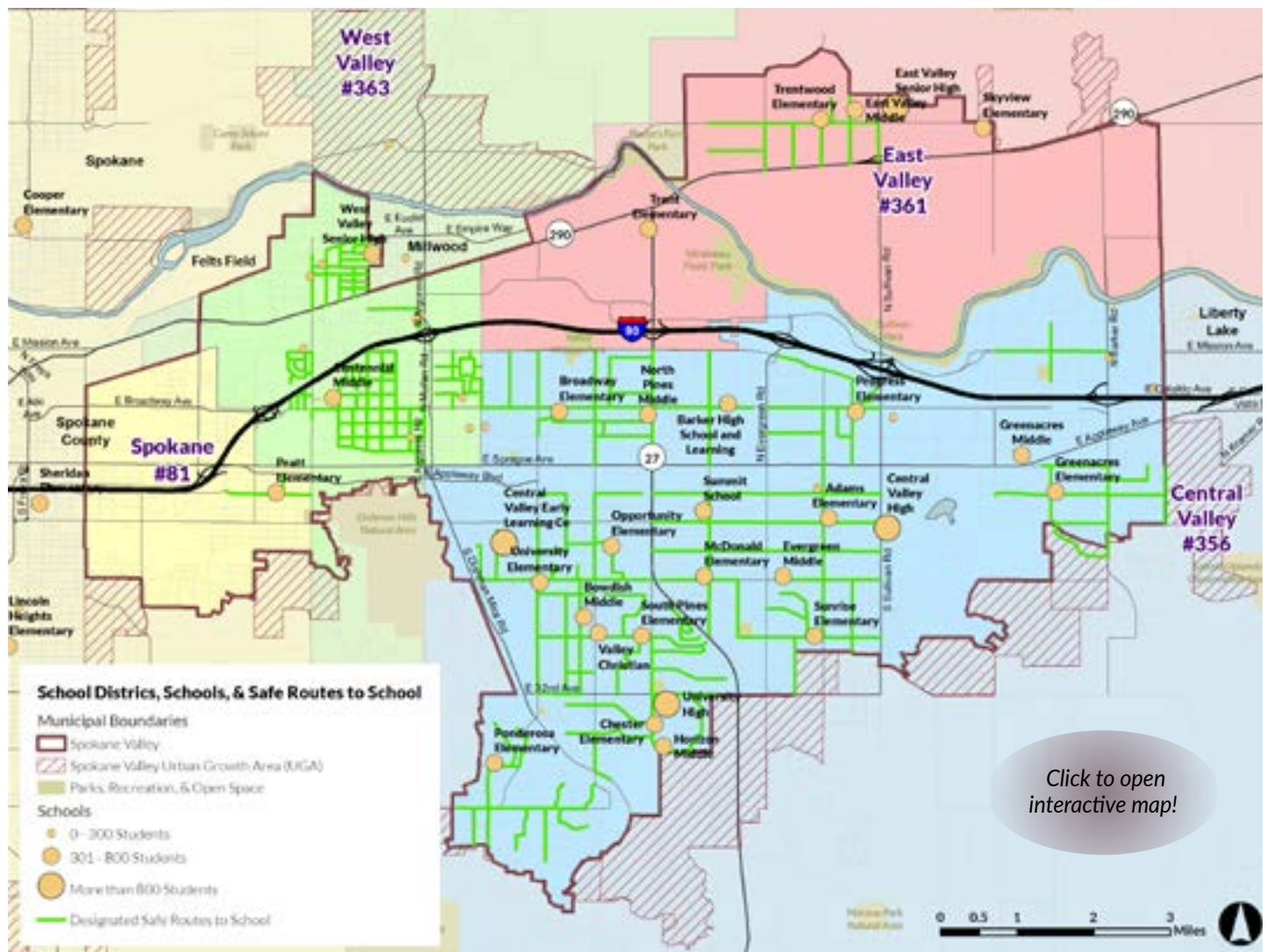
CenterPlace Regional Event Center

CenterPlace is located at 2426 North Discovery Place, near Mirabeau Park. It is a 54,000 square foot regional event center and houses the Senior Center, as well as the Parks and Recreation Office.

Street Maintenance Facility

The City of Spokane Valley Street and Stormwater maintenance facility is located at 17002 East Euclid Avenue. The facility houses plow trucks, stormwater and traffic signal parts, liquid and granular deicing material, and other street maintenance equipment.

Police Precinct

The Police Precinct is located at 12710 East Sprague Avenue. The building is approximately 21,779 square feet in size. The District Court operates a courtroom out of the building, using 2,503 square feet. The County pays a lease and maintenance charges for this facility. The building also contains office space, kitchen, locker room and bathroom, maintenance garage, gym, court ticket counter, police counter, conference room, and roll call room. There is also a shop and garage in a separate structure. Dedicated Spokane Valley personnel and some support staff are housed at the Precinct. Most of the investigative personnel and support staff are housed at the Public Safety Building in Spokane. The old holding area is now used for breathalyzer tests, probation meetings, recorded interviews, and additional office space.

Ongoing Projects

The City Hall site is 3.38 acres located at the southeast corner of Sprague Avenue and Dartmouth Street. The structure is 65,172 square feet. The building will be three stories above grade totaling 47,485 square feet. The first floor will be 18,553 square feet, the second floor will be 15,155 square feet and the third floor is 13,777 square feet. The building will have a full basement of 17,687 square feet.

The construction of City Hall will be complete by August 31, 2017. The City will move in to the new building in September 2017. The total project cost for City Hall is approximately $14,150,000. The City is using $6,300,000 from the general fund and $7,850,000 in net Limited Tax General Obligation bond proceeds. The bonds will be repaid over a 30-year period in roughly equal annual installments. The average annual bond repayment is $399,888, which is $34,712 less per year than the City's current annual lease payment for the current City Hall space at the Redwood Plaza located at 11707 East Sprague Avenue.

MEETING AND EXCEEDING STANDARDS

Level of Service (LOS) is the adopted standard used to measure the adequacy of services. LOS relates to the types of services rendered. For capital facilities, LOS standards determine what improvements or new facilities are necessary to support anticipated growth. These standards inform the public, developers, and decision-makers about the quality or quantity of a facility or service.

An LOS standard is a tool to measure the performance of a capital facility. A capital facility operating at or above the established LOS indicates no need for

improvements or new facilities. A facility operating below the established LOS is an indication that there may be a need for improvements, or a need for new facilities, or re-evaluation of the LOS.

The following table (Figure 47) below provides the regional LOS for water, sewer, transportation, stormwater, law enforcement, libraries, parks, street cleaning, public transit, fire, and schools. Local jurisdictions may choose higher standards.

Figure 47. Regional LOS Summary for Capital Facilities
Source: Spokane County; additional sources indicated in table

FACILITIES	REGIONAL LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD
Water	Domestic Water Supply – Minimum Levels of Service for storage capacity and flow shall be consistent with the Washington State Department of Health requirements and the Spokane County CWSP requirements (where applicable).
	System Design – Minimum Levels of Service for pipe sizing, flow rate, and systematic grid development shall be consistent with the Washington State Department of Health requirements and the Coordinated Water System Plan requirements (where applicable).
	Fire Flow – Fire flow rate and duration as well as fire hydrant specifications and spacing shall be consistent with local fire authority requirements or the Fire Code, whichever is more stringent.
Sewer	Incorporated areas will be provided with wastewater collection and transport systems in accordance with the adopted sewer concurrency requirements of the jurisdiction. Unincorporated urban growth areas will be provided with wastewater collection and transport systems in accordance with the requirements for sewer concurrency as set forth in Spokane County's Development Regulations.
	Collection systems and transport systems will be designed for peak flow conditions so that overflows, backups, and discharges from the system do not occur under normal operating situations. Specific design criteria shall conform to the requirements of the Washington State Department of Ecology and local regulations. Wastewater collection and transport systems will convey wastewater to centralized wastewater treatment facilities. Centralized wastewater treatment and effluent disposal facilities will be planned, designed, and constructed to provide effluent that does not adversely impact the quality of surface or groundwater of the State of Washington.
	Planning and design for wastewater treatment and effluent disposal facilities will be based on 20-year projections of population growth and current water quality criteria as established by the Washington State Department of Ecology. (Centralized wastewater treatment facilities shall be a part of a sewage system owned or operated by a city, town, municipal corporation, county, political subdivision of the state, or other approved ownership consisting of a collection system and necessary trunks, pumping facilities, and means of final treatment and disposal and approved or under permit from the Washington State Department of Ecology.)
Transportation	Maintain travel corridor time as established by Spokane Regional Transportation Council.

FACILITIES	REGIONAL LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD
Stormwater	Flooding of property outside designated drainage-ways, de facto drainage-ways, easements, flood zones, or other approved drainage facilities during the design precipitation or runoff event prescribed in the standards of the governing local agency or jurisdiction shall be prevented within the reasonable probability afforded by such standards. Impact to buildings and accessory structures shall be avoided to the maximum extent practicable by evaluating the effects of a 100-year rain event, and implementing measures to ensure that the runoff attendant to such an event is directed away from such buildings and accessory structures. Any stormwater discharge to surface or groundwaters must meet federal, state, and local requirements for water quality treatment, stormwater runoff, and infiltration.
Law Enforcement	Each jurisdiction shall specify in its Comprehensive Plan a level of police protection that addresses the safety of its citizens.
Libraries	Each jurisdiction will specify its own LOS
Parks	Each jurisdiction will specify its own LOS
Solid Waste	Solid waste processing will meet Federal and State regulations, including maintaining any required facilities licenses.
Street Cleaning	Each jurisdiction within the non-attainment area shall develop and use a street cleaning plan, coordinating with Spokane County Air Pollution Control Authority (SCAPCA) as the oversight agency, to meet mandated Particulate Matter dust standards. Each jurisdiction's street cleaning plan will describe the programs and methods to be used to reduce particulate matter emissions from paved surfaces. Each plan shall address but not be limited to the following: 1. Street sweeping frequency and technology to be employed. 2. Factors for determining when and where to initiate street sweeping following a sanding event, with the goals of expeditious removal when safety and mobility requirements have been satisfied. 3. Sanding reduction goal. 4. Sanding materials specifications to be employed. 5. Locations, application rates and circumstances for use of chemical de-icers and other sanding alternatives. 6. Identification of priority roadways (over 15,000 average daily traffic count).
Public Transit	Jurisdictions within the Public Transit Benefit Area (PTBA) shall have policies consistent with the LOS adopted by the Spokane Transit Authority Board of Directors.
Fire and Emergency Services	Urban areas jurisdictions in excess of 5,000 population, or once a population of 5,000 persons is achieved, shall be served by a fire district with at least a (Washington Survey and Rating Bureau of Insurance Services Office) Class 6 Insurance Rating or better. For the purposes of GMA minimum Levels of Service, Class 6 or better shall be based on the ISO Grading Schedule for municipal fire protection, 1974 edition, as amended, by using the fire district, fire service communication, and fire safety control portions of the grading schedule. The total deficiency points identified in these portions of the ISO or Washington Survey and Rating Bureau schedule shall not exceed 1,830 points. All jurisdictions, regardless of size, shall ensure that new development has a Fire Flow and hydrant placement per the International Fire Code adopted by that jurisdiction. Urban areas must be within five road miles of an operating fire station that provides service with a "Class A" pumper, unless structures are equipped with fire sprinkler(s) that are rated in accordance with the edition of the International Fire Code adopted by the jurisdiction, and is located within five road miles of an operating fire station that provides service with a Class "A" rated pumper. Urban areas shall be served by a state certified basic life support (BLS) agency. Urban areas should be served by an operating basic lifesaving unit within 5 miles; and an operating advanced life support unit within six miles or 10 minutes' response time for those jurisdictions with urban areas in excess of 5,000 in population; and basic life support and advanced life support transport service.
Public Schools	To be determined by individual school district CFP.

The City has adopted the following LOS standards (Figure 48), which in some cases exceed the regional LOS standards described in the preceding table.

Figure 48. Spokane Valley LOS Summary for Capital Facilities

Source: City of Spokane Valley

FACILITIES	SPOKANE VALLEY LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD
Water	Meet the minimum Regional LOS
Sewer	Public Sewer required for new development

Transportation[1]	• LOS D for major arterial corridors:
	
	  > Argonne/Mullan between the town of Millwood and Appleway Boulevard
	
	  > Pines Road between Trent Avenue and 8th Avenue
	
	  > Evergreen Road between Indiana Avenue and 8th Avenue
	
	  > Sullivan Road between Wellesley Avenue and 8th Avenue
	
	  > Sprague Avenue/Appleway Boulevard between Fancher Road and Sullivan Road
	
	• LOS D for signalized intersections not on major arterial corridors
	
	• LOS E for unsignalized intersections (LOS F is acceptable if the peak hour traffic signal warrant is not met)

Stormwater	Meet the minimum Regional LOS
Law Enforcement	No minimum LOS adopted
Libraries	Library District to set LOS
Parks	1.92 acres per 1,000 residents
Solid Waste	Meet the minimum regional LOS
Street Cleaning	Meet the minimum regional LOS
Public Transit	Meet the minimum regional LOS
Fire and Emergency Services	Meet the minimum regional LOS
Public Schools	School Districts to set LOS

1. I-90 is a HSS facility under the jurisdiction of WSDOT. Maintain WSDOT adopted LOS standards on I-90 and the ramp terminal intersections with city streets.

Notably, the City does not apply LOS standards to the City-owned facilities described in an earlier section of this Element. Instead, the City is developing an asset management system that will allow the City to produce recommendations for the maintenance of City-owned facilities. Also notable is the fact that the City, pursuant to state law, considers the adequacy of water supply (in addition to minimum LOS) prior to issuance of a building permit or other land actions (e.g. rezonings, subdivisions).

FUNDING FUTURE PROJECTS

The GMA requires that budgeting decisions be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The 6-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a significant component of the Financing Plan. It includes a list of projects, when they will begin, how much they will cost, and how they will be funded.

Both the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan are adopted by reference and each identify capital improvements and the financing for those improvements. Both plans are adequately funded to maintain the adopted LOS. The new City Hall building is the only other capital improvement proposed within the next six years and the financing for that project is identified under ongoing projects.

For all other facility types, the City will continue to coordinate with relevant service providers identified above. These providers are responsible for maintaining adopted levels of service and the financing of improvements. The improvements and financing for those providers are not repeated here.

Current Funding Sources

The City is limited in its ability to finance all desired capital facility projects. Options must be available for addressing funding shortfalls or adjustments to lower the levels of service for public facilities. In deciding how to address a particular shortfall, the City will need to balance current needs versus future growth requirements and existing deficiencies versus future expansions. If funding shortfalls occur, the City will have the following options available to balance the budget:

- Increase revenues,

- Decrease LOS standards,

- Decrease the cost of the service or facility,

- Decrease the demand for the service or facility,

- Some combination of the above.

Frequently-used sources of funds for the maintenance or expansion of capital facilities in Spokane Valley include current revenues, bonds, federal grants, state grants and loans and others. Those sources are included, with added detail, in Figure 49.

Approach to the Capital Facilities Element

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Ensuring Street Maintenance

State law requires cities to submit a TIP showing the sources and amount of funding for transportation improvement projects planned for the upcoming six-year period. Projects included on a TIP represent the City's intent to fund and construct transportation projects and both state and federal agencies require projects to be included in a TIP in order to be eligible for grant funding. The City can currently finance its six-year TIP, though decisions will need to be made by the City's leadership to ensure that the City can maintain, in the long-term, the high quality street infrastructure that exists today.

The City has the challenge of maintaining the quality of the existing street system. The City has approximately 439 miles of paved roadways within its entire network. Overall, there are approximately 125 miles of major roadways (arterials and collectors) and 314 miles of local roadways, encompassing over 81,000,000 square feet of asphalt and concrete surfacing. At an average replacement cost for a typical roadway approaching $859,000 per mile, not including the value of the land, the City has over $375 million invested in its paved roadway network.

Figure 49. Funding Sources for Capital Improvements

Source: City of Spokane Valley

FUNDING CATEGORY	FUNDING SOURCE
Current Revenues	• General Fund (sales tax, fees, property tax, state-shared revenues, etc.) • Utility Tax for Street Maintenance • Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) • Impact Fees • Stormwater Utility and Aquifer Protection Area Fees
Bonds	• Non-voted General Obligation • Voted General Obligation • Revenue (payable from a particular utility or enterprise) • Local Improvement District (Assessment Bonds)
Federal Grants	• Surface Transportation Program • Bridge Replacement Funds • Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) • Land and Water Conservation Fund • Community Development Block Grants
State Grants/Loans	• Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA) • Transportation Improvement Account • Centennial Clean Water Fund • Public Works Trust Funds • Resource and Conservation Office (RCO) • Arterial Street Fund (Motor Fuel Tax) • Urban Arterial Trust Account (UATA) • Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account • Hazardous Bridge Replacement • Community and Economic Revitalization Board • Water Pollution Control Fund
Other	• Developer Contributions • Donations • Local Improvement Districts

Preservation of the existing street systems has become a major concern for the City due to the limitation of current funding.

In an effort to identify solutions for maintaining the City's street infrastructure, the City hired a consultant to analyze the condition of the streets and provide solutions for pavement management. Pavement management is the process of planning, budgeting, funding, designing, constructing, monitoring, evaluating, maintaining, and rehabilitating the pavement network to provide maximum benefits with available funds.

Decisions will need to be made on the desired LOS and acceptable amount of backlog, including deciding on an acceptable Overall Condition Index (OCI) level for City streets. Establishing the target OCI will allow the City to decide on the appropriate annual budget for street maintenance expenditures. The financial impact of allowing the network OCI to drop by allocating fewer resources toward preservation efforts will increase costs in future years when streets may need to be fully restored. Deferred maintenance can save some money in years of significant financial constraint; however, that deferred maintenance usually comes at a higher cost later on. Deferring needed maintenance can also reduce the lifespan of the investment.

Every year the City underfunds street maintenance it ultimately costs more to rehabilitate in future years.

Coordinating Water Districts

The City does not own or operate a public water supply system. Spokane Valley residences and businesses receive water through special purpose districts, associations, and public and private corporations. The Coordinated Water System Plan identifies service boundaries, establishes minimum design standards and promotes the consolidation of regional water resource management.

All future development must demonstrate that there is adequate water and fire flow for the proposed use. The City relies on groundwater from the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer for its water needs. Groundwater rights determine the pumping capacity. Currently, some water purveyors serving the City are close to or exceeding their allocated water rights. The City is collaborating with water districts to derive solutions such as adjudication, the formation of a water authority, the conversion of irrigation water rights to municipal water rights, or the inclusion of irrigation water rights when evaluating water supply capacity.

The City will need to continue to coordinate with the water purveyors and DOH to ensure there is an adequate supply of water for current and anticipated demand. On the capacity side, the City will continue to coordinate on the development of strategies to ensure there is adequate water capacity to serve anticipated levels of development. Furthermore, the City will not issue building permits or land actions if the applicant is unable to demonstrate adequate water availability.

Managing Coal and Oil Transportation

Most of the coal delivered to U.S. consumers and for foreign export is transported by railroads. Citizens and local governments in Washington State are concerned about the impacts of increased rail traffic going through their communities and the impacts of proposed coal and oil export facilities.

In Washington State, new oil terminal facilities are proposed in Vancouver and Grays Harbor, and the state's five existing refineries from Tacoma to Ferndale are planning to expand.

The five coal export terminals proposed for Washington and Oregon could add dozens of trains per day to the City's railways. The new terminals and increased transport can obstruct and delay vehicles at rail crossings, extend the travel times of emergency responders, and block access to hospitals, schools, businesses, and neighborhoods. Heavy coal trains damage rails with their pressure and clog the pores of gravel under tracks, reducing wet ballast permeability and stability increasing the risk of derailment of other hazardous and explosive freight.

Currently, approximately 150 to 175 trains move through the City daily. If all of the proposed coal export terminals are built, as many as 47 coal trains could be added to the daily total over the next two decades. Half of the trains would be full of coal heading to the ports. The other half would be empty going back to Wyoming and Montana to pick up more coal from the Powder River Basin.

This increase in rail traffic further necessitates Bridging the Valley (BTV). The BTV project will separate vehicle traffic from train traffic in the 42-mile corridor between Spokane, Washington and Athol, Idaho. The separation of railroad and roadway grades would improve safety, reduce congestion, assist in eliminating whistle noise, improve air quality, and enhance economic development. It may benefit the City to continue to pursue strategic investments in the near term in order to avoid costlier investments in the future.

Siting Essential Public Facilities

The GMA requires the Comprehensive Plan to include a process for identifying and siting Essential Public Facilities (EPF). According to the GMA, no local comprehensive plan may preclude the siting of EPF.

The GMA defines EPF as those "that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, state education facilities, and state or regional transportation facilities as defined in RCW 47.06.140, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, and in-patient facilities including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities, group homes, and secure community transition facilities as defined in RCW 71.09.020."

The regional process provides for a review process with a location analysis. Public involvement takes place throughout the process with public comment periods as well as public hearings. The review process requires the applicant for an EPF to assume responsibility for the bulk of the analysis and processing of the proposal. The analysis includes two parts. First, an analysis of functional criteria of all potential sites is conducted to select the highest-ranking 10 semi-finalist sites. Second, these 10 semi-finalist sites are analyzed using more qualitative criteria and resulting in selection of at least three preferred sites. Both analyses include public comment periods.

Next, the BoCC conducts a public hearing on the preferred site list to allow for further public comment, identify strategies to address any issues associated with particular sites, and rank the finalist sites. The BoCC ranking is advisory to, but not binding on the applicant. Last, the applicant, after selecting a specific site, will work directly with a local jurisdiction and its regulatory requirements to permit construction and operation of the EPF.

The regional siting process is based on a coordinated inter-jurisdictional approach, which in combination with consistent development regulations among the jurisdictions will implement the requirement of equitable distribution of EPF of a statewide or regional/countywide nature.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

The following improvements are not required of the City, but rather are aspirational and represent opportunities to fulfill citizen desires and advance ongoing economic development efforts.

Funding New Facilities and Services

New growth creates a demand for new and expanded public facilities and services, and the City must find ways to pay for these facilities and services. Impact fees may represent one opportunity to raise the necessary funds. The GMA authorizes local governments to impose and collect impact fees to partially fund public facilities to accommodate new growth, and these fees can be used to pay for new or expanded facilities (but cannot be collected to address existing infrastructure deficiencies). The GMA allows impact fees to be assessed on the following:

- Public Streets and Roads.

- Public Parks.

- Schools.

- Open Space.

- Fire Protection Facilities.

- Recreation Facilities.

Impact fees provide an opportunity for the City to fund future facilities by distributing the costs of new development proportionally as development occurs. Many builders and developers are impact fee proponents because they know that impact fees add predictability to the development approval process and create a "level playing field" between them and their competitors. They also know impact fees replace less fair negotiated exactions. According to recent national surveys, about 60% of all cities with over 25,000 residents and almost 40% of all metropolitan counties use some form of impact fees.

The City may consider enacting impact fees to add predictability and a more balanced funding mechanism for capital facilities.

Sustaining Investment In Trails

The City has invested in the development of the Appleway Trail. The first phase constructed a shared use path along the abandoned Milwaukee Railroad corridor. The corridor parallels Sprague Avenue, approximately two blocks to the south, through the heart of Spokane Valley's commercial district. In 2008, the City constructed 1.2 miles of this path from Corbin Road to the east City limits. The City is scheduled to construct Pines to Evergreen and Sullivan to Corbin in 2017.

The project will provide a route for non-motorized travel along Spokane Valley's principle east-west commercial arterial, connecting Pence-Cole Valley Transit Center, business districts, schools, and multifamily housing. The pathway will connect to Sprague Avenue by way of signage, side street routes, and connections directly to businesses. The path will include arterial crossings with pedestrian HAWK beacons, medians, and pedestrian rapid flashing beacons at the higher traffic volume locations.

Connecting the Appleway Trail to Sprague Avenue and the commercial assets along the corridor is a great opportunity and can generate a range of expected benefits for the local community. The City may pursue this opportunity by continuing to make connections to the businesses along the Sprague Avenue corridor from the Appleway Trail. The City will benefit from increase sales taxes and nearby retail businesses will benefit from increased spending.

Providing Infrastructure For Industrial Development

The role of government and the relationship with business has changed considerably since the recession. Policymakers have begun to focus many of their efforts on understanding and supporting business development. The City recognizes that industrial development is necessary to increase economic prosperity in our community.

INDUSTRIAL IMPROVEMENT AREA

The City has identified an area located in the northeast portion of the City that is appropriate for quality industrial development. The City is coordinating infrastructure improvements, and continued planning for relevant facilities and services is essential to achieving the City's vision.

To date, the City has coordinated with economic development partners at the state and local levels to facilitate a new Union Pacific spur just east of Barker Road and north of Euclid Avenue. The spur will allow for rail access to approximately 500 acres of industrial land. The City is also working with Spokane County to facilitate the expansion of sewer service to the same area. Ultimately, the City would like to work with the property owners to create certified sites for new industrial development.

BARKER ROAD GRADE SEPARATION

The existing intersection at Barker Road and Trent Avenue has a LOS of "F" due to high traffic volumes and proximity to the at-grade crossing. This failing LOS rating restricts development of 500 acres of nearby industrial-zoned land and 75 acres of residential-zoned land. Without improvement, the crossing will experience continued increases in vehicle and rail conflicts, eroding the quality of life in nearby residential areas and impeding economic growth.

This project proposes an overpass over BNSF's tracks an Trent Avenue, as well as other roadway access improvements. The Barker Road crossing is one of 57 high-priority projects for the BNSF mainline separation projects of the BTV program. BNSF's tracks currently carry approximately 55 scheduled trains a day, a figure that will increase substantially to serve a projected expansion in agricultural production, natural resources, and other sectors. The estimated project costs are $36 million. The City is not currently able to pay these costs.

The investment in infrastructure will allow the land to support economic development at a much higher intensity. The economic and tax impacts of that higher level of development are estimated as follows stemming from the construction and occupation of industrial developments.

- $2 billion in total economic output in the state ($980 million in direct impacts).

- 9,800 new jobs supported in the state (3,300 direct job impacts).

- $12.3 million in new general fund taxes to the City (25-year present value at 4%).

- $50.8 million in new general fund taxes to Washington State (25-year present value at 4%).

PINES ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

This $18 million project proposes to reconstruct Pines Road to pass under existing BNSF tracks. To accommodate this, Trent Avenue will also be lowered. This project will allow the City of Spokane Valley to request closure of the University Road railroad crossing one mile to the west. The closure would further improve public safety by reducing the possibility of rail-vehicle collisions at this intersection. BNSF's tracks currently carry approximately 55 scheduled trains a day, a figure that will increase substantially to serve a projected expansion in agricultural production, natural resources, and other sectors. In 2016, the project cost is estimated to cost $18 million.

Supporting Retail

The City's capital investments often set the stage for and entice private investment. There is a significant amount of retail space in Spokane Valley, with retail uses clustered along Sprague Avenue and Appleway Boulevard, as well as many of the City's north-south corridors like Argonne Road and Sullivan Road and the area near the Spokane Valley Mall. The City recognizes supporting current retail and future, catalytic development projects requires continued investment in local infrastructure.

The City may consider input from retailers and other business owners when prioritizing capital projects, investing in the appearance of key gateways and planning for multimodal access to retail centers. Furthermore, the City could also consider infrastructure improvements in areas with higher housing densities, especially those lacking public infrastructure that would support neighborhood-scale retail development. Ongoing City-funded projects, such as City Hall, also offer opportunities to create the conditions for new retail development.

BEST PRACTICES

Capital facility plans are blueprints for the future; they identify economic, land use, and infrastructure development and/or redevelopment, which may include transportation, housing, and public facilities. These plans include broad community participation to ensure the City is planning and identifying the jurisdictional needs for the future. Regular updates are imperative to determine development and infrastructure needs as local conditions change.

Emphasizing Preventative Maintenance

Future updates to the Comprehensive Plan and other related plans will consider addressing preventive maintenance. A component of effective maintenance typically includes preventative maintenance at regularly scheduled intervals to prevent premature failure and to maximize the useful life of our facilities. The City may therefore benefit from establishing a baseline for a comprehensive preventive maintenance program.

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK.

Public & Private Utilities

Introduction

WHY THE UTILITIES ELEMENT IS IMPORTANT

Spokane Valley residents rely on facilities and services that help define their quality of life. These facilities include those provided by several privately-owned utilities in the region. Although these utilities are privately owned and regulated at either the state and/or federal level, coordinated planning at the local level is essential to ensure that adequate utility service is available to all citizens. Sanitary sewer and potable water are typically considered "utilities"; however, for purposes of the City's Comprehensive Plan, sewer and water are addressed in the Capital Facilities Element of this Plan. This Element addresses electrical service, natural gas, and telecommunications utilities.

The Utilities Element is an opportunity to identify ways of improving the quality of services provided within the City. The City will use this element to identify priorities and develop implementation strategies to ensure that provision of utilities is properly coordinated with land use.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The GMA requires cities to prepare a Utilities Element that generally describes the location of existing and proposed utilities, and the related capacity. This Element must be internally consistent with all other appropriate elements of the Spokane Valley Comprehensive Plan.

At a regional level, the Countywide Planning Policies (CWPP) provide a regional policy framework to achieve the overall goals of the GMA. The CWPP were coordinated by the Spokane County Steering Committee of Elected Officials (SCEO) and adopted by the Spokane County Board of County Commissioners. A Regional Utility Corridor Plan was prepared by the Spokane County Regional Utility Technical Committee and adopted in 1995 by the SCEO to insure the CWPP's were met.

REFERENCES KEY

● Refers to other section in plan
X-XX

(SV) Refers to other Spokane Valley plans and official documents

(&) Refers to other non-Spokane Valley references for further reading

Many utilities that operate within the region are planned and regulated at higher levels. Privately and publicly-owned electrical, natural gas, and land line telephone utilities are regulated by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). Wireless telephone communication companies are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Cable television companies are regulated by the FCC and the Communications Acts of 1934 and 1996. Utilities must have a franchise agreement to place utilities in the public right of way. Franchise agreements give each utility the non-exclusive right to provide its category of service within the City.

Current Conditions

This section provides information related to the current providers of electrical service utilities and telecommunications utilities in Spokane Valley.

ELECTRICAL SERVICE UTILITIES

There are currently five providers of electrical services serving Spokane Valley. These include the Bonneville Power Administration, Avista Utilities, Vera Water & Power, Modern Electric Water Company, and Inland Power and Light. This section introduces each company and provides an overview of services.

Bonneville Power Administration

The BPA is a federal agency under the U.S. Department of Energy that markets wholesale electrical power and operates and markets electrical transmission services in the Pacific Northwest. Although BPA is part of the U.S. Department of Energy, it is self-funding and covers its costs by selling its products and services. BPA markets wholesale electrical power from 31 federal hydroelectric projects in the Columbia River Basin, one non-federal nuclear plant and several other non-federal power plants. The dams are operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation. BPA manages over 15,000 circuit miles of transmission lines and owns 261 substations.

The hydroelectric projects and the electrical system are known as the Federal Columbia River Power System. Approximately 28% of the electric power used in the Spokane Valley region comes from BPA. BPA's transmission system accounts for approximately three-fourths of the high-voltage grid in its service territory and includes major transmission links with other regions. BPA's service territory covers 300,000 square miles and includes Idaho, Oregon, Washington, western Montana, and small parts of eastern Montana, California, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming. BPA operates a 500kV line just north of the existing City limits. Additionally, BPA operates the Trentwood substation and 115kV transmission lines within the City.

Avista Utilities

Avista Utilities is involved in the production, transmission, and distribution of energy. Avista provides energy services and electricity to customers in eastern Washington, northern Idaho. Avista Utilities is an operating division of Avista Corporation and is the principal electricity provider in the City.

Avista is statutorily obligated to provide reliable electricity service to its customers at rates, terms, and conditions that are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient. To determine how to best meet the future electric needs of its customers, Avista produces an Electric Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). The IRP looks ahead 20 years to identify resource strategies and portfolios that will cost-effectively meet customers' long-term needs. The Electrical IRP is refreshed in odd years, as required by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission and the Idaho Public Utilities Commission where Avista has customers. The most recent IRP and additional information on the process are available on Avista's website at www.avistautilities.com/inside/resources/irp

Vera Water & Power

Vera Water and Power (Vera) is a publicly-owned utility that supplies water and electricity to the Veradale area. Vera currently operates three substations in Spokane Valley. A new substation located on the corner of Sullivan Road and 16th Avenue is under construction with a target energize date of 2016.

Approximately 3,000 customers will be moved to the new substation to ensure the district's electric system is safe and reliable.

Vera purchases the majority of its power from the BPA which is then distributed to its customers through an underground and overhead electrical distribution system. Vera takes delivery of power from BPA at the substations indicated above. Vera serves over 10,500 electric customers in the City.

In June 2016, Vera introduced a Community Solar Project to customers choosing to purchase "blocks of power" and share in the cost of building a solar electric project. Community solar participants are eligible to receive Washington State production credits through June 2020. After 2020, the renewal of the state incentives is up to the Legislature.

Modern Electric Water Company

Modern Electric Water Company (MEWCO) is a nonprofit, customer-owned corporation that provides water and electricity to approximately 10,000 customers in the Opportunity neighborhood of Spokane Valley. MEWCO purchases power from BPA and currently is in an agreement to purchase all its electrical power from BPA through September 30, 2029. MEWCO's mission is to provide reliable, economical, and safe electric and water distribution services. Its goal is to make the City of Spokane Valley more attractive to businesses looking to locate and expand here by offering the lowest rates in the area.

MEWCO's electrical supply system consists of three substations including the Locust station, located south of Interstate 90 on the west side of Locust Street; Nelson station, located south of 4th Avenue, east of Walnut; and the Opportunity station located at MEWCO main office site on Pines Road, north of Broadway.

Inland Power & Light

Inland Power & Light (Inland) serves electrical customers in 13 counties in eastern Washington and northern Idaho and is the largest electric cooperative in the state. Inland currently purchases all its power from BPA.

Inland's customer base has grown to over 39,000 customers with a relatively small number located in the southern portion of the City. Inland is a member-owned company focused on providing safe, reliable electricity at affordable rates.

Additional information on services and processes can be found on Vera's website at www.verawaterandpower.com.

Additional information on services and processes can be found on MEWCO's website at www.mewco.com.

NATURAL GAS SERVICE

Avista Utilities

Avista Utilities also operates and maintains the natural gas distribution system serving Spokane Valley, and is the only provider of natural gas in the City. Avista provides natural gas to customers in eastern Washington, northern Idaho, and parts of southern and eastern Oregon. For more information, please visit www.avistautilities.com.

The Pacific Northwest receives natural gas from various regions of the United States and Canada. Natural gas is transported throughout the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho via a network of interstate transmission pipelines owned and operated by Northwest Pipeline Corporation. Natural gas delivery from Williams Pipeline is via Avista's distribution system.

To determine how to best meet the future natural gas energy needs of its customers, Avista produces a Natural Gas IRP. The IRP looks ahead 20 years to identify resource strategies and portfolios that will cost effectively meet customers' long-term needs. The IRP is refreshed in even years as required by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, the Idaho Public Utilities Commission, and the Oregon Public Utility Commission.

Telecommunications Utilities

Telecommunications is the transmission of information in the form of electronic signals or other similar means. The telecommunications section focuses on telephone, wireless communications, Internet, and cable television.

Landline Telephone System

Telephone service is offered through two main providers, although service is available through various cable companies. CenturyLink Communication, Inc. (CenturyLink) provides telecommunication service to the Spokane Valley planning area as regulated by WUTC. CenturyLink's facilities may be aerial or buried, copper or fiber. Comcast also offers wired phone service to the Spokane Valley area. Comcast utilizes existing telecommunications infrastructure for this service. Comcast is regulated by the WUTC.

It is anticipated that additional upgraded facilities will be needed to handle the growing demand. However, due to advances in technology, additional capacity is easily and quickly added to the system.

Wireless Telephone System

The City is served with a number of wireless communication service providers. Currently, these services rely on ground-based antennae and often co-located. Expansion of the wireless system is demand driven; therefore, wireless providers maintain a short response time and a tight planning horizon. Providing wireless service involves adapting to changing technologies, which may make current forms of receivers obsolete.

Cable Television and Internet Service

Internet service is available through multiple providers. CentruryLink and Comcast are the primary cable television and Internet providers. CenturyLink provides Internet service via telephone lines and Comcast provides Internet service via cable. However, numerous cable providers serve the area, and generally, include Internet access service options.

The City supports increasing the availability of improved telecommunications services throughout the City. The City encourages new telecommunications technology that balances the costs and benefits of health and safety, aesthetics, the environment, and the economy. In most cases, telecommunications services will use existing utility corridors and public rights-of-way, and will be able to provide services to all parts of the City. The City encourages the shared use of space for telecommunication infrastructure projects within the street right-of-way and for telecommunication infrastructure opportunities. The City's infrastructure investment and aesthetic quality should be protected from unnecessary degradation caused by the construction of telecommunications infrastructure.

Approach to the Public and Private Utilities Element

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Developing and Supporting New Technologies

New technology offers new opportunities to bring high speed Internet access to the City. Ensuring that quality, affordable Internet connectivity is available will further the City's goal of economic growth. The City will need to work to ensure that there are not excessive visual impacts and that access is not limited to select areas of the City. A balanced permitting process will help encourage deployment of high speed telecommunications infrastructure while protecting neighborhood character.

Maintaining Utility Infrastructure

Some of Spokane Valley's utilities infrastructure is aging and will require repairs and replacement over the next 20 years. The costs of replacing utility infrastructure may be substantial for each utility and may take years for planning and implementation. Each utility has strategies and plans for funding and building the necessary improvements.

Accommodating Future Demand

Increased demand will require investment to build new facilities. As demand increases, which may be a likely outcome of continued population and employment growth, non-City utility providers will need to plan for new or improved facilities and residents may turn to providers for expertise in energy efficiency.

Protecting Neighborhood Character

It is important to ensure that new and expanding utility facilities are sensitive to neighborhood character. Some utilities have the potential to create significant incompatibilities with Spokane Valley neighborhoods. Such sensitivity factors as proximity to residential neighborhoods, visual access, and expansion within or beyond an existing facility border should be considered in identifying potential incompatibilities.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Accommodating New Development

Ongoing economic development efforts will lead to new private development projects in Spokane Valley. For these projects to be viable, utilities must ensure sufficient capacity and reliable delivery for future tenants. Spokane Valley's focus on catalytic projects also involve development at scales that may require explicit utilities planning.

Investing In Key Corridors

Economic development relies on selling Spokane Valley to potential business owners, employees, and residents. The aesthetic appearance of gateways and corridors is one component of these marketing efforts. Substations, overhead wires, and other quotidian components of utilities infrastructure can affect

the experiential quality of Spokane Valley's neighborhoods and commercial areas. Therefore, to the extent possible, the City should support efforts by private utilities to locate infrastructure in practical but unobtrusive areas. This may involve the continuation of current efforts to limit the placement of telecommunications facilities within rights-of-way.

BEST PRACTICES

Undergrounding Utilities

Undergrounding utilities is a best practice in utilities planning and the City is interested in this process. The City should support efforts by private utilities to underground utilities infrastructure and should include undergrounding in future franchising negotiations.

Evaluating Life-Cycle Costs

In evaluating both public and private investments in utilities infrastructure, the City should encourage decision-makers to assess the life-cycle costs of the proposed improvements. Life-cycle cost analysis will ensure that decisions are based on a long-term assessment and will help the City maintain fiscal responsibility.

Encourage Sustainability Tracking

Increasingly, private utilities are providing tools to customers to track usage and make informed decisions about their consumption. This can save money for individual consumers, but also improves the long-term sustainability of the City's available resources.

Support Use Of Renewable Resources

The Energy Independence Act applies to utilities providers with over 25,000 customers and requires covered companies to obtain 15% of their electricity from qualified renewable resources by 2020. Many providers have incorporated these targets into their IRPs, and the City may support these providers in their efforts to meet and exceed renewable energy standards.

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK.

Parks, Recreation, & Open Space

Introduction

WHY THE PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT IS IMPORTANT

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, Element provides the backbone to building formal and informal public spaces that support resident and visitor leisure time. The Element provides a formal statement of the City's priorities as they relate to parks, recreation, open space, and art. Parks add to the quality of life for residents and to the value of nearby neighborhoods. The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space in conjunction with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan provide the full range of urban living.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The City has an adopted Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan. The PROS Plan was developed to comply with the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office's planning guidelines in order to maintain grant eligibility. The PROS Plan was also based on an extensive public engagement program that included stakeholder interviews, workshops, an open house, and a survey. The PROS Plan provides the direction, goals, policies, and implementation measures for parks and recreation within the City. The PROS Plan is adopted within this Comprehensive Plan by reference, and is included as an appendix of this document.

The GMA requires cities to consider as part of the development of their comprehensive plans the goal to "Retain open space, enhance recreation opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities."

The GMA, in RCW 36.70A.070(9), also requires a Parks and Recreation Element be included in comprehensive plans. Specifically, the GMA requires the element to include:

- Estimates of park and recreation demand for at least a 10-year period.

- Evaluation of facilities and service needs.

- Evaluation of intergovernmental coordination opportunities to provide regional approaches for meeting park and recreation demand.

REFERENCES KEY

● X-XX   Refers to other section in plan

(SV)   Refers to other Spokane Valley plans and official documents

(&)   Refers to other non-Spokane Valley references for further reading

However, the requirement to include a Parks and Recreation element in the Comprehensive Plan is conditioned on the State Legislature providing funding. As of 2016, the Legislature has not provided such funding. The City adopts by reference the City of Spokane Valley Parks and Recreation Master Plan as amended, which meets the GMA the mandates listed above.

While not required of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element, the GMA, in RCW 36.70A.160, requires that cities identify open space corridors, including land useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and critical areas. While the Natural Environment Element identifies wildlife habitat and critical areas, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan identifies the Spokane River, drainage corridors, and the Centennial and Appleway Trails as recreation assets.

Current Conditions

Spokane Valley's parks system consists of developed formal parks, undeveloped natural areas, and trails. Throughout the City there are a mix of park types available for residents and visitors, including neighborhood, community, large urban parks, and special use areas like pet parks, equestrian facilities, and a dance hall. The City also has a very small number of undeveloped sites to meet future recreational need. The City's adopted PROS Plan provides a full accounting of the City's park system, levels of service standards, park users, and improvement priorities. The PROS Plan also includes a financing plan that identifies how to pay for the improvements.

Figure 50 provides a summary of the park system, identifying the park type and available amenities. The PROS Plan provides additional detail about each park and/or area.

The PROS Plan not only identified the exiting physical conditions and inventory of park facilities within the City, it also used an extensive public process to identify park needs. Some to the key findings from the PROS Plan are identified below to illustrate the support the community has for parks, recreation, and open space.

- **Partnership** - The City Parks and Recreation Department maintains an excellent relationship with schools and private sports program providers. The Parks and Recreation Department should continue these mutually beneficial relationships and work towards developing joint use agreements with the schools.
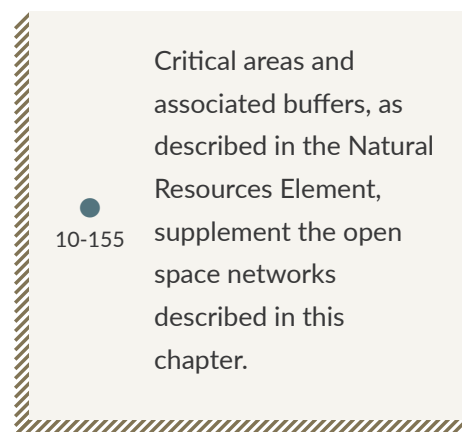
(SV) The PROS Plan is available at www. spokanevalley.org.

Figure 50. Summary of Park Conditions

Source: City of Spokane Valley

LEGEND
Y *Park Component Exists*
– *Component Not Present*
P *Swimming Pool*
S *Splash Pad*

	Softball Fields	Multi-Use Fields	Swimming Pool (P) / Splash Pad (S)	Open Play Areas	Tennis Courts	Sand Volleyball Courts	Basketball Courts	Playground Areas	Shelter Buildings	Picnic Areas	Restrooms	Pathway / Trails	Natural Areas	Pond / Fishing Area	Indoor Facilities	Art Installation	Equestrian Facility
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK																	
Balfour Park (2.8 acres)	–	–	–	Y	–	Y	–	Y	–	Y	Y	–	–	–	–	–	–
Browns Park (8.2 acres)	Y	Y	–	Y	–	Y	–	Y	Y	Y	Y	–	–	–	–	–	–
Castle Park (2.7 acres)	–	–	–	Y	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Edgecliff Park (4.7 acres)	Y	Y	–	Y	Y	–	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	–	–	–	–	–	–
Greenacres Park (8.3 acres)	–	Y	S	Y	–	–	–	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	–	–	–	–	–
Terrace View Park (9.2 acres)	Y	Y	P	Y	–	–	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	–	–	–	–	–	–
COMMUNITY PARKS																	
Sullivan Park (16.1 acres)	–	–	–	Y	–	–	–	–	Y	Y	Y	–	Y	–	Y	–	–
Valley Mission Park (24 acres)	Y	Y	P	Y	Y	–	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	–	–	–	–	–	Y
LARGE URBAN PARKS																	
Mirabeau Point Park (42.0 acres) • Discovery Playground • Mirabeau Meadows • Mirabeau Springs	–	–	S	Y	–	–	–	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	–	Y	–
SPECIAL USE FACILITIES																	
CenterPlace (13.6 acres)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Y	–	–	–	Y	–	–
Park Road Pool (2.0 acres)	–	–	P	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Y	–	–	–	–	–	–
Western Dance Hall (Sullivan Park)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Y	–	–	–	–	–	–
TRAILS AND LINEAR PARKS																	
Centennial Trail	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Y	Y	Y	–	–	–	–
Appleway Trail	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
NATURAL OPEN SPACE AREAS																	
Myrtle Point Park (31.1 acres)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	Y	Y	–	–	–	–
UNDEVELOPED LANDS																	
Valley Mission Park South (7.2 acres)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Balfour Park Extension (8.4 acres)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

- **Spokane River** - The Spokane River is an asset to the community and while there are a number of access locations, additional access should be considered to realize the full potential. Consideration for increased connectivity between parks via the river and water trail is important.

- **Neighborhood Parks** - Providing park access to neighborhood kids should be the Parks and Recreation Department's "highest calling." Ensuring that all areas of the community have park land accessible should be an important priority.

- **Economic Development** - Access to parks or trails provides development and investment incentives, and most people like to live and/or work near parks. The City should consider taking advantage of sports-related tourism by providing tournament quality facilities such as artificial turf and lighting. The City should also consider creating a set of park sign standards to help "brand" the Parks and Recreation Department.

- **Facility Types** - Generally the type of facilities available are adequate. However, some facilities such as the horse arena at Valley Mission Park and the Western Dance Hall may be under-used and some modern facility types such as skate parks and pet parks are unavailable. The City should consider new modern facility types and perhaps repurposing older facility types.

- **Acquisition** - As the City becomes more urban, there will be an increased need for parkland especially to underserved areas. The amount of parkland available is inadequate to meet present and future needs, especially as it relates to open space and athletic fields, but also important is parkland with unique natural features or natural resources.

- **Management** - Parks managed by the Spokane Valley Parks and Recreation Department are highly satisfactory to Spokane Valley residents. Residents also felt the parks are clean and well-maintained.

- **Design** - Park design should be flexible and be able to adapt to foreseeable changes in recreating needs and/or desires.

> ● 10-155 Critical areas and associated buffers, as described in the Natural Resources Element, supplement the open space networks described in this chapter.

Discovery Playground is a valued community amenitiy.

Approach to the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The PROS Plan does not specifically identify challenges and opportunities; however, based on the public process used in developing this plan in conjunction with the needs analysis and goals of the PROS Plan, several challenges and opportunities can be identified.

Enhance Outdoor Recreation

The City of Spokane Valley offers unmatched access to the Spokane River. The majority of the nearly 10 miles of shoreline is publically owned, most this ownership is by Washington State Parks. The Centennial Trail offers a paved shared-use path that is grade separated for most of the Spokane River's path through the City. Increased formal access points to the Spokane River, like at Myrtle Point near CenterPlace, as well as increasing opportunities for north-south connections to the Spokane River and Centennial Trail is an important opportunity for this plan.

Support Sports And Leisure Activities

Youth sports is important to the City of Spokane Valley. There are two major youth sports activity centers near the City of Spokane Valley, Plante's Ferry and the Hub. Plante's Ferry offers outdoor sports with soccer and softball fields and the Hub offers indoor sports, volleyball, and basketball. Additionally, the City owns and operates eight sand volleyball courts and uses its established relationships with local school districts to support and supply youth sports activities. While some opportunities exist to provide additional fields locally, the City also supports improvements and expansions of regional sports centers like Plante's Ferry and the Hub.

Develop Tourist Attractions

The City of Spokane Valley owns a few unique recreation assets that are underused or undeveloped, like the horse arena at Mission Park, vacant property adjacent to Balfour Park, or vacant shoreline lands. Identifying opportunities for these sites is a priority and each could help expand the City's tourist attractions like a visitor's center, farmers' market, or a whitewater course with associated park.

The Centennial Trail is an active shared-use path that residents value.

Make Recreation Space Accessible

The City of Spokane Valley was developed at suburban densities, an important feature loved by residents. While the City has a number of neighborhood scale parks, there are areas that don't have access to park land, especially in the north part of the City. Opportunities for neighborhood scale parks are limited, so smaller scale park facilities may offer park space to residents. Additionally, the non-motorized travel network is limited and providing non-motorized access to parks will continue to be a challenge in the future.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Parks are often an immediate top-of-mind thought when residents think of services the City provides, and improving and maintaining them are typically a priority for residents. Parks and recreation are often an introduction to the community for visitors, and these amenities encourage visitors to stay longer. Thus, parks, recreation, open space, and the arts play a key role in being both a community priority, from a resident's perspective, and an economic development priority, from a tourist perspective.

Improve the City's Image and Identity

Parks and recreation facilities can be a sales pitch for the community to visitors, and the quality of these facilities and inherent recreation assets can therefore improve the image of Spokane Valley and build its brand. The following priorities represent opportunities to use parks, recreation, and open spaces to strengthen the City's image:

- Strengthen and improve Spokane Valley's image and identity by improving the City's key gateways, similar to the improvements made at Sprague Avenue and Appleway Boulevard near I-90. Take advantage of public property to create a sense of place, letting visitors and residents know they've arrived in the City of Spokane Valley.

- Leverage local and regional assets like the Centennial and Appleway Trails, the Spokane River, and community parks. Ensure that the goals and policies take advantage of regional recreational assets that visitors and residents use, and find ways to enhance their use and extend visitor stays.

- Expand the City's role in existing events, regionally and locally. Look for ways to increase exposure for local destinations that are overlooked or underused. Promote expanded athletic events held in and around the City.

- Grow Spokane Valley's market share of tourism by investing in new tourist attractions that support the recreational and open space assets and values of the City.

- Enhance and develop opportunities to support the local and regional arts.

BEST PRACTICES

Coordinate with Recreation Providers

Coordinating efforts and investments with other recreation providers may ensure efficient service provision where possible, and also offers an opportunity to expand the City's network of recreation-related open spaces.

Use Multifunctional Infrastructure

Where possible and when feasible, investing in infrastructure pieces that play more than one role can increase the return on the City's investment and decrease maintenance costs.

Natural Resources

Introduction

WHY THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT IS IMPORTANT

The Natural Environment Element combines several environmental topics, including critical areas (wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat areas, frequently flooded areas, and geologically hazardous areas), surface water quality and quantity, shorelines, and air quality.

The diversity of Spokane Valley's natural environment is illustrated by ecosystems that range from the foothills of Mt. Spokane to the low-lying Rathdrum Prairie floodplains along the Spokane River. This diversity supports a broad spectrum of wildlife, from the moose of Mt. Spokane to the interior red-band trout in the Spokane River. Throughout the region, lakes, rivers, wetlands, and associated riparian areas provide linkages and corridors for wildlife. Spokane Valley's natural environment also includes the Spokane Valley/Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer (SVRP), one of the most productive aquifers in the United States.

Spokane Valley's economic development success in recent years is partially attributable to natural amenities that make the area beautiful and supply it with an array of recreation opportunities. The purpose of this chapter is to coordinate planning efforts to protect, preserve, and enhance this unique natural environment. By ensuring the availability of clean air and water and preserving critical areas and natural features, Spokane Valley will continue to grow as a healthy, sustainable, and inviting community.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Balancing the conservation and protection of the natural environment with population growth, economic development goals, and increasing recreational access is a key purpose of statewide planning rules and regulations. Direction is provided through statewide planning goals, the GMA, and the Shoreline Management Act (SMA). Statewide Planning Goal 10 (RCW 36.70A.020) instructs jurisdictions to: "Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water."

REFERENCES KEY

●   Refers to other section in plan
X-XX

(SV)   Refers to other Spokane Valley plans and official documents

(&)   Refers to other non-Spokane Valley references for further reading

The GMA requires local governments to adopt ordinances that limit development in and near environmentally sensitive areas, which it refers to as critical areas. Critical areas include wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat, frequently flooded areas, and geologically hazardous areas. During municipal incorporation in 2003, the City adopted Spokane County's Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) as an interim measure to regulate development in and near critical areas and thereby comply with the GMA. The City has prepared an updated CAO to provide regulations that are specific to the City's unique natural environment. This Natural Environment Element of the Spokane Valley Comprehensive Plan provides the foundation for the CAO and other municipal plans and regulations, and provides context for the establishment of goals and policies related the City's natural environments. Notably for Spokane Valley, all lands within the City are already characterized by urban growth, limiting the City's obligations under RCW 36.70A.170. The only resource lands extant in the City are mineral resource lands, which have been designated and are discussed in this element.

Pursuant to the GMA, the City is required to designate natural resource lands and critical areas. Critical areas are discussed in more detail below. With regard to natural resources, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170, the City is required to designate "where appropriate...[a]gricultural lands...[f]orestlands...[and] [m]ineral resource lands that are not already characterized by urban growth and that have long-term significance for the extraction of minerals...." Further, pursuant to RCW 36.70A.060, the City is required to adopt development regulations to ensure conservation of mineral resource lands designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170. During its first update, the City did not designate any mineral resource lands and further, it has not designated any mineral resource lands since 2006. However, the consideration of mineral resource land designation is an important one for the City, as the City currently has several existing active surface (sand and gravel) mines. These take up significant acreage and even with appropriate reclamation planning, create long-term impacts that can limit or preclude future industrial, commercial, or other productive use of the site, even after the mine closes. Although the City has existing mines and desires to allow those uses to continue, the City has determined not to designate any mineral resource lands at this time as such designation is not appropriate due to the extensive urban characteristics surrounding the mines and the wide availability of the gravel within the region as described further below.

Current Conditions

The majority of Spokane Valley is developed for residential, commercial, or industrial uses. Above ground, undeveloped natural areas within the City are generally located along the Spokane River and local streams, including associated riparian areas and wetlands. Natural, undeveloped areas are also found on forested cliffs and steep slopes, open areas between the Spokane River and Trent Avenue east of Millwood, and public parks such Mirabeau Point Park and Sullivan Park. These natural environments provide important recreational and scenic amenities to the City, as well as habitat for fish, birds, and terrestrial wildlife. Additionally, the majority of the City is underlain by an extensive, sole-source aquifer that provides high quality drinking water and provides some return flows to the Spokane River. The aquifer moves through alluvium deposited by historic flood events. These layers of sand, gravel, clay, and silt provide mineral resources, which are actively mined at various gravel quarries within the City.

Natural areas are protected by various federal, state, and local plans or laws. This section describes the current condition of natural areas in the City within the context of these laws, which regulate critical areas, surface water, air quality, and shoreline areas.

MINERAL RESOURCE LANDS

The City has undertaken an extensive review process to determine the availability, need, and appropriateness for mineral resource designation and protection within the City. It has conducted interviews with stakeholders; reviewed mineral resource needs due to estimated future construction utilizing information obtained from USGS, Department of Natural Resources, stakeholders, WSDOT, and Spokane County; reviewed access to and availability of mineral resources through materials provided by the Department of Natural Resources; and has analyzed the current urban characteristics surrounding the existing mines within the City.

Based on data from the Department of Natural Resources, the City currently has 18 permitted surface mines with five of them having an active status and the remainder an inactive status. The permitted area of the active mines totals 465 acres. The mined sand and gravel is used extensively in construction projects around the region. Reclamation for the closed mines generally consists of landscape planting and some reshaping of the slopes. Several of the mines have deep excavations that have exposed the SVRP Aquifer. The

areas around the open mines generally consist of urban areas with developed industrial and heavy commercial uses, although one newer mine (Eden Pit No. 55-06) has open land to its north that is currently zoned for industrial use. All but one (Eden Pit No. 55-06) of the existing active mines have been in operation since the City's incorporation. Other than permitting mining in the heavy industrial zone, the City has not had additional protective regulations for the mines as it did not designate any mineral resource lands in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. Due to the urban growth immediately surrounding the mines, additional protections for mining could likely negatively impact other existing industrial and commercial uses.

The mines within the City are but a small part of the extensive approximately 73 active mines within the County. Mining is common throughout the region due to the extensive deep flood deposits of high quality sand and gravel and similar alluvium that compose SVRP Aquifer which are easily accessed due to the typically very thin overburden. Additionally, there are numerous rock mines within the County. These flood deposits extend from Lake Pend Oreille on the east to the West Plains west of the City of Spokane. Accordingly, there are adequate options for gravel mining outside of the City and indeed such mining has and is already occurring.

CRITICAL AREAS

Per the GMA, jurisdictions are required to protect critical areas through the adoption of policies and regulations. Critical areas include: (a) wetlands; (b) areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for domestic purposes; (c) fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas; (d) frequently flooded areas; and (e) geologically hazardous areas.

Spokane Valley recognizes the importance of protecting the ecological functions and societal values provided by critical areas. These natural systems play valuable roles in stormwater disposal, flood prevention, and water quality preservation, as well as provide recreational opportunities. Protection of critical areas makes economic sense because the alternative is development of expensive engineered systems for protection from floods and geological hazards and for purification of drinking water, or regulations that are restrictive and expensive to implement, as necessary to restore declining populations of sensitive species.

WETLANDS

There are few wetlands in the City (Figure 51); however, each plays a valuable role in providing aquatic habitat, preserving water quality, and maintaining water storage. Wetland types in the City include marshes, prairies, shrublands, forests, and vegetated ponds. By storing floodwaters, wetlands reduce flooding and downstream erosion, trap and absorb sediments, and help protect water quality. Furthermore, wetlands discharge water to aquifers and streams, help replenish groundwater, and maintain base flows of surface water systems. In addition to these water quality and water storage functions, wetlands also provide habitat that is locally limited for birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles,

Figure 51. Map of City of Spokane Valley Hydrology
Sources: City of Spokane Valley (2016); Community Attributes Inc. (2016); AECOM (2016)
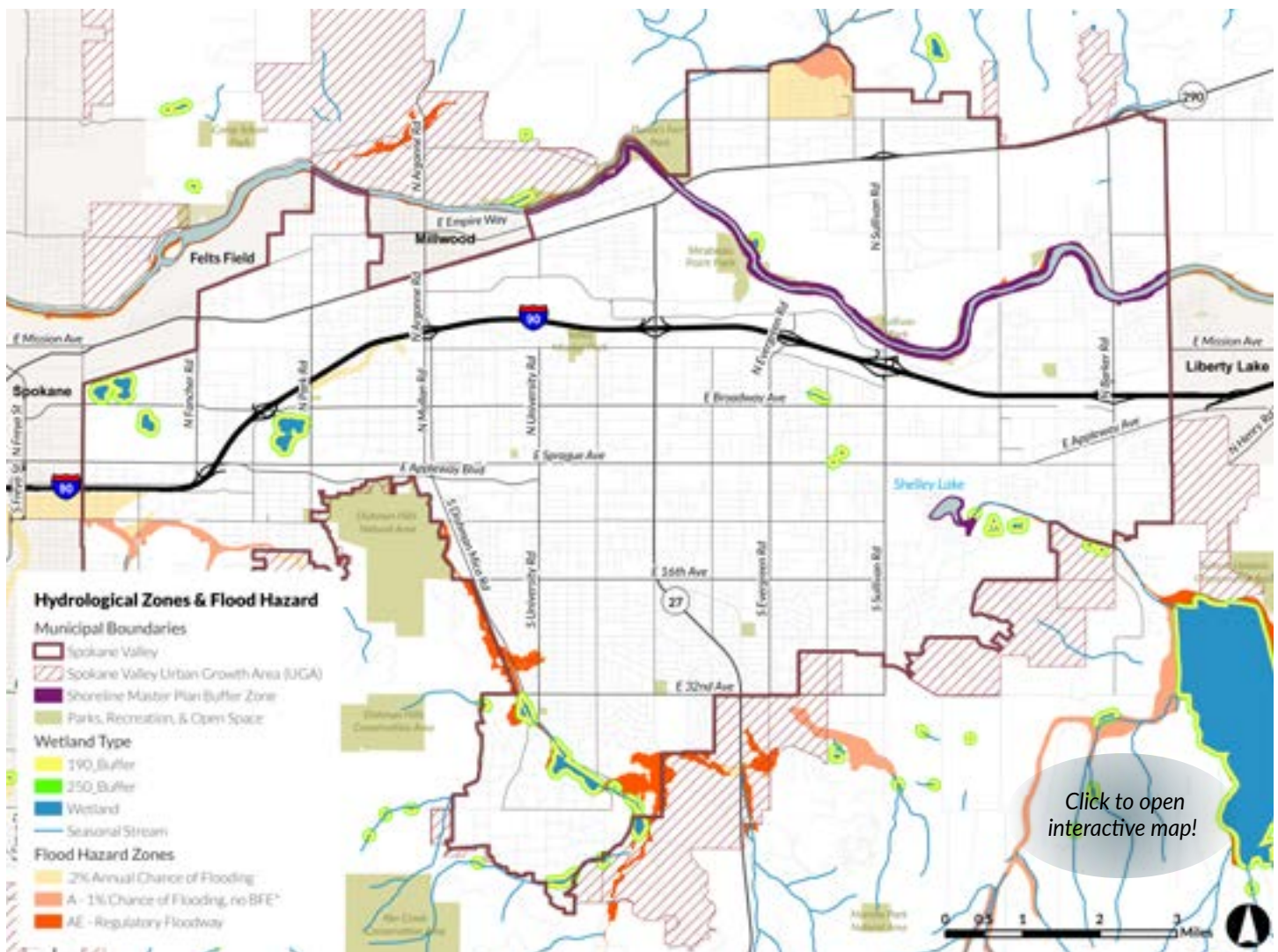
insects, and occasionally fish. Most wetlands within the City are associated with streams, Shelley Lake, or historical mining. They tend to be most affected by runoff from adjacent roadways and developed residential and commercial lands.

Wetland quality is assessed by a wetland rating system developed by the Washington State Department of Ecology in 2004. In planning for development in or near wetlands, the City strives to ensure that the critical functions of wetlands are not impacted, or, if impacts cannot be avoided, that they are compensated for elsewhere as part of the development project.

FREQUENTLY FLOODED AREAS

Frequently flooded areas are lands in the floodplain subject to a one-percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year. These areas include, but are not limited to, streams, rivers, lakes, sink areas, major natural drainageways, and wetlands. They are natural physical features of a watershed that play an important role in stormwater storage and disposal. Maintenance of the natural function of these areas protects residences, structures, and infrastructure and reduces the need to construct flood control facilities. These areas are designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as the 100-year floodplain and are shown in Figure 49. The City supports improved modeling of floodplains and floodways that minimize constraints on affected land uses. The City actively works to facilitate floodplain mapping updates. The City regulates floodplain development in accordance with chapter 21.30 SVMC Floodplain Regulations. Any development on a parcel located within a special flood hazard area requires a floodplain permit.   Areas with known floodplain issues include Forker Draw and the Glenrose drainage area. Spokane County is actively working to reduce flooding in the Glenrose Watershed, which presents an opportunity for coordinated flood hazard reduction.

SURFACE WATER

Water quality and quantity influences the domestic, economic, and recreational quality, and maintains the natural environments of Spokane Valley. Historically, clean water has been taken for granted. As growth and development have increased, so have problems associated with maintaining water quality and quantity. Industry, business, agriculture, commercial, and residential development all contribute to reduced water quality and quantity. To ensure that water quality and storage capacity are maintained as the City continues to grow and develop, a comprehensive approach must be taken to ensure future water quality and quantity.

Spokane Valley has a limited number of surface water bodies, which include the Spokane River and Shelley Lake. The Spokane River provides the region with significant economic, recreation, wildlife habitat, and aesthetic value. The Spokane River is included in the State's "303d" inventory as having impaired water quality for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), 2,3,7,8-Tetrachlorod-ibenzo-p-dioxin, lead, and zinc within Spokane Valley. To address these issues, the Washington Department of Ecology and other agencies have ongoing water quality improvement projects in the Spokane River, and the Spokane River Regional Toxics Task Force was established in January 2012. There are currently Total Maximum Daily Load projects for dissolved oxygens, dissolved metals, and PCBs.

The use of the Spokane River as a receiving water for sewage effluent discharges and stormwater runoff makes it an important resource for waste assimilation. The increased impervious area resulting from development changes the amount and the quality of runoff water. If left unmanaged, discharges of stormwater can cause flooding and water quality degradation, especially in water bodies like the Spokane River that are already impaired.

Long-term solutions to stormwater problems require creative problem solving on a case-by-case basis. In areas where development has already occurred, much of the natural stormwater system may be altered so that it no longer functions effectively. In these areas, stormwater regulations should target redevelopment, voluntary treatment enhancements, wetland conservation, and capital improvements in City treatment facilities. In areas where wetlands are filled or natural drainageways are altered, the cost of replacing natural water quality treatment functions with engineered stormwater treatment facilities can be substantial. In currently developing areas where stormwater disposal has not yet become a problem, it is important to preserve the natural drainageways and pervious characteristics of the landscape to prevent problems from occurring as a result of future development.

SHORELINES

Waters with a mean annual flow of greater than 20 cubic feet per second (in the case of flowing water) or an area greater than 20 acres (in the case of standing water) are considered Shorelines of the State and are subject to the Shoreline Management Act (SMA). Within the City, the Spokane River and Shelley Lake are the only two Shorelines of the State managed under the City of Spokane Valley Shoreline Master Program (SMP). The extent of SMP jurisdiction includes the body of water together with an adjacent strip

of land 200 feet wide, measured landward from the ordinary high water mark (common high water line of stream or lake). Note that other waters within the City, including Saltese Creek and Chester Creek, although not regulated under the City's SMP, are important water resources and are protected under the City's CAO regulations as fish and wildlife habitat. The SMP also protects any additional critical areas within shoreline areas. This Comprehensive Plan does not propose changes to the SMP.

The GMA (RCW 36.70A.480) requires that cities include the goals and policies of the adopted SMP in the Comprehensive Plan. The City's comprehensive SMP update was approved by the Department of Ecology in August 2015. The update revised the existing shoreline program, including the goals, policies, regulations, shoreline environment designations (SEDs), administrative procedures, and definitions. Due to the length of the SMP goals and policies, they are adopted by reference in the Comprehensive Plan and can be viewed on the Department of Ecology's website. However, this section describes the overarching goal of the SMA, and the SEDs in an effort to summarize the plan for managing the City's shorelines.

The overarching goal of the SMA is to prevent the inherent harm in uncoordinated and piecemeal development of the state's shorelines. Shorelines are among the most ecologically productive and fragile of environments in the City. The intent of the City's SMP is to foster reasonable and appropriate use of the shorelines while protecting their natural character, preserving the ecology and resources, improving public access, and increasing recreational opportunities for the public.

The SEDs developed for the SMP are based on existing land use patterns, the biological and physical character of the shoreline, and the goals and aspirations of the City. SEDs are analogous to zoning designations for areas within the shoreline jurisdiction. SEDs provide a uniform basis for applying policies and use regulations within each designation, and SEDs are intended to encourage appropriate uses and activities while providing for protection and restoration of shoreline ecological functions. It is anticipated that reasonable standards, restrictions, and prohibitions on shoreline developments will be instituted as shoreline regulations. This is necessary so that shoreline development will reasonably protect existing uses and shoreline character and ensure "no net loss" of shoreline ecological functions is achieved. Characteristics and general management policies for each of the designations can be found in the SMP.

Spokane Valley is unique in its application of shoreline regulations with regard

to riparian setbacks. Rather than applying generic shoreline setback widths as other cities have done, riparian setbacks in Spokane Valley are based on existing or potential high-quality shoreline resources that should be conserved to ensure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions.

AQUIFER RECHARGE AREAS

The SVRP Aquifer supplies potable water to most of the residents of Spokane County. The aquifer and associated recharge areas underlie the entire City of Spokane Valley. The aquifer begins in northern Idaho between Spirit Lake and the south end of Lake Pend Oreille. The aquifer flows south and west under Spokane Valley and downtown Spokane. The aquifer then turns north and discharges into the Little Spokane River. Aquifer deposits range from 150 feet to more than 600 feet in depth.

Due to concerns regarding the maintenance of water quality of the aquifer, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency designated the SVRP Aquifer a "Sole Source Aquifer" in 1978. The aquifer was only the second in the nation to receive such a designation. Although the aquifer provides high quality drinking water, it is highly susceptible to contamination due to the underlying geology of the area, which consists of sandy, gravelly glacial outwash that allows surface water to infiltrate rapidly. The aquifer is dynamic, with close to one billion gallons of water flowing into and out of the system each day. The Spokane River provides about 49% of the aquifer inflow and 59% of the aquifer outflow. The Spokane River stretch through Spokane Valley is primarily a gaining reach, where the river gains water from the aquifer.

Since 1977, 50 monitoring wells in Washington and 28 wells in Idaho have been installed to monitor the impacts of land surface activities over the aquifer. The primary concern in the aquifer has been nitrate, which may cause health problems above certain levels in drinking water. Septic systems, fertilizer, and stormwater are typically major contributors to elevated nitrate levels in the aquifer. Ongoing programs, including stormwater management and installation of sewers, have decreased nitrate levels in the aquifer. Monitoring efforts indicate that contaminants have reached the aquifer; however, the aquifer water quality remains very good.[1]
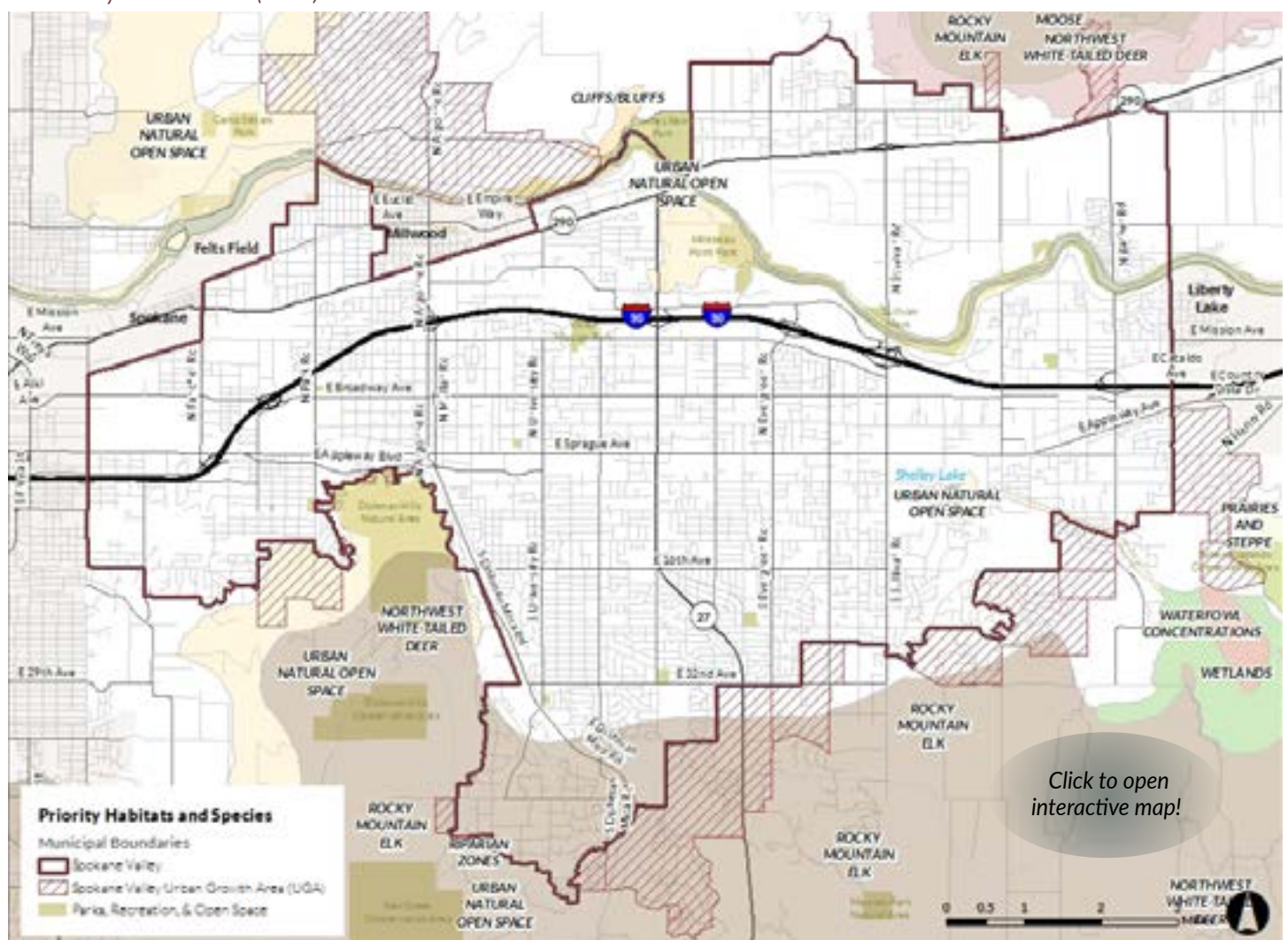
FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

Fishing and the observation of wildlife are valued recreational activities that contribute to the local economy and quality of life in Spokane Valley. Priority fish and wildlife habitat areas, as designated by the Washington Department

of Fish and Wildlife (Figure 52), are considered critical areas and are necessary for both native resident and seasonal migratory animal species. Habitat conservation areas may include open areas with species richness, breeding habitat, winter range, migration corridors, and habitats that are of limited availability or high vulnerability to alteration, such as cliffs, talus, and wetlands. Chester Creek and Saltese Creek do not fall within the state's shoreline jurisdiction, but they contain valuable riparian habitat that provides shade, food, and cover for fish and wildlife species. The Washington State Department of Natural Resources Water Typing maps identify these streams as containing fish. These streams, and other unnamed drainages generally infiltrate into the ground before reaching the Spokane River above ground. This means that they

Figure 52. Priority Species and Habitat Areas

Sources: City of Spokane Valley (2016); Washington Department of FIsh and Wildlife; Community Attributes Inc. (2016)

provide important aquifer recharge functions and that, if contaminated, they could contaminate the aquifer.

Urban landscaping, parks, and open spaces supplement fish and wildlife habitat areas by providing cover, food, or nest areas for a wide variety of wildlife. The loss of natural wildlife habitat to urban development can be partially offset by landscaping that includes a variety of native plants that provide food and shelter for wildlife.

GEOLOGICALLY HAZARDOUS AREAS

Geologically hazardous areas are areas that because of their susceptibility to erosion, sliding, earthquakes, or other geological events are not suited for development. Geologically hazardous areas include both erosion and landslide hazard areas where one or more of the following exist:

- A slope of 25% or greater.

- Soils identified by the Natural Resource Conservation Service as having a severe potential for erosion.

- Hydraulic factors such as existing on-site surface and groundwater or changes in hydraulic factors caused by proposals that create a severe potential for erosion or landslide hazard.

- Areas that historically have been prone to landslide, which include active fault lines, areas adjacent to lakes, streams, springs, or any one of the following geologic formations: alluvium, landslide deposit, or Latah formation.

- Areas of uncompacted fill.

- Areas that are unstable as a result of rapid stream or stream bank erosion.

Figure 53 depicts the location of geologically hazardous areas within and adjacent to Spokane Valley.

AIR QUALITY

Air quality in the Spokane Valley region is affected by both human and natural causes. Human activities, including automobile use, wood stove use, and industrial and agricultural operations generate airborne substances that can affect air quality. In addition, the entire region has been affected substantially by windblown dust from the central portion of the state. The Spokane Valley

Figure 53. Map of Geological Hazards

Sources: City of Spokane Valley (2016); Community Attributes Inc. (2016)
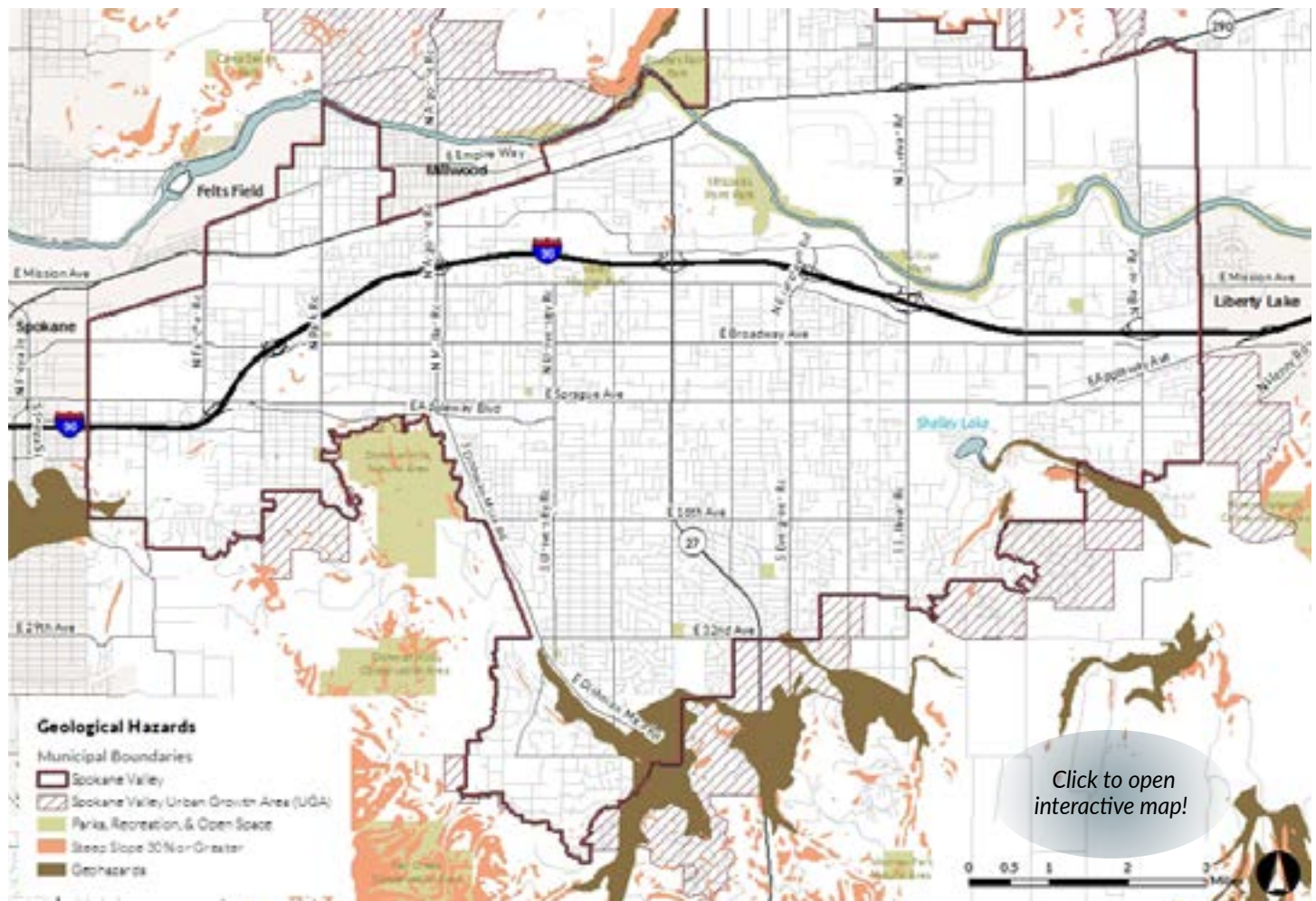
is also a natural basin in which air pollution is trapped and concentrated by an occasional temperature inversion (a situation in which lighter warm air overlies heavier cool air).

A variety of air pollution control strategies have been employed across the region. The strategies include auto emission inspections, restrictions on open burning, wood stove certification and restriction on wood stove use when pollution levels are high, oxygenated fuels for cars, road paving, use of chemical deicers as an alternative to road sanding, and others. These measures combined with cleaner-burning cars have significantly improved the region's air quality. However, traffic volumes continue to increase, which could lead to degradation of air quality in the future.

Air quality is inextricably linked to land use and transportation patterns. The

challenge presented to the region is to balance land use, transportation, and air quality in such a way that the community can continue to grow and prosper without compromising quality of life.

Approach to the Natural Resources Element

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The primary challenge for Spokane Valley is to protect the City's natural environment while allowing for human use and economic growth. Without established codes and policies for the designation and protection of important natural resource areas, developers may not see the benefit of protecting natural resources, incorporating LID measures, and preserving valuable ecological functions such as water storage and treatment. Challenges specific to the City include:

- Maintaining water quality and flows in the Spokane River.

- Preventing contamination of the City's high quality groundwater and providing for adequate aquifer recharge.

- Managing stormwater to minimize flooding and the impairment of surface waters.

- Ensuring adequate protection of natural resources while supporting new development.

- Developing resource conservation plans based on limited or inaccurate natural resource inventory data layers.

- Maintaining air quality as the population increases.

Managing Mineral Resource Lands

Due to the urban development that has occurred within the City adjacent to the existing mines and the wide availability of the mineral resource outside of the City, the City has determined to not designate mineral resource lands at this time. However, it is a priority of the City to continue to allow the existing mines to continue to operate within their existing property, as such use has occurred historically without negatively impacting surrounding industrial uses and it contributes to the City's economy.

Conservation of Resources

Conservation land uses provide opportunities to benefit both humans and fish and wildlife. For example, protecting wetlands and natural habitats will benefit fish and wildlife as well as human recreational opportunities. Managing stormwater runoff, aquifer recharge areas, and geologically hazardous areas will also help reduce the potential for property damage and protect drinking water quality. A protected and healthy natural environment can also attract new businesses by offering desirable aesthetics and recreation opportunities. Specific opportunities include:

- Partnering with county and state government partners to pool watershed and stormwater planning resources.

- Mineral resources are sufficiently abundant within the region such that the industry can continue to prosper within the City without the need to designate lands solely for this land use.

- The City has the opportunity to develop updated data inventory layers, including wetland and stream mapping, and fish presence assessments.

- Planning for habitat conservation and restoration in public parks and open spaces can improve aesthetics and habitat quality for local native wildlife.

- Improved floodplain delineation mapping may free up developable land uses that are no longer constrained by the cost of floodplain insurance.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Leveraging Natural Assets

The community and economic development priorities can be strategically linked to natural environment protections. A healthy, robust natural environment can improve the quality of life, which will attract new businesses and residents. Development should not be allowed to encroach into critical areas, and effective measures should be encouraged to minimize impacts to water quality and quantity.

BEST PRACTICES

Incorporating Stormwater Best Management Practices

Incorporating best management practices in stormwater is cost effective and good for water and habitat quality. In the upcoming years, local codes and ordinances will need to incorporate these practices, including low impact development measures, in order to receive a municipal stormwater permit from the Department of Ecology.

Mineral resource land designation

The City has determined to not designate mineral resource lands at this time. The City will continue to allow the existing mines to operate within their existing property through development regulations.