

# Post Falls City Center Plan

*City of Post Falls & City of Post Falls Urban Renewal Agency*



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## City Center Plan

The Post Falls City Center Plan is a comprehensive revitalization strategy for the historic center of Post Falls. The Plan considers a full range of community development issues including transportation, character and identity, economic reinvestment, business vitality, and other topics. The City Center Plan is grounded in a community based vision statement and a series of goals established through an intensive outreach effort during the winter and spring of 2004. The Plan also represents a synthesis of a series of alternatives that were created to explore a full range of potential options for achieving the City Center Plan. The Plan should be used as a blueprint for future project actions in the City Center District, by the City of Post Falls, the Post Falls Urban Renewal Agency, and other community and civic agencies working to improve Post Falls. The Plan sets out a coordinated, implementable strategy to reach residents’ desires for the future of the City Center.

The City Center Plan is summarized in three general areas: 1.) General Land Use Pattern & Project Actions; 2.) Transportation and Circulation Actions, and 3.) Design and Incentive Overlay Districts.

For reference the community-based Vision Statement and City Center Goals are listed below. For further information, see Chapter 2. Community Participation for full documentation of the Community Participation Process.

## City Center Plan Actions

The Post Falls City Center Plan is intended for implementation. The Plan outlines clear and decisive actions towards the Vision for the Post Falls City Center. To ensure that the plan leads to action, the Plan includes a list of 25 specific project and actions. These actions will guide the execution of the City Center Plan. Each action is detailed on pages 10 - 30 of this section.

### Concept Level Actions

Each of the 25 actions detailed in the City Center Plan is designed to a conceptual level. Higher priority actions are brought to a higher level of detail. It is important to note that final design for actions would occur at a future time. The current level of design is intended to sketch the overall intention and character of each step.

### Prioritization of Actions

General priorities are given to each action based on steering committee feedback and public participation at a public meeting. Actions are ordered according to the prioritization they received, with higher priority projects listed earlier in the list. Top priority actions are catalyst actions that can help to bring about positive change and spur implementation of City Center goals.

### Timeline For Action

The timeline for each City Center action does not necessarily follow the prioritization of actions on a step-by-step basis. Due to differing levels of complexity and funding availability, some actions will be easier to accomplish during a short timeframe than others. Approximate timelines for future actions are provided along with Plan actions.

### Estimated Costs & Potential Funding for Actions

The Plan identifies an approximate range of estimated costs for top-priority actions. Estimated costs are general and are considered the total cost of The Action, or “project”. The estimated cost consists of “hard costs” which are the costs attributed directly to construction contract(s) and “soft costs” which are ancillary costs for such items as taxes, fees, contingencies, and administration directly associated with the project. Estimated costs are calculated in 2006 dollars since projections past two years are difficult to predict due to uncertainties in the construction market. Estimated costs provided are intended to provide a measure for funding of projects and actions. Where appropriate, potential funding sources are suggested.

### City Center Vision Statement

The city center district is the city’s heritage center, the focus of Post Falls identity, and is distinctive in character, look and feel. The district celebrates and reconnects with Post Falls’ heritage as a historic mill and railroad town. The city center fully capitalizes on wonderful natural resources in close proximity to downtown including the Spokane River, Post Falls, and Q’emiln Park. A network of safe, pleasant pedestrian connections are in place, linking key landmarks and attractions, and these connections are clearly marked and understood. Civic, cultural, and business attractions draw both I-90 travelers and Post Falls residents into the area. A safe, livable residential core is in place especially in the southern part of the district. The residential core provides basic support for a mix of retail shops, small offices and services nearby, that are also available to regional patrons as well. Because of the falls, natural character and parks, the Post Falls city center is a great place to live, work, recreate, do business and visit.

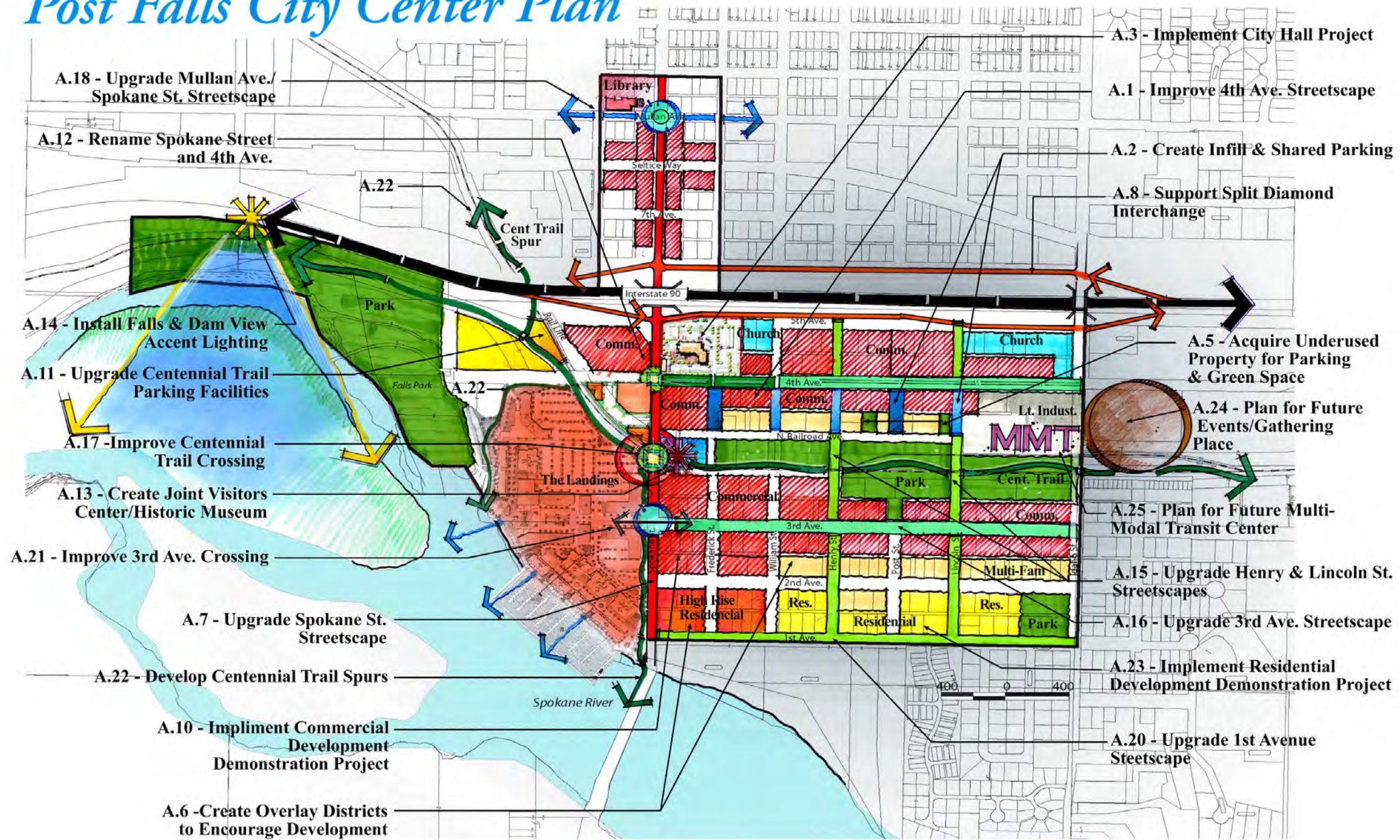
### City Center Plan Goals

1. Promote a Distinct Post Falls Identity
2. Reconnect with Post Falls History and Heritage
3. Capitalize on Natural Character - The River, The Falls and the Landscape
4. Make Pedestrian Friendly Connections
5. Create and Strengthen City Center Attractions
6. Promote a Vibrant Mix of Infill Developments and Uses
7. Improve Transportation Choices



# City Center Plan: General Land Use & Project Actions

## Post Falls City Center Plan





## General Land Use & Project Actions: Summary

### Overall Organization

The General Land Use & Capital Projects figure at left illustrates a desired future organization in the City Center District. The pattern reflects the Vision Statement for an area that has a unique identity. (See Vision Statement Section II Community Participation). A number of specific projects and actions lead to the overall plan displayed at left. Below, several overarching concepts are highlighted.

### Vibrant Mixed Use Corridors - 4th Ave. / 3rd Ave. / Spokane St.

The City Center Plan identifies 4th Avenue, 3rd Avenue and Spokane St. as the City Center's, lively mixed-use commercial streets or boulevards. These key corridors are pedestrian friendly, they are urban in character and they create a sense of place. Areas shaded Red for commercial in the figure at left represent areas where a lively mix of businesses, residences, and shops are encouraged. Buildings may be taller and denser than what has been the norm in Post Falls to date. The ground floors of these businesses all have street-related activities at ground level. 3rd Avenue, 4th Avenue and Spokane St. along with a completed Post Falls Landing are the commercial corridors that make the city center a destination.

### Civic and Community Focus

The City Center Plan strengthens the civic and community focus in the district, establishing a distinct and identifiable center for the City as a whole. A number of important Plan elements support an increased Civic and Community Focus in the City Center. These include: implementation of the City Hall project, actively retaining religious institutions in the City Center, and pursuing implementation of a combined visitor center and historic museum. These areas and locations colored in blue in the figure at left indicate enhancement of civic / community focus in the City Center. Additionally, identity is also strengthened by providing better views of and access to the Spokane River, and better views of the falls themselves, the center of Post Falls identity, and initial impetus to the city's creation.

### Quality Residential District With Connection to the River

The City Center Plan seeks to enhance the southern part of the district as a high quality residential area that takes full advantage of its close proximity to the Spokane River and nearby natural resources. The areas denoted in yellow and orange in the figure at left indicate areas for increased residential investment. In future years these areas may be appropriate for denser, townhome or midrise development. These types of housing could take advantage of potential views over the Spokane River, continue the momentum of Post Falls Landing, and bring a more sizeable residential community to anchor the City Center District.

### Reconnecting With History and Enhancing Identity

A number of the actions in the Post Falls City Center Plan seek to enhance a center of identity for the City as a whole. An important part of this is to reconnect with the history that made this area the original center and core of Post Falls. Project actions to enhance identity and connection to history include, tree pruning / removal and accent lighting to enhance the visual presence of Post Falls and the historic Washington Water Power Bridge from Interstate 90. Additionally, the creation of a combined historic museum and visitor center in the core of the City Center brings a stronger historical presence and center for interpretation of history in Post Falls.

### Linking Network of Pedestrian and Green Connections

The City Center Plan provides opportunities for recreation and safe connections for pedestrians. Enhancing and linking together the district's green spaces and access to natural resources is an important part of this strategy. The figure at left identifies a green space corridor running along the center of the district paralleling the railway line. Landscaping and attention to both public and privately owned parcels in this corridor will help 'knit together' a green space ribbon that ties the district to the Centennial Trail. Green spaces can be mixed with public parking lots in this corridor. Other improved green and pedestrian connections include extensive sidewalk and streetscape upgrades on multiple streets (See Transportation pg. 4). An improved, lighted pedestrian walkway across the Spokane St. Bridge to Q'emlin Park, and improved spurs from the Centennial Trail are also suggested.



See Action 3 - Implement City Hall Project (pg. 13)



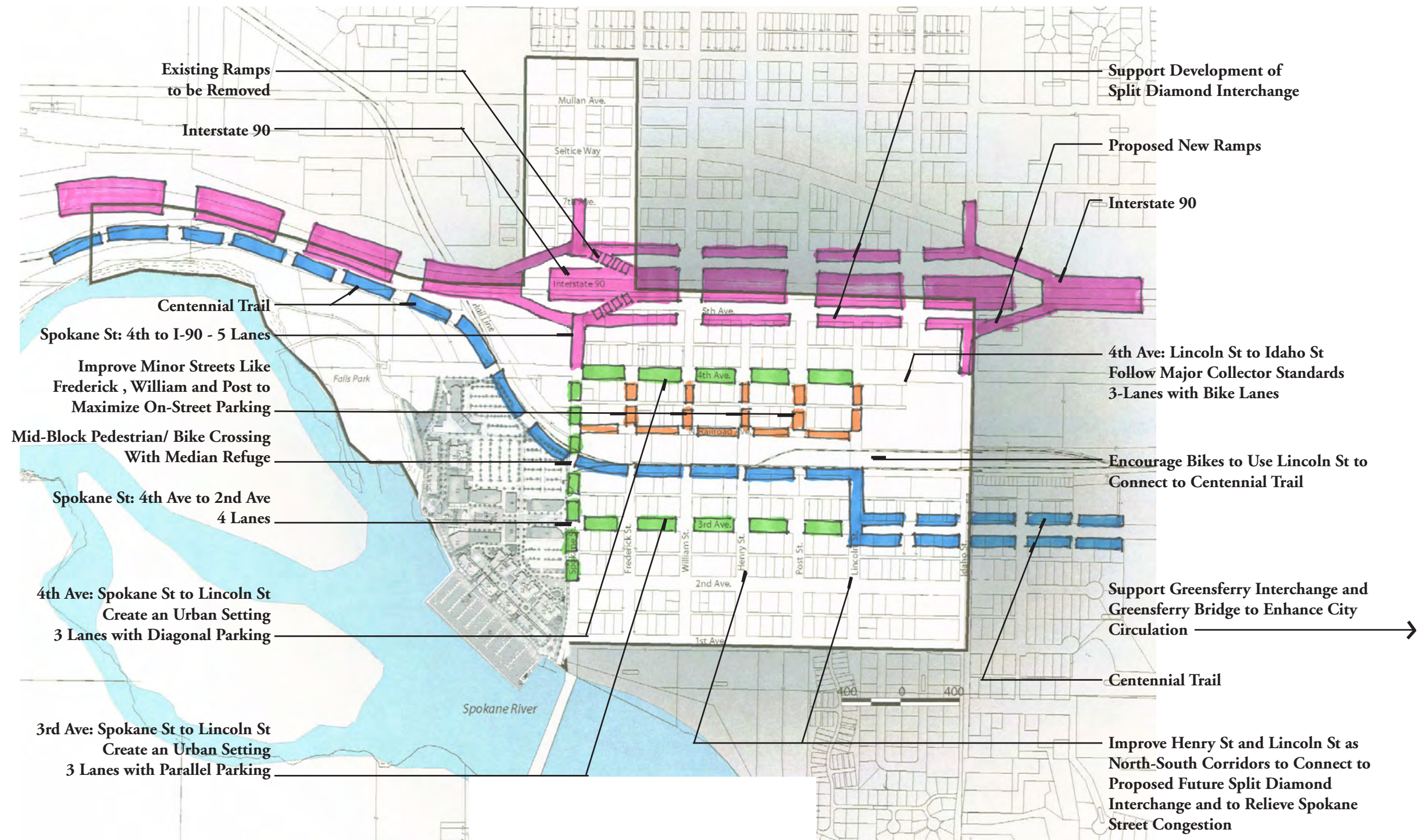
See Action 10 - Commercial Demonstration Project (pg. 25)



See Action 13 - Historic Museum / Visitor Center (pg. 26)



# City Center Plan: Transportation & Circulation





## Transportation & Circulation / Streetscape: Summary

The figure on page 4 depicts the transportation and circulation actions envisioned in the Post Falls City Center Plan. The City Center Plan Vision Statement and Goals are the basis for the Transportation and Circulation Plan. The proposed Transportation & Circulation strategy meets City Center goals since implementation of the strategy would enforce a strong identity, create pedestrian friendly connections, and improve transportation and choices. Transportation and Circulation Actions integrate with Land Use and Project Actions suggested for the plan.

### A Destination District

It is crucial to note that the City Center Plan views the study area as a destination district, not a traffic through-route. This means that in certain cases roadway configurations and streetscapes are meant to calm traffic and allow visitors to travel at a speed where they can browse and interact with the businesses and activities taking place in the City Center District. A balance between the need for efficient vehicular circulation and the desire to create a destination City Center district is suggested in streetscape configurations for Spokane St., 4th Ave., and 3rd Ave.

### 'Urban Streets' and 'Green Streets'

An important concept for the pattern of overall Streetscape upgrades is the mixing of an urban city center with vibrant mixed-use streets and quieter small town residential or heritage streets. Rather than a 'one size fits all solution' the City Center Plan recommends that commercial corridors of 4th Ave., Spokane St., and 3rd Ave. be different from north-south residential 'green' streets. The technique for how stormwater is handled, the distance from building frontage to the street edge, and the character of landscape plantings help form this difference. On urban mixed-use streets, the street edge is continuous, with a hard edge. On residential streets, the street edge is soft with stormwater swales and more extensive plantings.

### Meeting Regional Transportation Needs

Transportation and Circulation recommendations in the City Center Plan support regional and citywide circulation and transportation needs. As illustrated in the Circulation and Street Improvement Plan, the plan:

- Supports implementation of Split Diamond Interchange for expanded I-90 access between Spokane Street and Idaho Street. Convert 5<sup>th</sup> as one-way eastbound. 6<sup>th</sup> as one-way west bound. This action is primarily intended to ease east / west traffic flow for the City Center as a whole, but will have important local impacts in the City Center District with a new 5th Ave. frontage road.
- Encourages development of a full interchange on I-90 at Greensferry plus a future bridge across the river at Greensferry. This would improve City Center circulation.
- Recommends signalized intersections at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue & Spokane Street, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue & Spokane Street.
- Suggests Channelized regional bicycle traffic to the Centennial Trail, at Lincoln Street.

### Aggressive Streetscape Improvements

The City Center Plan strives for an aggressive program of Streetscape and roadway improvements. Major streetscape upgrades are recommended for 4th Ave. and Spokane St., and later 3rd Ave. Henry and Lincoln Streets as denoted in the figure at left. Streetscape upgrades are intended to improve circulation and traffic flow, upgrade neglected and deficient roadway surfaces, and improve the

character of the City Center to make it a more attractive location in which to invest or live. The streetscape improvement program takes advantage of the existing wide Rights - of - Ways to provide more safe and clear parking and wider sidewalks. Non-motorized circulation is also enhanced, with a safer and more attractive Centennial Trail crossing of Spokane Street. As illustrated in the Circulation and Street Improvement Plan, the plan:

- Creates a Spokane Street boulevard with center landscape medians as traffic calming enhancements. Spokane Street could be three lanes with parallel parking on both sides, or 4 lanes with parallel parking on the east side per The Landing peak entry traffic demands.
- Improves 4<sup>th</sup> Street from Spokane to Lincoln Street as a 3-lane section with diagonal parking on both sides, plus 12' wide sidewalks. Center landscape medians could be added where there are no conflicts with access.
- Improves 4<sup>th</sup> Street from Lincoln to Idaho per City Major Collection Standard with bike lanes. Designate bike lanes to use Lincoln to access Centennial Trail
- Adds a mid-block pedestrian and bike crossing on Spokane Street for Centennial Trail, employing landscaped refuge medians.

### Unified Palette of Streetscape Fixtures & Furniture

A unified palette of streetscape fixtures and furniture that is unique to the City Center District should be adopted that will provide standards for future development, including new traffic signals and signage. This unified palette will play an important role in strengthening Post Falls identity and character and will signal entry into a distinct section of Post Falls.

### Maximize On-Street Parking in the City Center

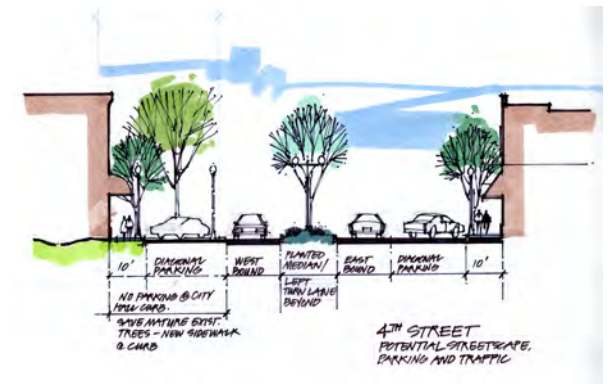
The availability of parking is an important consideration for business and residential viability in any City Center. The transportation and circulation element of the City Center Plan recommends an increase to the amount of publicly available parking in the City Center. As noted in the figure at left, minor side streets like Frederick, William, and Post between 4<sup>th</sup> and Railroad are to be improved to maximize on-street parking such as infill diagonal parking. On-street parking is also recommended for 4th Ave., and Spokane St. The addition of free public parking also supports the Land Use Regulation action to reduce the amount of parking that must be provided within private developments. In this way, transportation and land use recommendations reinforce one another.

### Increase Walkability and Pedestrian Safety through Traffic Calming

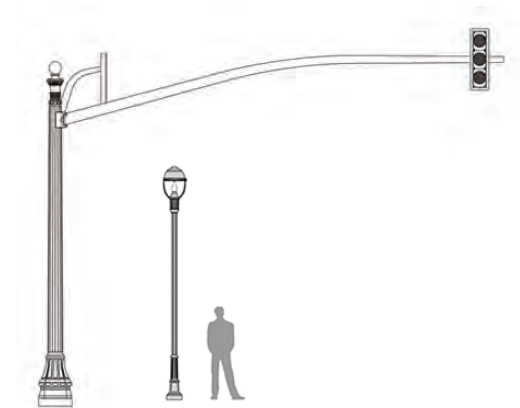
Transportation Improvements will serve to slow traffic down through the downtown area in several ways as illustrated in the Circulation and Street Improvement Plan and as described below:

- Improve Henry Street and Lincoln Street as north-south corridors to enhance circulation, and as an alternate to Spokane Street. In this way the historic grid pattern of development can be used to ease traffic congestion.
- Add pedestrian bulb outs at improved streets and intersections where possible, plus pedestrian scale architectural illumination.

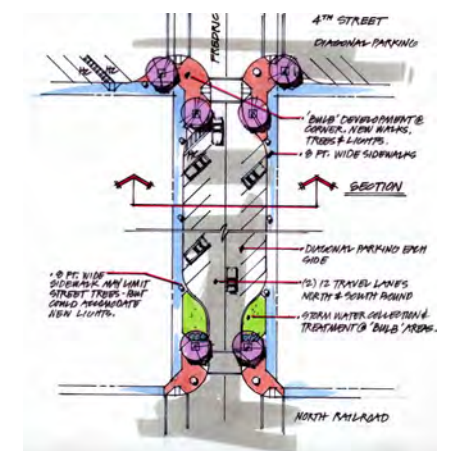
In addition, the plan calls to develop alternate street drainage facilities to allow increased density of on-street parking in key areas of the City Center. The City Community Development Department would like to evaluate impacts of these recommended city center street concepts on the overall Post Falls Transportation Plan.



See Action 1 - 4th Ave. Streetscape Upgrade (pg. 10)



See Action 9 - Unique Fixtures & Signage (pg. 24)



See Action 2 - Infill & Shared Parking (pg. 12)



# City Center Plan: Regulatory & Incentive Overlays

Potential Regulatory and Incentive Overlays are depicted in Brown and Red on the figure at right.

## CC - C: City Center

### Commercial Investment Overlay

A regulatory and incentive overlay zone to encourage commercial mixed-use development within the primary City Center commercial corridors: 4th Ave., 3rd Ave., and Spokane St. The overlay seeks to increase commercial investment, and provides design guidelines in keeping with the vision for the Post Falls City Center.

## CC - R: City Center

### Residential Investment Overlay

A regulatory and incentive overlay zone to encourage medium density residential development within the area envisioned as a high quality City Center Residential district: along 1st Ave. and 2nd Ave. The overlay seeks to increase residential investment, and provides design guidelines in keeping with the vision for the Post Falls City Center.

## CC - F: City Center

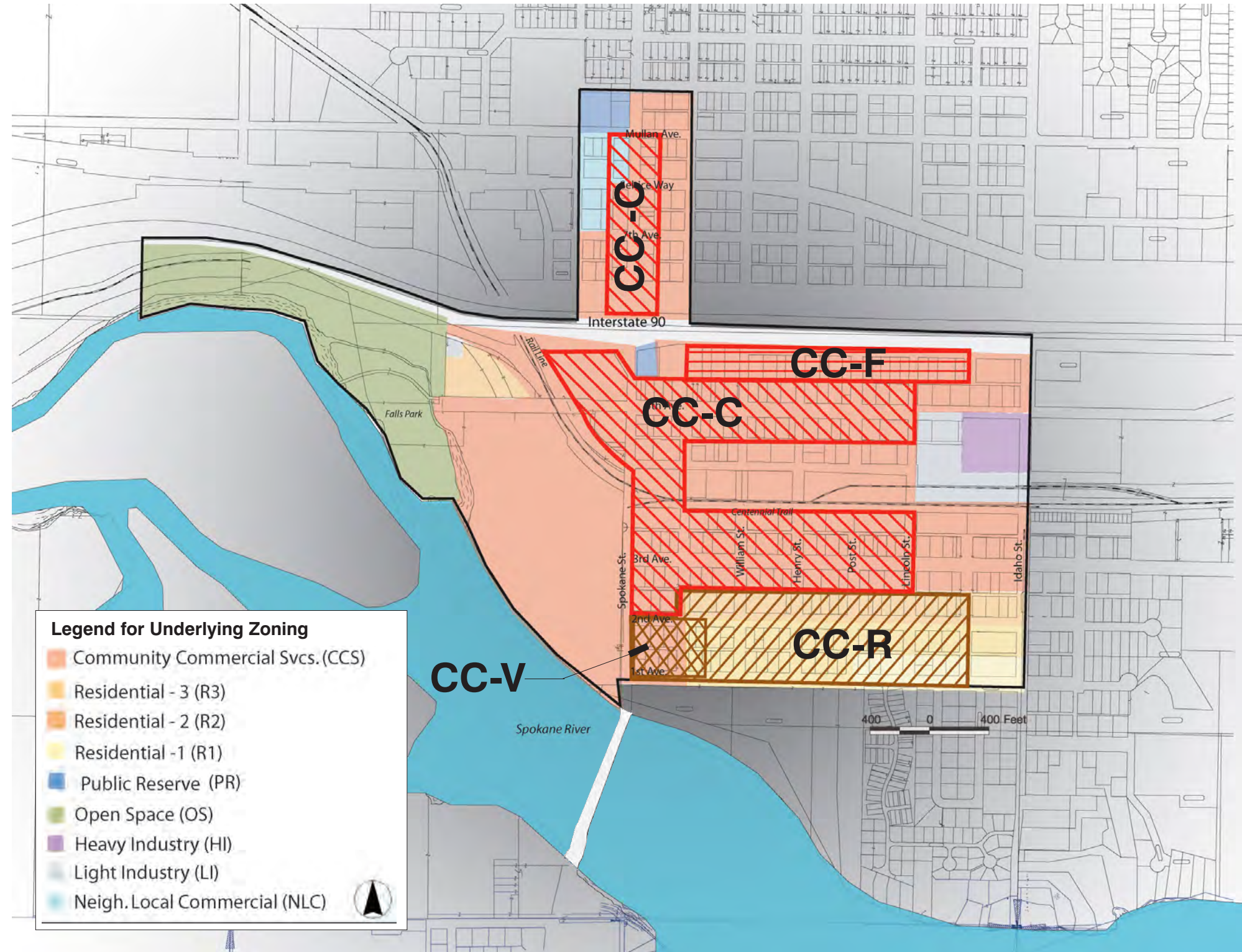
### Freeway Commercial Overlay

The Freeway Commercial Overlay zone responds directly to the potential split diamond interchange project. The overlay seeks to control the visual character of the edge of the City Center district.

## CC - V: City Center

### Residential View Overlay

The Residential View Overlay seeks to encourage development that is related to the Spokane River and takes full advantage of views over the water.





## Regulatory & Incentive Overlays: Summary

The figure at left depicts a set of potential land use regulatory and incentive overlays that can be added to the Post Falls zoning code to help achieve the desired results of the City Center Plan. An overlay zone applies special or unique rules to a target area. Overlay zones may be one of the most appropriate methods to create a unique and special focus in the Post Falls City Center.

The recommended overlays suggest a balance of design considerations (design guidelines) with incentives and bonuses for new development. Potential overlays are marked by the hatched areas in red and brown on the figure at left. Overlays can help to create an architectural character and style that is appropriate for a livable Post Falls urban core, and they can also encourage new investment. Overlays can also help to encourage sustainable site design and building practices. Overlay zones would not replace the base zoning (illustrated by colored areas in figure at left) but would add another layer of incentive or regulation on top. It is the suggestion of the City Center Plan that overlay regulations be structured so that quality design and architectural character in new development is rewarded with land use bonuses. This can make new construction more economically viable for developers. Specific suggestions for how both outcomes can be accomplished are detailed in Action 6.

### Supporting Other Plan Actions

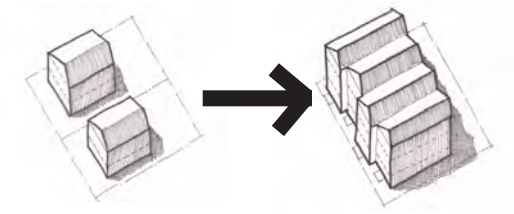
It is important to note that suggested Incentive and Overlay districts support both the transportation element and general land use elements of the City Center plan illustrated on previous pages. The Commercial Investment Overlay zone, for example, is positioned along 4th Ave., Spokane St., and 3rd Ave, - the same streets envisioned for streetscape upgrades and vibrant mixed use development. The Residential Investment Overlay is positioned to support the goal of quality residential development in the southern portion of the district. A targeted Freeway Commercial Overlay zone is suggested specifically to address the impacts of the potential split diamond interchange.

### Balancing Incentive & Regulation

City Center overlay zones should balance development incentives and regulations. On the one hand, high quality design features that reflect Post Falls' heritage as a mill and railroad town are sought - which are most likely to be achieved through development regulations for quality design. On the other hand, increased investment and infill development are sought - which are most likely to be achieved through relaxation of regulations such as allowance of height increases, relaxed parking requirements, bonuses for sustainable design and streetscape upgrades, increased density, and reduced development fees / faster processing. Careful writing of overlays can allow for a system where development incentives are linked to quality design standards. In this way a developer would receive defined 'bonuses' on a City Center project, but only upon the condition that the development uphold specific quality design standards. These topics are detailed in the discussion of Action 6.

### Recommendations - Not Final Code Revisions

The City Center Plan makes suggestions for the type and structure of overlay zones that could potentially be added to the Post Falls zoning code. The plan does not provide specific language or regulations that can be incorporated directly into code. Rather, additional study, stakeholder coordination and research would be required to transform the suggestions within the City Center Plan into code.



See Action 6- Residential Investment Overlay (pg. 20)



See Action 6- Design Principles (pg. 18)

# City Center Plan: Action Table

Action	Description	Priority	Implementation Timeline	Estimated Costs (Low)	Estimated Costs (High)	Responsible Party	Potential Funding
1	<b>Improve 4th Ave. Streetscape</b> - Spokane St. to Idaho St.. Resurfacing, nodal stormwater treatment system, sidewalks, plantings, fixtures/furniture & possibly rename to 'Post Falls Boulevard' per Action 12.	High	2006- 2008	Project 1.1 \$575,000; Project 1.2 \$600,000; Project 1.3 \$700,000 Total \$1,875,000		URA, CD, City.	CBDG, LID/URA, IDL, EDA, LHTAC
2	<b>Create Infill &amp; Shared Parking</b> - Convert segments of Fredrick, William and Post St. ROW to shared infill parking lot facilities. Work to develop shared off-street parking arrangements through collaboration by part time uses such as community clubs. Shared parking supports future business and potential visitor / historic facility.	High	2006-2008 if combined with Action 1. Otherwise 2009- 2012.			URA, CD, City.	URA, Local Businesses/ Clubs
3	<b>Implement City Hall Project</b> - and piggy back ancillary projects i.e. conversion of Park & Recreation Bldg.	High	2005 - 2008	Total Hard Costs: \$5.8 million; Total Project Costs \$6.8 million		City.	CITY
4	<b>Improve Underground and Stormwater Utilities</b> - Place utility lines underground in association with streetscape upgrade projects where appropriate. Develop nodal system of stormwater treatment.	High	Incremental Project. 2006 - 2020			City, URA.	CDBG
5	<b>Acquire Underused Property for Parking and Green Space</b> - Underused lots in North Railroad corridor. Lots may have future use as green space, can assist in nodal stormwater treatment system, can be future public gathering area, or future transit hub.	High	2009 - 2012	\$9 / Square Foot	\$11 / Square Foot	URA, CD, City.	CITY and/or URA
6	<b>Create Overlay Districts to Encourage Development - Incentive &amp; Regulatory Actions</b> - <i>Design Guidelines</i> - Develop as part of overlay zones, or as freestanding, to help secure grant funding. - <i>Commercial Investment Overlay Zone</i> - Write, and add to city zoning code. Apply to City Center commercial streets, Spokane, 3rd Ave. & 4th Ave. - <i>Residential Investment Overlay Zone</i> - Write and add to city zoning code. Apply to City Center Residential streets, 1st Ave. & 2nd Ave. - <i>City Center Freeway Character Overlay Zone</i> - Write and add to city zoning code. Provision to accommodate split diamond interchange commercial on 5th Ave. within City Center Character. - <i>Apply Overlay to Post Falls Landing</i> - Work with developer to amend PUD for portion of development along Spokane St. Ensure street edge development.	High	2005 - 2006	\$15,000 consultant fee	\$45,000 consultant fee	CD, P&Z, URA.	N/A
7	<b>Upgrade Spokane Street Streetscape</b> - 1st Ave. to 5th Ave., safe crossing nodes at 4th Ave., and Centennial Trail crossing, include center turn lane landscaping, sidewalks, fixtures/furniture & possibly rename to Spokane River Blvd. per Action 12. Pedestrian illumination across bridge to Q'emiln Park.	High	2009 - 2012	Project 7.1 \$550,000; Project 7.2 \$120,000; Project 7.3 \$240,000; Project 7.4 \$175,000; Total: \$1,085,000		URA, CD, City.	CDBG, IDL, Local Businesses
8	<b>Support Split Diamond Interchange</b> - Provide formal endorsement for US-90 Split Diamond Interchange. Maintain Transportation Master Plan levels of service, while applying unique City Center street design standards for a.) Major Collectors, and b.) Residential Streets 'green streets'. Apply to Streetscape Improvements previously identified (A.1, A.7).	High	2005 endorsement. 2006 - 2010 construction	No direct cost.	No direct cost.	URA, City.	N/A
9	<b>Create Unique Signage &amp; Character-</b> Design and create a palette for unique street signs, traffic signal mast arms, and pedestrian lighting and bollards in City Center. Incorporate in conjunction with streetscape projects.	High	Concurrent with 1,2,7.	\$5,000 consultant fee. Or in house no cost.		URA, CD, City.	Enhancement
10	<b>Implement Commercial Development Demonstration Project</b> - URA to purchase underused City Center commercial lot (3rd, 4th, or Spokane St.). Issue Request for Proposal (RFP) to development community for construction according to City Center goals for mixed use commercial development. URA receive repayment of residual value after project completion.	High	2009 - 2012	\$160,000 land cost. Recouped at conclusion of projet. \$8,000 legal / economic study fees.		URA, CD, City.	URA

Key to Codes: URA = Urban Renewal Agency, CD = Community Development Dept., City = City Administration, Hist = Historical Society, Chbr = Chamber of Commerce



Action	Description	Priority	Implementation Timeline	Responsible Party	Potential Funding
11	<i>Upgrade Centennial Trail Parking Facilities</i> - e.g., Lot next to Falls Apartments.	High	2008 - 2011	CD, City, URA.	Enhancement, Avista Foundation, Idaho Community Foundation, Fundraising
12	<i>Rename Spokane St., and 4th Ave.</i> - Formally rename Spokane St. south of I-90, and 4th Ave. west of Idaho St. to names more in keeping with City Center identity. (e.g. Spokane River Blvd., and Post Falls Blvd.)	High	Concurrent with Actions 1,7. Or 2006 - 2007.	CD, City, URA	Enhancement, Avista Foundation
13	<i>Create Joint Visitors Center/Historic Museum</i> - At location to be determined by the community.	High	2009 - 2015	Hist, Chbr, City, URA	CDBG, LID/URA, IDL, EDA
14	<i>Install Falls &amp; Dam View Lighting Accent</i> - Enhance views of Dam Facilities and Post Falls from I-90 with tree pruning. Accent with decorative night lighting.	Med	2007 - 2010	URA, CD, City	CDBG, LID/URA, IDL, EDA
15	<i>Upgrade Henry St. and Lincoln St. Streetscapes</i> - 5th Ave. to 1st Ave., 'green street' residential character. Sidewalks, plantings, furniture/fixtures.	Med	2010 - 2015	URA, CD, City.	City Street Department, URA
16	<i>Upgrade 3rd Ave. Streetscape</i> - Spokane St. to Idaho St., sidewalks, nodal stormwater swale relocation, plantings, fixtures /furniture.	Med	2010 -2015	URA, CD, City	City Street Department, URA
17	<i>Improve Centennial Trail Crossing</i> - At Spokane St. as part of Spokane Street and/or 4th Ave. streetscape improvements, or as a stand-alone project.	Med	Concurrent with Action 7. Or 2009 - 2012.	URA, CD, City	Enhancement, Avista Foundation
18	<i>Upgrade Mullan Ave. / Spokane St. Streetscape</i> - Create node intersection with pedestrian crossings and traffic control (possible roundabout).	Med	2010 - 2015	URA, CD, City	CDBG, LID/URA, IDL, EDA
19	<i>Create a Historic/Interpretive Walking Tour</i> - Delineate in informational brochure. Mark sites with interpretive placards in streetscape. Incorporate placards with Streetscape Improvement projects above.	Med	2006 - 2008	Hist, CD	Enhancement, Avista Foundation, Idaho Community Foundation, Fundraising
20	<i>Upgrade 1st Ave. Streetscape</i> - Spokane St. to Idaho St., sidewalks, plantings, fixtures/furniture. Residential 'green street'.	Low	2012 - 2016	URA, CD, City.	N/A
21	<i>Improve 3rd. Ave. Crossing</i> - At Spokane St., create a clear and designated pedestrian/bicycle crossing to Post Falls Landing, and a nodal intersection.	Low	Concurrent with Action 7. Or 2010 -2012.	URA, CD, City.	CDBG, IDA/URA, IDL, EDA
22	<i>Develop Centennial Trail Spurs</i> - Clear signage and marked lanes to other City Center Bike lanes and destinations.	Low	2008 - 2010	CD, City	Bikes Beyond, Enhancement, Local
23	<i>Implement Residential Development Demonstration Project</i> - URA Purchase underused City Center residential lots (1st, or 2nd). Issue Request for Proposal (RFP) to development community for construction according to City Center goals. URA receive repayment of residual value after project completion.	Low	2012 - 2016	URA, CD, City	Bikes Beyond, Enhancement, Local
24	<i>Plan For Future Events/Gathering Center</i> - Near current Idaho Veneer mill site.	Low	No specific timeframe.	CD, City	HUD
25	<i>Plan For Future Multi-Modal Transit Center</i> - Near Idaho St. or lands along railway. Coordinate with regional transit agencies and other governments. Explore potential for bus, future rail, and bicycle modes.	Low	No specific timeframe.	CD, City	N/A

# Action 1 4th Ave. Streetscape Upgrade



Example - Urban street edge with angled parking, and attractive sidewalk environment.

## The Action

As a top priority project, Action 1 upgrades, resurfaces, and reconfigures 4th Avenue between Idaho and Spokane Streets. The overall design for 4th Avenue establishes an urban continuous curb edge with a planted median as illustrated in the diagram to the right. The upgrades to 4th Avenue:

- Create a pleasant urban boulevard that enhances City Center identity, and makes the area more attractive for new businesses and residents to locate.
- Feature two travel lanes plus a center turn lane that is attractively landscaped in non-turn areas with a planted median.
- Increase traffic capacity from its current two lanes. The current configuration underperforms as a major collector street.
- Include angled parking stalls in appropriate locations on both sides. This angled parking will be installed as a demonstration test, and if the parking arrangement is successful, angled parking will become the standard for 4th Avenue. An option will remain for angled parking to be reconfigured if determined unsuccessful.
- Enhance pedestrian connections by adding a 10' sidewalk with sidewalk bulbs, pedestrian streetlamps, new street trees, benches, and trash receptacles.
- Preserve existing mature trees wherever possible, including the block directly in front of City Hall.
- Minimize the number of 'curb-cuts' or driveways that enter 4th Ave. at midblocks.
- Seek alternatives to installation of extensive stormwater swales at the street edge.

As the upgrades to 4th Avenue are implemented, the plan encourages exploration of renaming the street to a title more befitting of Post Falls identity such as "Post Falls Boulevard". (See Action 12 - Street Renaming.)

## Goals Supported by this Action

1. Promotes a Distinct Post Falls identity
4. Makes Pedestrian Friendly Connections
5. Creates and Strengthens City Center Attractions
6. Promotes a Vibrant Mix of Infill Development and Uses

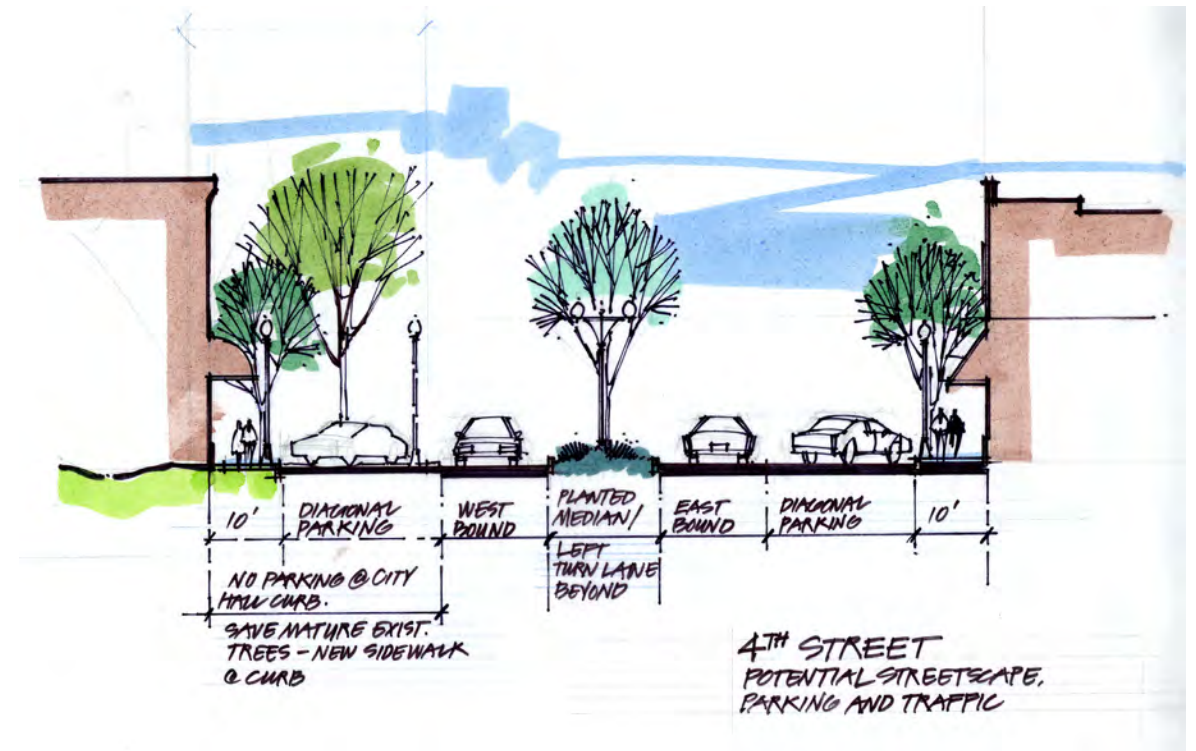
## Key Issues: Action 1

### Unique Street Configuration

The suggested configuration of 4th Ave. is different from the way most other streets of its class (Major Collector Streets) are handled. In order to create a unique identity for the Post Falls City Center. The suggested configuration of 4th Ave. has angled parking as shown in the figure, with east / west bicycle travel channeled to the Centennial Trail. (Angled parking could be replaced by parallel parking and a bicycle lane could be added to 4th Ave).

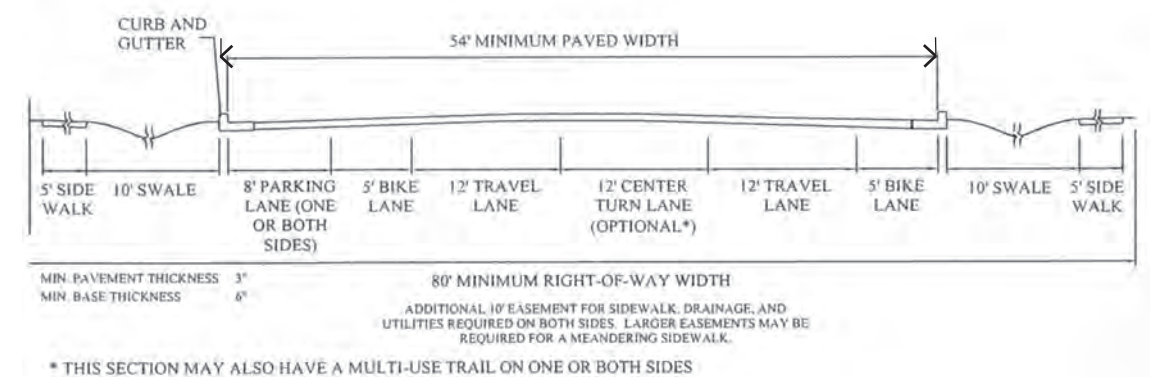
### Stormwater Management

Collecting and treating rainwater runoff and snow is an important aspect of any streetscape. Action 1 suggests that in lieu of extensive swales, which are not urban in character, stormwater on 4th Ave. be channeled to concentrated stormwater collection bulbs in the vicinity of Idaho Street. Where an existing gutter system is in place, stormwater would continue to be channeled there. Careful attention to a nodal stormwater management system will allow for a continuous urban curb and gutter.



Suggested 4th Ave. roadway configuration with a planted median and sidewalks and street trees at pavement edge. Rights of ways are reduced to 80'.

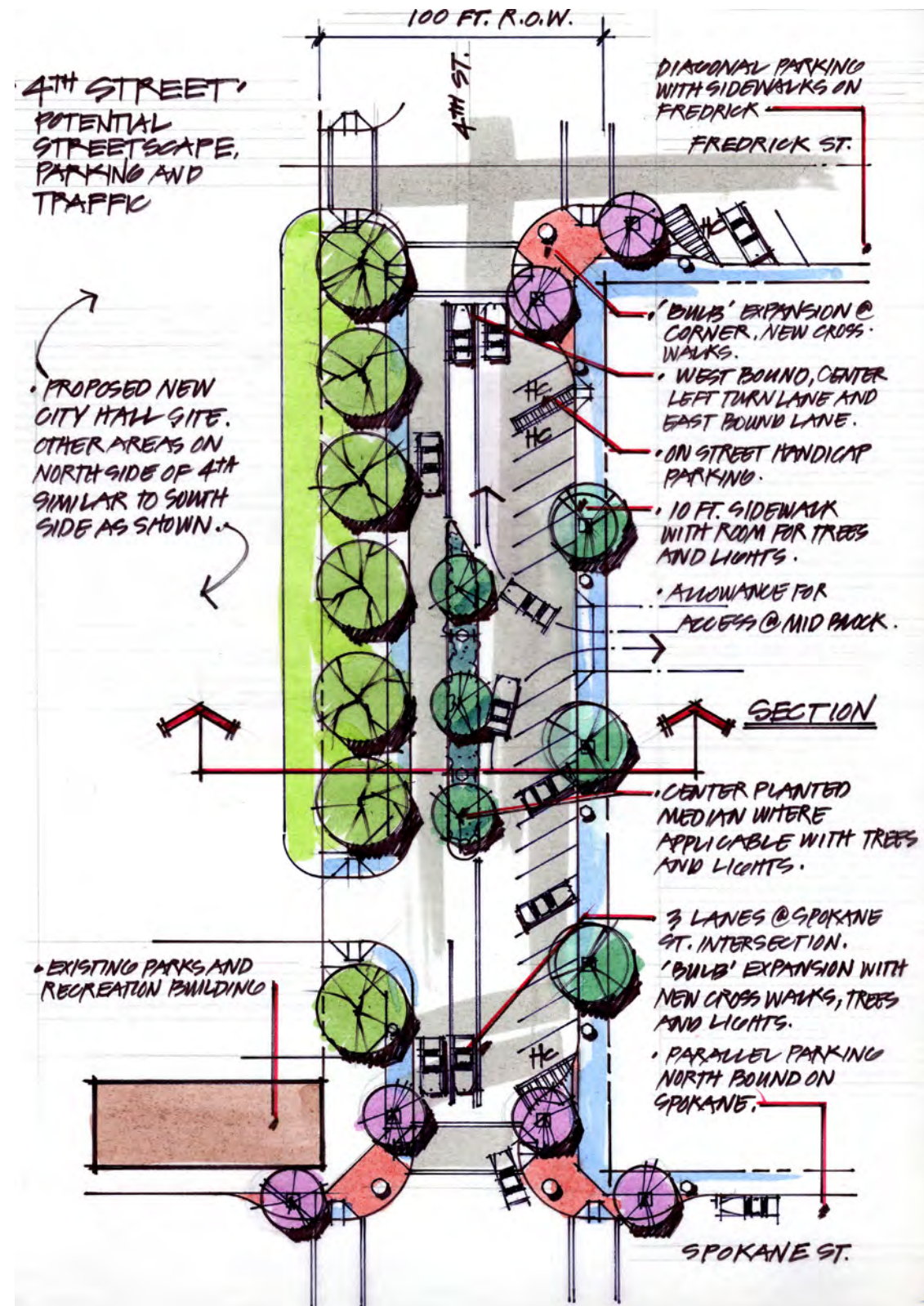
## SECTION D: MAJOR COLLECTOR



Planned 4th Ave. roadway configuration in 2004 Post Falls Transportation Master Plan showing three lanes, a 5' bike lane, and a 10' swale and 5' sidewalk on each side.



## Action 1 Continued: 4th Ave. Streetscape Upgrade



### Locating Curb-Cuts & Medians

Strategic location of curb-cuts and driveways entering onto 4th Ave. is an important part of Action 1. Where possible access to properties via north / south sidestreets or an alley is preferred. Also, with inclusion of a median, left turns from some locations onto 4th Ave. will be restricted. These reconfiguration items allow for better traffic circulation and a more orderly 4th Ave.

### Postal Service Delivery

The method of Postal Service delivery in the City Center district is an important factor in the design of 4th Ave. Currently the Postal Service does not provide on-foot delivery routes in Post Falls. This creates a demand for Postal delivery vehicle 'turnouts' on the street. Such turnouts would not be allowed under the suggested configuration of an upgraded 4th Ave. Therefore, it is recommended that the City coordinate with the local Post Office for foot delivery of mail on 4th Avenue.

## Implementation: Action 1

Projects and Cost estimates for Fourth Ave. have been divided into sub-elements in order to help facilitate funding and phased implementation.

### Project 1.1: Enhancement of Fourth Ave. from Spokane St. to William St.

(Streetscape Demonstration Project). These two blocks of Fourth Ave. will enhance the recommended pedestrian and streetscape improvements including center medians. In order to recognize existing business constraints and the importance of preserving mature trees in these two blocks, the south side of 4th Avenue between Spokane and Williams Streets will be developed with parallel on-street parking. On the north side of 4th Ave., the block between Spokane St. and Frederick St. will be parallel parking in order to preserve existing mature trees; however the south side of 4th Ave. between Frederick St. and William St. will be designed for diagonal parking as a demonstration of the operation and desirability for diagonal parking on the remainder of 4th Ave.

### Project 1.2: Reconstruction of Fourth Street from William Street to Idaho Street.

This project element assumes a full structural re-construction of Fourth Avenue by removal of the underlying concrete pavement. (Other alternatives for handling the old concrete street could be considered in the final design, including the "crack and seal" process or grinding and reuse as ballast.) This phase assumes re-constructing a 3 lane cross-section without curbs, or pedestrian improvements. This phasing approach allows the city the option of completing the over-due structural improvements to 4th Avenue without waiting to secure funding for the rest of the pedestrian and streetscape elements east of William Street. In addition, improving 4th Avenue east of William Street as a 3 lane rural road-section without a center median would allow time for land uses to evolve as commercial with many of the existing driveway approaches becoming phased out and/or combined. Also, the effectiveness of the streetscape design details will have been demonstrated on the blocks between Spokane Street and William Street.

### Project 1.3: Completion of Streetscape on 4th Avenue between William & Idaho Streets.

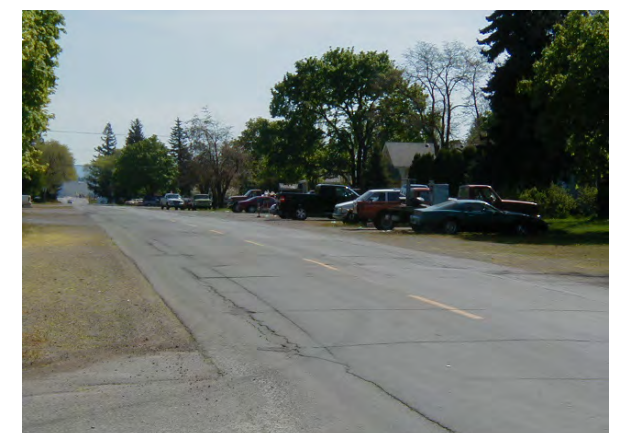
The final phase element of the proposed improvements to Fourth Avenue will complete curb and drainage, landscaping, and pedestrian enhancements between William Street and Idaho Street. This phasing concept will allow time for added commercial investment to take place, and therefore, tax increment financing to occur. This will assist the funding of the remainder of the enhancements on Fourth Street.



Existing businesses on 4th Ave. near Spokane St. must be accommodated in the new design concept.



4th Ave. is over-due for structural re-construction to the city's major collector standards.



Future diagonal parking on 4th Ave. would help organize current practices on some blocks of 4th Ave.



## Action 2 Infill & Shared Parking (On & Off Street)



Right-of-Ways on north/south streets between 5th and 3rd offer opportunities for widening and addition of street parking



Example north/south street.

### The Action

Another key strategy for increasing the density of commercial and residential uses in the city center is to optimize public on-street parking. Action 2 strives to add on street parking, improved sidewalks and streetscapes within the platted rights-of-way on several low-traffic north south streets, which dead end at the railroad corridor. Streets to receive these parking and streetscape upgrades according to Action 2 include Frederick St., William St., and Post St. between N. Railroad Ave. and 4th Ave. The illustrations show how two rows of safe, clear angled parking can be added while maintaining two travel lanes. Streetscape improvements include new pedestrian street fixtures, street trees and attractively planted corner 'bulb-outs'. Bulb outs double as stormwater collection swales. Rainwater and snow can be channeled to these large bulb-out areas and can be treated there. Attractive landscaping and planting in the large bulb-outs will enhance the idea of the north/south streets as 'green streets', which are different from the east/west urban commercial corridors.

In addition to adding parking on side streets, Action 2 calls for shared parking arrangements. During data collection, it was noted that community clubs and the Kootenai County licensing building use parking areas only during certain hours. A cost effective way to increase publicly available parking in Post Falls, is to negotiate shared parking arrangements with these and other community oriented property owners. Allowing public parking access in shared lots during specific hours can support current and future businesses, and decrease the amount and cost of on-site parking required in other developments.

### Goals Supported by this Action

4. Makes Pedestrian Friendly Connections
6. Promotes a Vibrant Mix of Infill Developments.

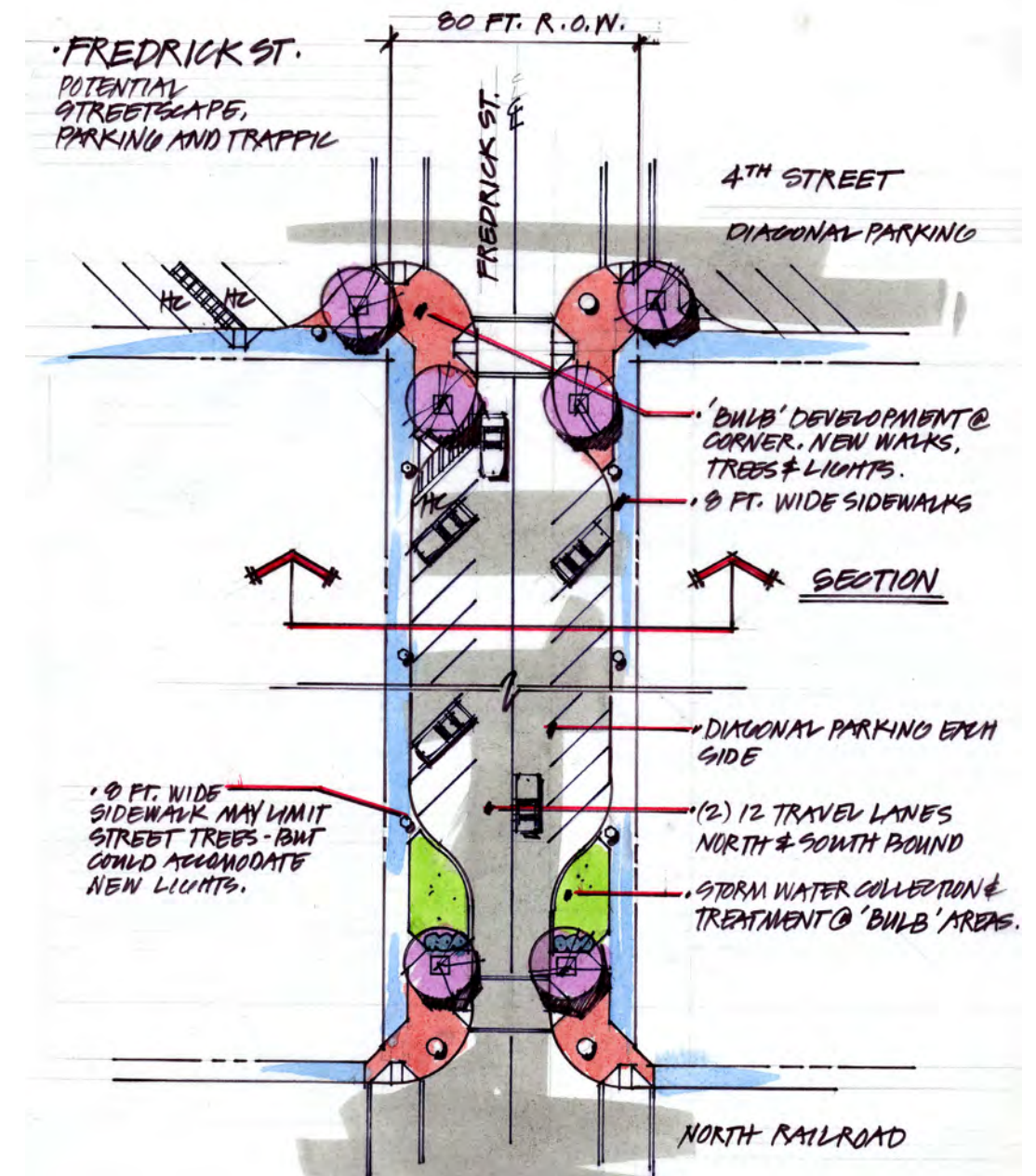
### Implementation: Action 2

#### Project 2.1: Infill Parking Typical for 80 ft Rights-of-Way.

This project cost estimate is for a typical, approximate 300 foot long block within an 80 foot right-of-way, allowing the street to be widened in order to provide diagonal on-street parking on both sides. This project cost estimate also assumes street enhancements typical of the city center concept including curb, drainage, sidewalks, landscaping, and pedestrian scale illumination.

#### Project 2.2: Infill Parking for 60 ft. Rights-of-Way.

Similarly, this project cost estimate is for a typical approximate 300 foot long block within a 60 foot right-of-way, allowing the street to be widened in order to provide parallel on-street parking on both sides. Again, this project cost estimate also assumes street enhancements typical of the city center concept including curb, drainage, sidewalks, landscaping, and pedestrian scale illumination.



Street	Platted Right-of-Way Width
Frederick St.	80 ft. (4 <sup>th</sup> to N. Railroad) 60 ft. (S. Railroad to 1 <sup>st</sup> )
William St.	60 ft. (5 <sup>th</sup> to N. Railroad) 80 ft. (S. Railroad to 1 <sup>st</sup> )
Henry St.	60 ft. (5 <sup>th</sup> to N. Railroad) 80 ft. (S. Railroad to 1 <sup>st</sup> )
Post St.	84 ft. (5 <sup>th</sup> to N. Railroad) 80 ft. (3 <sup>rd</sup> to 1 <sup>st</sup> )
Lincoln St.	60 ft. (5 <sup>th</sup> to N. Railroad) 80 ft. (S. Railroad to 1 <sup>st</sup> )

Right-of-Way widths for each north / south street.





**The Action**

Implementation of the ongoing project to build a new Post Falls City Hall and civic campus is a crucial part of the City Center Plan. The proposed new City Hall is located on the site of the current City Hall, and consolidates a number of aging and deteriorated public structures into a more efficient and attractive new building. The new City Hall features a civic plaza and presents a strong public image for the City of Post Falls as a whole, and the for the City Center District. The figures at left are conceptual illustrations of the overall City Hall campus master plan, which is endorsed by the Post Falls City Council, and awaits implementation. The new City Hall campus establishes a character and identity befitting the Post Falls City center vision. The campus master plan also preserves and reuses the current Parks & Recreation building at the corner of Spokane St. and 4th Ave. This structure, originally the Chapin Drug Store, is one of the few remaining historic structure in Post Falls.



*The existing Parks & Recreation building is preserved in the new City Hall project, but converted to another use.*

**Goals Supported by this Action:**

1. Promotes a Distinct Post Falls identity
2. Reconnects with Post Falls History and Heritage
5. Creates and Strengthens City Center Attractions
6. Promotes a Vibrant Mix of Infill Development and Uses

**Key Issues: Action 3**

**Environmental Sustainability**

A critical issue that arose during the early implementation steps for the new City Hall was the City's commitment to a design that embraced a high standard of environmental sustainability. This would enable the project to decrease long term operating costs, and to become a leader in stewardship of the environment. Building a sustainable city hall adds some additional up front cost to the project and requires some new and innovative design features. Post Falls is currently pursuing additional funding from non-city sources to implement the City Hall at a higher design and sustainability standard.

**Implementation: Action 3**

As a high priority project, and a project with ongoing momentum, it is expected that the City Hall project will be implemented in the 2005 - 2008 timeframe. Initial implementation steps are already underway including schematic design.

**Funding for Sustainable Design**

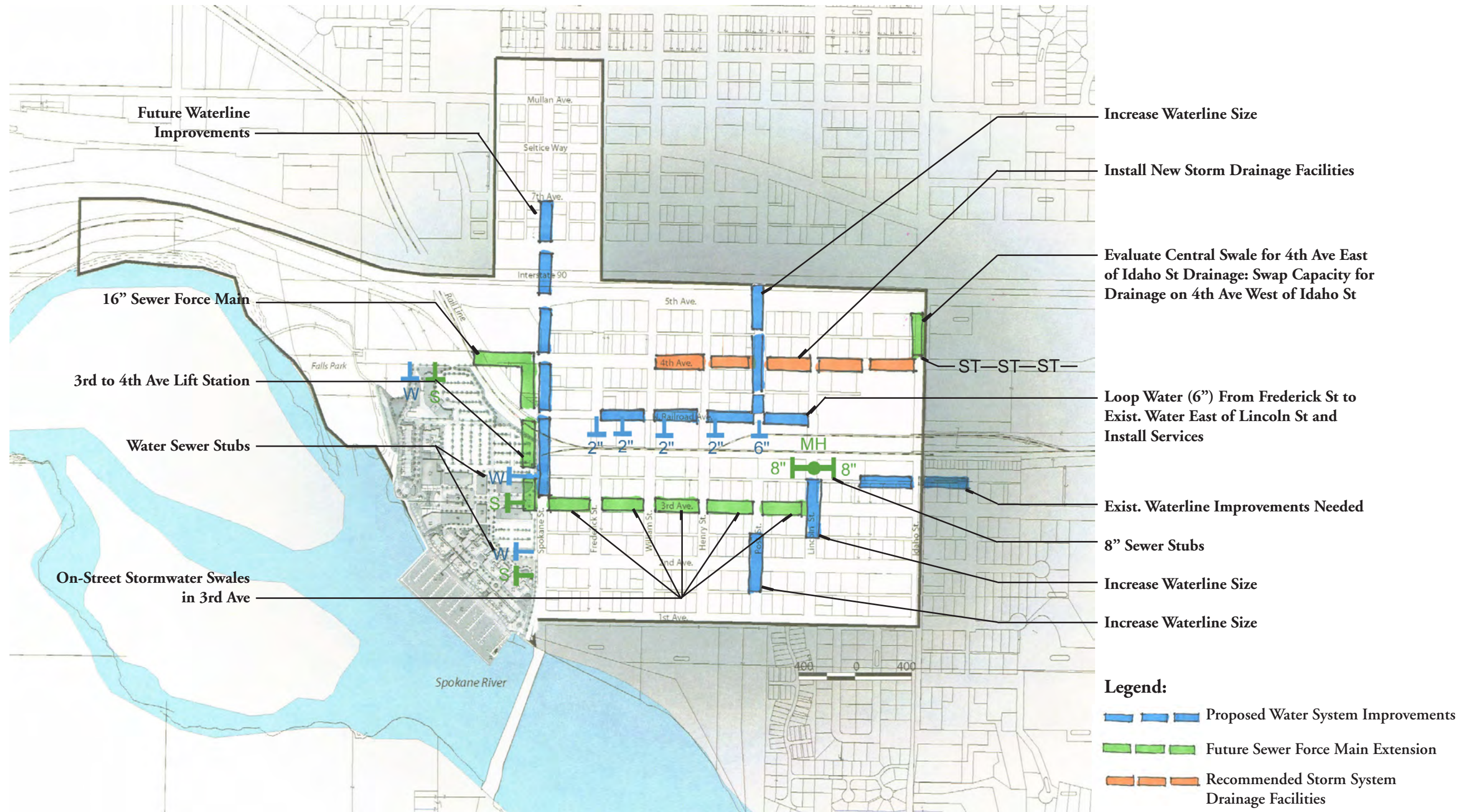
Continued pursuit of funds for a sustainable project is ongoing through the efforts of the 'green team'. Multiple City departments are coordinating efforts to identify the most appropriate funding strategy, including City and supplemental non-city resources and grants to build the new City Hall.

With additional up-front costs for sustainable building factored in, the estimated project cost for the new City Hall is in the range of \$6.8 million - \$7.4 million.





# Action 4 Improve Underground and Stormwater Utilities





## Action 4 Continued: Utility Improvements

### The Action

Action 4, Utility Improvements, depicts a number of general utility improvements that are needed within the City Center District. Utility upgrades range from Streetscapes (detailed in individual actions), to water and sewer utility upgrading or replacement. A well-functioning utility infrastructure is important in attracting additional businesses and residences to the City Center, since developers need the assurance that basic services are in place. The full range of recommended utility improvements are documented in the figure on the preceding page. Several crucial utility upgrade actions are highlighted below. Streetscape Utility upgrades addressed elsewhere are not described extensively here.

### Goals Supported by this Action:

6. Promotes a Vibrant Mix of Infill Development and Uses.

### Key Issues: Action 4

#### Stormwater

Use of the existing underground stormwater sewer system in portions of the City Center would improve density of on-street parking and creation of an urban, City - Center character. In order to expand the use of the existing storm sewer facilities in the 4th Ave area, it is recommended that an off-setting drainage area be moved from the storm sewer (4th Ave east of Idaho St) to a newly constructed infiltration drainage swale (coordinated with the Split Diamond Interchange).

#### Water

Water line replacements are indicated according to the recommendations in the City's 2001 water system master plan. The City will perform additional water system modeling to determine if additional water lines should be replaced in the City Center.

#### Sanitary

A new sewer force main for the 3rd Ave lift station is required through an east/west corridor to be identified more specifically by the City Public Works Department.

### Implementation: Action 4

Infrastructure improvements are scheduled to be implemented as part of other actions. In particular see Action 1- 4th Avenue Streetscape Upgrade, Action 2 - Infill & Shared Parking, Action 5 - Acquire Properties for Parking & Green Space, and Action 7, Streetscape Improvements to Spokane Street. The following discussion outlines key elements of the implementation of anticipated city center infrastructure improvements.

- Use of the existing underground storm sewer system in a portion of the City Center would improve density of on-street parking and creation of an urban City-Center character.
- In order to expand use of existing city storm sewer facilities in the 4<sup>th</sup> Ave area, it is recommended to remove an off-setting drainage area from the storm sewer system (4<sup>th</sup> Ave east of Idaho St) and redirecting its stormwater to a newly constructed infiltrative drainage swale (coordinated with the Split Diamond Interchange).
- Water line replacements are indicated according to the recommendations in the City's 2001 water system master plan.
- A new sewer force main for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street lift station is required through an east/west corridor to be identified more specifically by City Public Works Department.
- The City will perform additional water system modeling to determine if additional waterlines should be replaced in the City Center.

# Action 5 Acquire Properties for Parking, Green Space, and Stormwater Management



Example - parking lot interspersed with green space.



Example - Attractive, passive open green space.



Underutilized, unimproved parcels in the N. Railroad Corridor.

## The Action

Action 5, Acquisition of property for parking, green space, and stormwater management is a proactive step for the City of Post Falls to support and anticipate future needs and services in the City Center District. During site analysis a number of largely vacant and underutilized parcels were identified in the City Center District, especially in the east-west spine of the district along the railway as noted in the figure on this page. Acquisition of underutilized parcels in this corridor by the Urban Renewal Agency or the City can immediately provide for the provision of public parking, green space, and integrated stormwater management to support action item improvements in the manner as follows:

- Maximize parking to support users of the Centennial Trail, and existing and future businesses.
- Create a linear green space along the central corridor of the City Center District that provides a connected walkable space with attractive and functional landscaping.
- Create a system of integrated stormwater management features that would utilize the principles of bioengineered soils, native water and drought tolerant landscaping in planted swales, and drainage overflow for peak storm flow.
- Soften the appearance of parking lots by providing attractive frontage landscaping and shaded landscape paths.

Specific parcels to explore for property acquisition include the properties along N. Railroad Ave. and S. Railroad Ave. between William St. and Lincoln St. In addition, owners of private properties in this corridor can be encouraged to maintain attractive green buffers on their land to enhance the central corridor as a belt of green space.

In future years, acquired properties can serve more active public functions. Lots used for parking and green space in the near term may be converted to long range uses such as a multi-modal transit center, and a public gathering area.

## Goals Supported by this Action:

- 4. Makes pedestrian friendly connections
- 6. Promotes a Vibrant Mix of infill Development and Uses

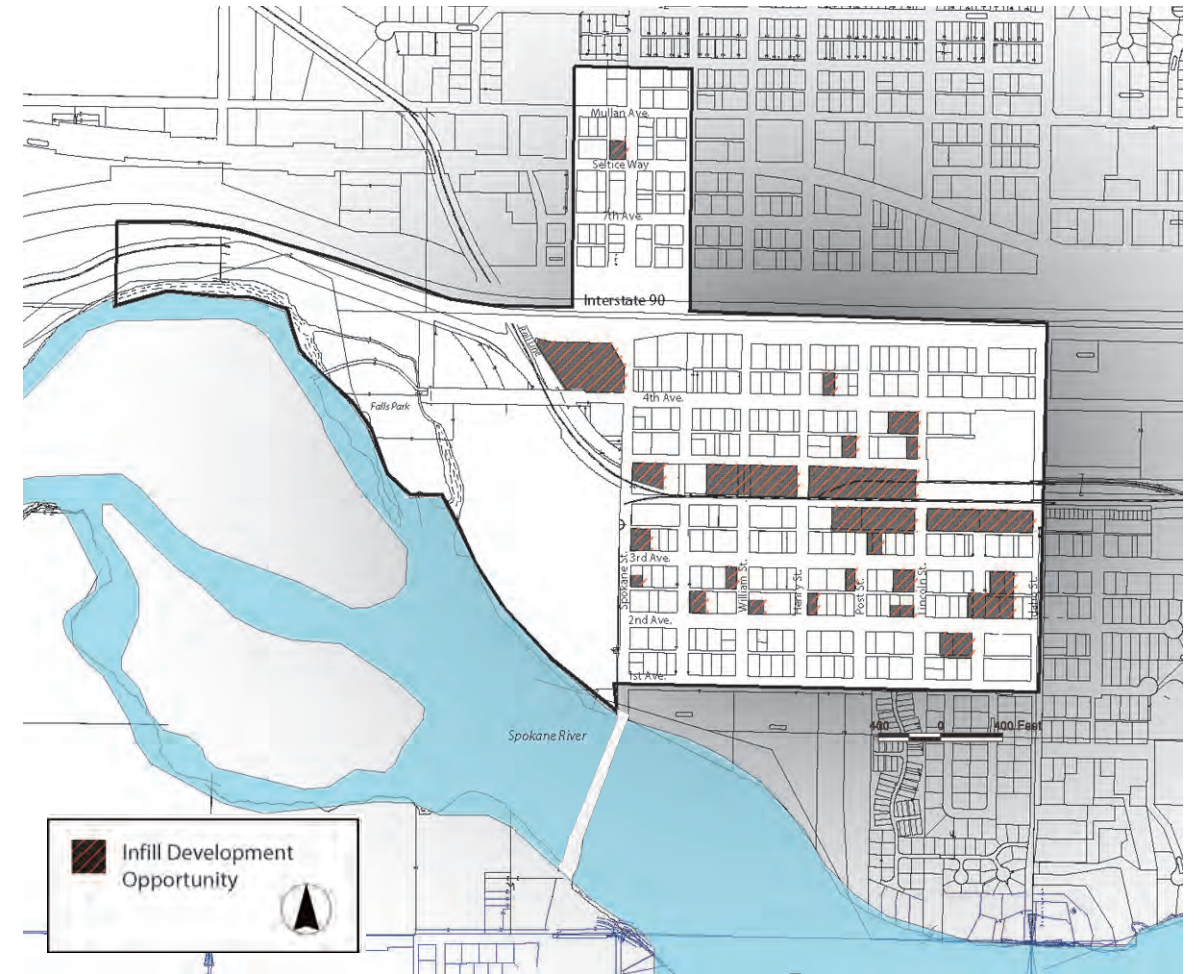
## Key Issues: Action 5

Coordinate with the guidelines of the active freight railroad with respect to clearance for safety, potential vandalism concerns and to allow for provision of maintenance of the rail line. Also coordinate with community clubs, Idaho Veneer and other users of the parcels in the railroad corridor. There may be coordination requirements for fencing and shared curb cuts to minimize vehicular-pedestrian conflicts.

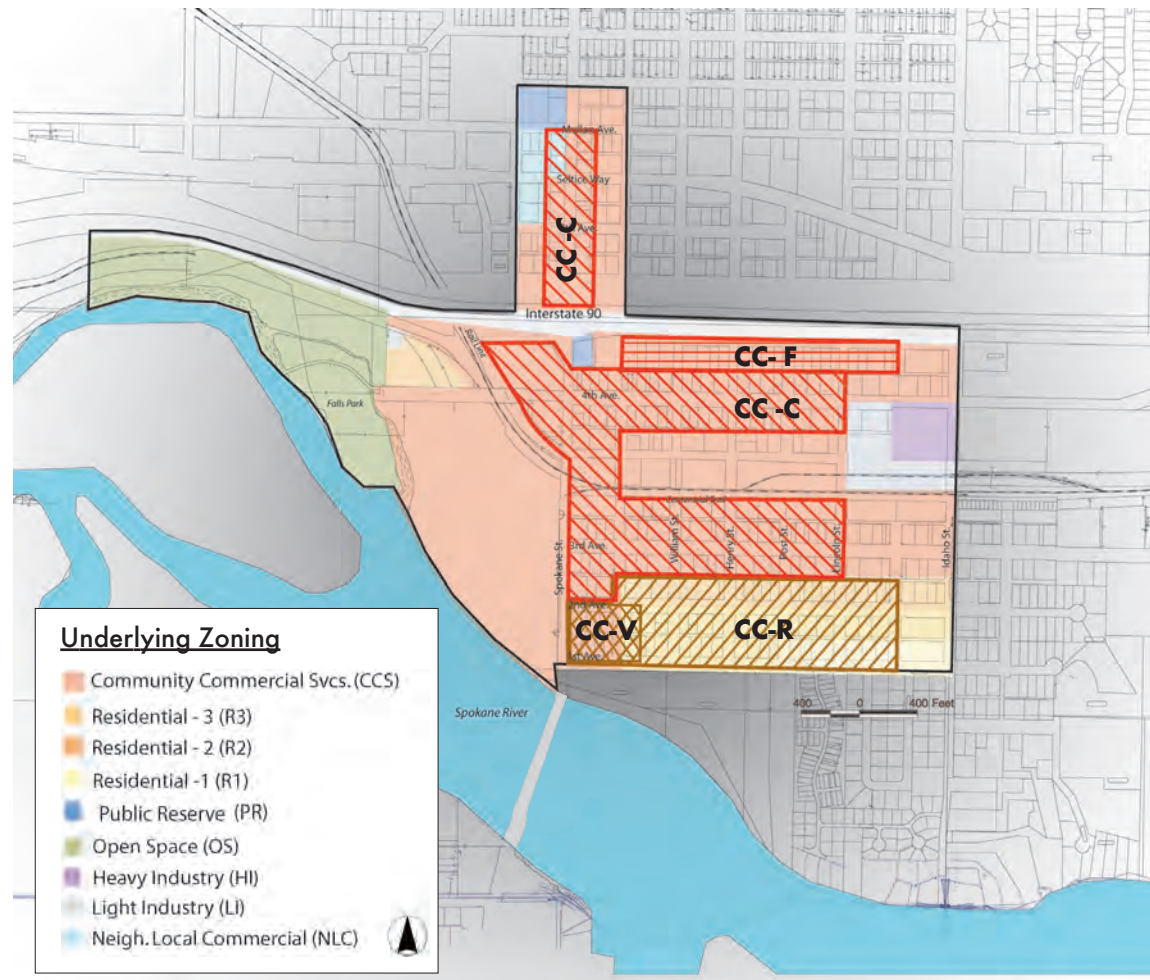
## Implementation: Action 5

While Action 5 received a high priority ranking, the implementation may be delayed due to lack of funds and the willingness of individual property owners to sell their properties. As funds and property become available through tax increment financing in future years, action 5 may become more viable. Implementation might be expected in the 2009 - 2012 timeframe.

Assuming comparable costs for 'raw land' in the region at the time of the City Center Plan acquisitions per acre of land are estimated in the \$160,000 to \$430,000 range. 2 - 4 acres is an appropriate range for the size of usable spaces to be acquired for the purposes of Action 5.







**City Center Commercial Investment Overlay (CC - C)**

Overlay zone along 4th Ave., 3rd Ave., and Spokane St. Encourages infill commercial and mixed-use development that creates a lively street-level environment.

**City Center Residential Overlay: (CC - R)**

Overlay zone along 1st Ave. and 2nd Ave. near the Spokane River. Encourages infill residential development at medium densities. Encourages an expanded residential population base in the City Center.

**City Center Freeway Character Overlay: (CC - F)**

Overlay zone along 5th Ave., immediately adjacent to the I-90 freeway. Encourages commercial development that reflects the quality and character of a City Center heritage district. Discourages an auto-oriented or 'fast-food' visual character in the highly visible edge of the City Center.

**City Center Residential River View Overlay: (CC - V)**

Allows for slightly taller residential structures that take advantage of potential vistas to the Spokane River and expands the City Center residential base.

**The Action:**

Action 6, City Center Overlay Districts, calls for a system of design and incentive overlay zones to encourage desired types of development in the City Center district. Overlay zones do not change the existing base zoning, but are applied as an additional set of incentives or regulations unique to the City Center District. Overlay zones strive for targeted types of new development, in terms of style and character, as well as density. Overlay zones are a regulatory and incentive tool to encourage infill growth in keeping with the community vision for the future of the Post Falls City Center.

**Goals Supported by this Action:**

1. Promotes a Distinct Post Falls identity
2. Reconnects with Post Falls history and heritage
3. Capitalizes on Natural Character - The River, The Falls and the Landscape
5. Creates and Strengthens City Center Attractions
6. Promotes a Vibrant Mix of Infill Development and Uses

**Key Issues: Action 6**

**Regulation & Incentives**

Action 6 suggests that the structure of City Center overlay zones should be a balance between development incentives and regulations. On the one hand, high quality design features that reflect Post Falls' heritage as a mill and railroad town are sought - which are most likely to be achieved through development regulations for quality design. On the other hand increased investment and infill development are sought - which are most likely to be achieved through relaxation of regulations, increased density, and reduced development fees. Careful writing of overlays can allow for a system where development incentives are linked to quality design standards. In this way a developer would receive defined 'bonuses' on a City Center project, but only upon the condition that the development uphold specific quality design standards.

**Overlay Zones**

Four recommended overlay zones are depicted in the figure at left and detailed on the following pages. It is important to note that these are suggested overlays only, and would require refinement and careful study before being enacted into code. Each suggested overlay reinforces other actions in the Plan. For example the Commercial Investment Overlay covers the streets recommended for commercial corridor streetscape upgrades; Residential Overlay reinforces the area targets for a high quality residential district near the Spokane River; and the Freeway Commercial overlay responds directly to the split diamond interchange project.

**Implementation: Action 6**

Retain a planning consulting firm to assess and develop overlay zones and such other changes to the zoning code to effect the proposed overlay districts generally described on pages 18 and 19.

*Cities often incorporate bonuses and design regulations into their codes to encourage publicly desirable types of development. These enhance and protect property values, and encourage economic development. Several examples are provided below...*

**MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT BONUS**  
KENT, WA  
'...commercial floor area may be increased by (1) one square foot for every square foot of residential floor area provided in upper stories.'

**COVERED PARKING BONUS**  
REDMOND, WA  
'In freestanding residential developments, a density bonus of 10 percent shall be granted to developments that provide semi- or full-subterranean parking...'

**PROPOSED OPEN SPACE BONUS**  
SEATTLE, WA  
In exchange for implementing streetscape improvements in accordance with the "SEA" Streets plan, the City of Seattle is proposing allowing developers to receive a reduction in the open space required to be provided elsewhere on the property.

**AMENITY FLOOR AREA BONUS**  
SEATTLE, WA  
'An applicant may achieve floor over the allowable base through bonuses for amenities: Public open space, hillside terrace, urban plaza, shopping corridor, health clinics, day care, job skills training etc...'



# Action 6 Design & Incentive Overlay Districts

## Design Principles: Post Falls City Center

To encourage high quality design in keeping with a consistent character, specific design guidelines or standards are needed. During the community participation process Post Falls residents described what overall character they thought was appropriate for the Post Falls City Center. The most common idea was a heritage center, which reflects Post Falls history as a historic mill and railroad town. Residents also selected photo images for the type of buildings they believed to 'fit in' with the Post Falls' character. Translating general design preferences into guidelines can be challenging. However, if a number of specific principles are followed, new buildings can begin to create the overall character desired for the City Center. On this page 8 specific design principles are suggested which could be incorporated into overlay zones. The following pages discuss how these regulatory design features could be linked to developer bonuses.



## Principle 1: Sustainability

Adopt sustainable design principles throughout the City Center. The city plan can conserve water by using rain water to help irrigate low maintenance, low water plants. Buildings could conserve energy by using enhanced thermal envelopes, increased daylighting, and high efficiency mechanical systems. Recycled, sustainable materials could also be encouraged.



## Principle 2: Facade Transparency

Traditional storefronts make a strong connection between the sidewalk and activities taking place in a business. Use of non-tinted glass for a substantial portion of the storefront creates facade transparency. Facade transparency activates the street environment and creates the sense of a lively commercial district.



## Principle 3: Street Edge Commercial

Commercial districts in the railroad era featured buildings positioned at the front of their lots, at the sidewalk. Street edge commercial development creates a lively streetscape, and a feeling of enclosure for the pedestrian. Auto-oriented development with parking lots at the street edge instead of buildings, detracts from the sense of place.



## Principle 4: Street Edge Residential

City Center commercial districts with a traditional character also feature residential buildings close to the street edge. This allows for a 'front porch' environment and decreases the impact of garages and blank walls to the overall visual character of the area. Parking for homes can be provided along side, from an alley or in a structure for larger scale residential developments.



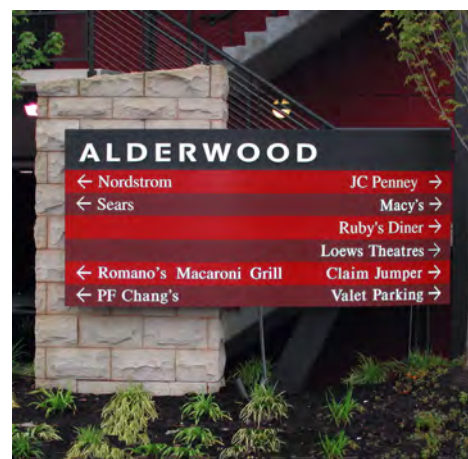
## Principle 5: Quality Materials

Heritage residential districts include buildings made of timeless materials, such as brick, stone, and authentic wood siding on the facades fronting public streets. Some contemporary materials such as corrugated and other metals, and vinyl siding may not be consistent with a heritage residential or commercial district.



## Principle 6: Modulation

Modulation is important to help new infill developments fit in with a traditional mill and railroad town character. Modulation 'breaks-up' continuous facades of larger buildings, so they don't seem too bulky or massive for the character of the district. Requirements for upper level setbacks and periodic recesses can also be made a part of code.



## Principle 7: Quality Signage

Business signs are an important part of a district's overall character. Signs made with quality materials, which are not lit from the interior are most appropriate for a heritage City Center district. Temporary banner signs, plastic signs, signs with interior lighting, or flashing signs may not be appropriate.

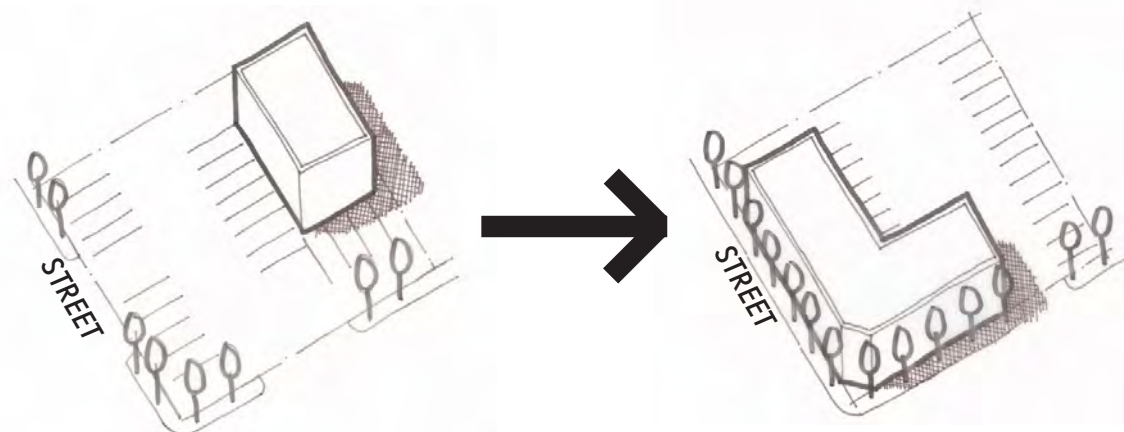


## Principle 8: Historic Colors

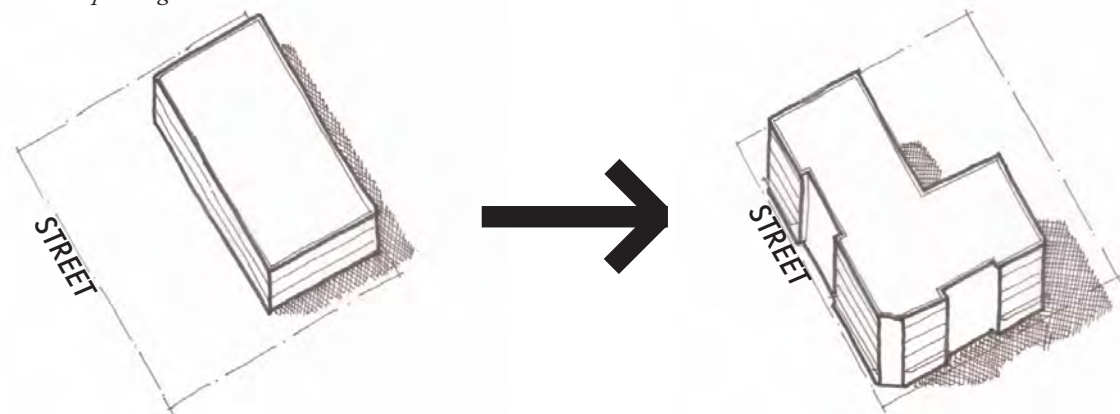
A palette of historic colors is often embraced in historic and heritage districts. Many paint manufacturers publish palettes of historic colors.



## Action 6 Continued: Commercial Investment Overlay



*Design Guideline Example: Instead of building an auto-oriented development with the commercial structure set at the back of a lot with parking along the street edge, a pedestrian-friendly development moves the structure to the front of the lot with parking in the rear.*



*Commercial 'Bonus' Example: If good design principles are embraced (eg. street edge, modulation, quality materials) a developer is granted increased allowable height, parking reductions and other bonuses.*

## Action 6 Continued: Freeway Commercial Overlay

### City Center Freeway Commercial Overlay (CC - F)

A freeway commercial overlay zone is recommended for the area adjacent to the potential split diamond interchange. This overlay might be less focused on the location and construction of future commercial buildings, but more focused on facade improvements, bulk and scale improvements, and the development of guidelines that establish the type and scale of commercial signs.

While the City of Post Falls has a detailed and new sign ordinance, specific attention to signage in the freeway commercial overlay is not thoroughly addressed at the time of the writing of this City Center Plan document. Modifications could ensure that new signage is in the character of a City Center heritage district. Methods of lighting, materials used, colors, and the size of signs could be regulated to enforce this identity. Guidelines would enforce the walkable heritage identity as viewed from the auto-oriented I-90 and associated traffic routes. Specific guidelines in this highly visible edge would provide strong visibility for the presence of the City Center district.

### City Center Commercial Investment Overlay (CC - C)

A commercial investment overlay zone is recommended for streets envisioned as key future commercial corridors: 3rd Ave., 4th Ave. and Spokane St. The commercial overlay zone would encourage multistory commercial development, mixed uses, and would include housing in upper stories. The overlay encourages development that:

- is urban in character
- supports a vibrant city center core
- is in keeping with the look and feel of the historic mill & railroad City Center
- encourages the eight design principles articulated on the preceding page
- gives 'bonuses' if a certain number of specific design principles are followed.

#### Design Guidelines:

The figure (top left) and the points below suggest specific design principles for developer guidelines:

#### Street edge commercial development:

Buildings are set back consistently from the principal street edge.

#### Parking Behind Beside or Beneath Structure:

Parking is placed behind, on the side of the principal structure, or below grade.

#### Lasting Materials, and Colors in Keeping With City Center Character:

Buildings are surfaced with lasting materials, such as brick, stone, or authentic wood siding. Materials such as vinyl siding and corrugated metal are not always appropriate. Colors are subdued.

#### Transparency in Ground Floor Facades:

Provide a specific percentage of the facade which is transparent along ground floor commercial between 2 feet and 10 feet above the sidewalk (eg. 70% of main level facade).

#### Encourage Upper Floor Residential Units:

Include a minimum number of residential units on upper floors (eg. 3 or more).

#### Bonus Features

The figure (bottom left) and points listed below illustrate how developer bonuses could be granted to make commercial development in the City Center more attractive and lucrative if a developer meets certain design criteria such as that outlined above. Listed below are suggested bonuses from the existing CCS zone.

#### Allowable height increase:

Allow an additional 10' of height to permit an additional story. (Max. 55' instead of 45')

#### Required Parking Relaxation:

Reduce parking requirement for uses including: commercial offices, retail stores, restaurants, and residential apartments. This reduces the amount of lot area needed for a development.

#### Allowable Lot Coverage Increase:

Waive maximum lot coverage requirement to allow full site buildout.

#### Bonuses for Streetscape Upgrades:

In exchange for implementation of streetscape improvement fronting their property.

#### Bonuses for Sustainable Design:

In exchange for the extra costs incurred to create a sustainable design.



## Action 6 Continued: Residential Investment Overlay

### City Center Residential Investment Overlay (CC - R)

A residential investment overlay zone is recommended for streets envisioned as key future residential districts: 1st Ave., and 2nd Ave. The residential investment overlay zone would encourage medium density residential development that increases the residential base in the City Center. The overlay strives to encourage development that is high quality, supports a vibrant city center core, and is in keeping with the look and feel of the historic mill & railroad City Center. The overlay encourages design principles articulated on page 18. The overlay could give 'bonuses' if a certain number of specific design principles are followed. A brief overview of potential design guideline features, and bonus features is provided below.

#### Design Guidelines:

The figure (top right) and the points below are several suggestions for specific design principles that a developer could be encouraged to follow.

**Street Edge Residential Development:** Buildings are set back a short distance from the principal street edge, eg. 10 feet or less to edge of sidewalk.

**Parking Behind or Beside Structure:** Parking is placed behind, on the side of the principal structure, or accessed from the alley.

**Lasting Materials, and Colors in Keeping With City Center Character:** Buildings are surfaced from a list of lasting materials, such as brick, stone, or authentic wood siding. Materials such as vinyl siding and corrugated metal may not be appropriate. Colors are from a historic palette.

**Front Porch Environment:** Require front doors, or porches facing the principal street.

#### Bonus Features

The figures (bottom right), and points listed below illustrate how developer bonuses could be granted to make Commercial development in the City Center more attractive and lucrative, if a developer meets certain design criteria (eg. above.) Listed below are suggested bonuses from the base R1 and R2 zones.

**Allowable height increase:** Allow an additional 10 feet of height to permit an additional story.

**Required Parking Relaxation:** Reduce parking requirement per residential unit.

**Allowable Lot Coverage and Setbacks:** Reduce or waive maximum lot coverage requirements or setback requirements to allow greater site buildout.

**Density Increase:** Decrease minimum lot width, minimum lot area, minimum SF per unit.

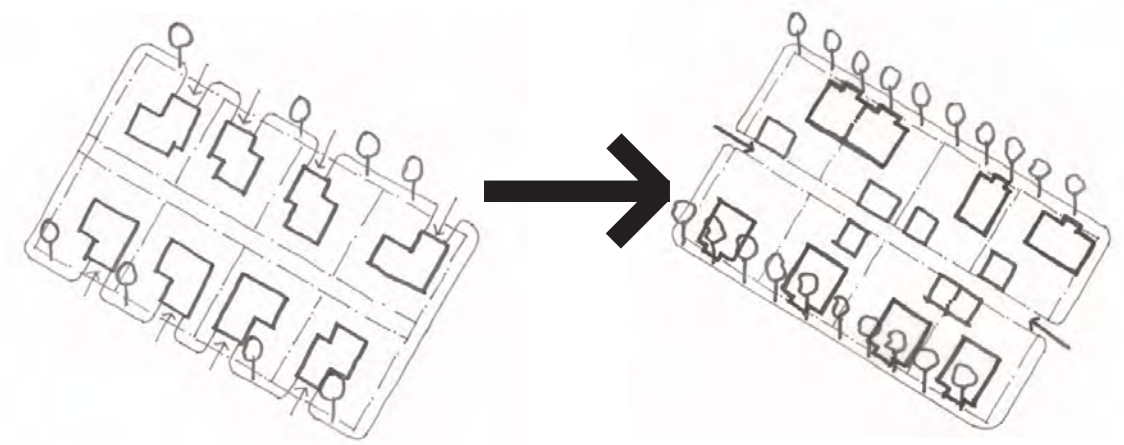
**Bonuses for Streetscape Upgrades:** In exchange for implementation of streetscape improvement fronting their property.

**Bonuses for Sustainable Design:** In exchange for the extra costs incurred to create a sustainable design

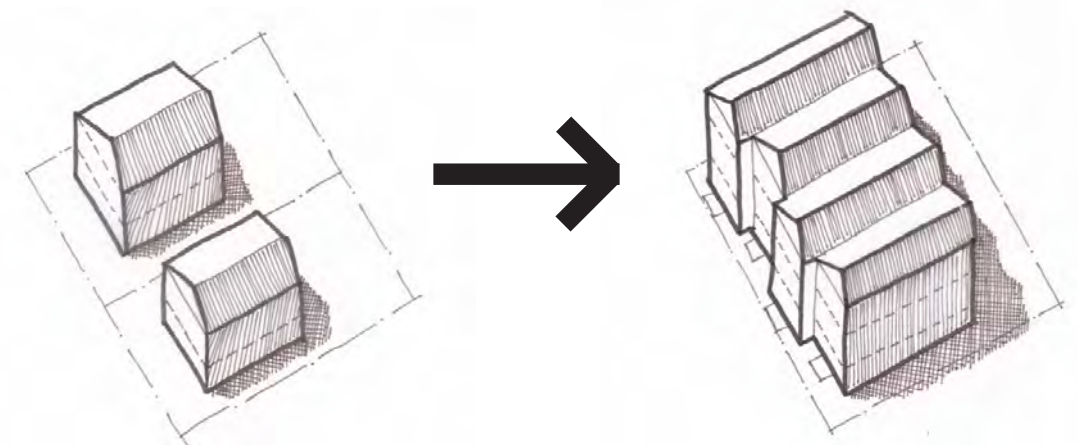
**Review Sprinklering Requirements:** Review fire code requirement for sprinklering of moderately sized residential developments. Sprinklering adds significant development cost, and the overlay location would be in close proximity to fire protection services.

### City Center Residential View Overlay (CC-V)

It is recommended that a Residential View Overlay be explored for the western edge of 1st Avenue and 2nd Avenue near Spokane Street. Such an overlay would allow for further increased height limits in a target area that can provide excellent views toward the Spokane River. Careful attention to the writing of this overlay would be required to ensure that new development is not out of scale with adjacent uses. However, increasing the potential for views can substantially increase the value of property and encourage increased residential investment in the City Center.



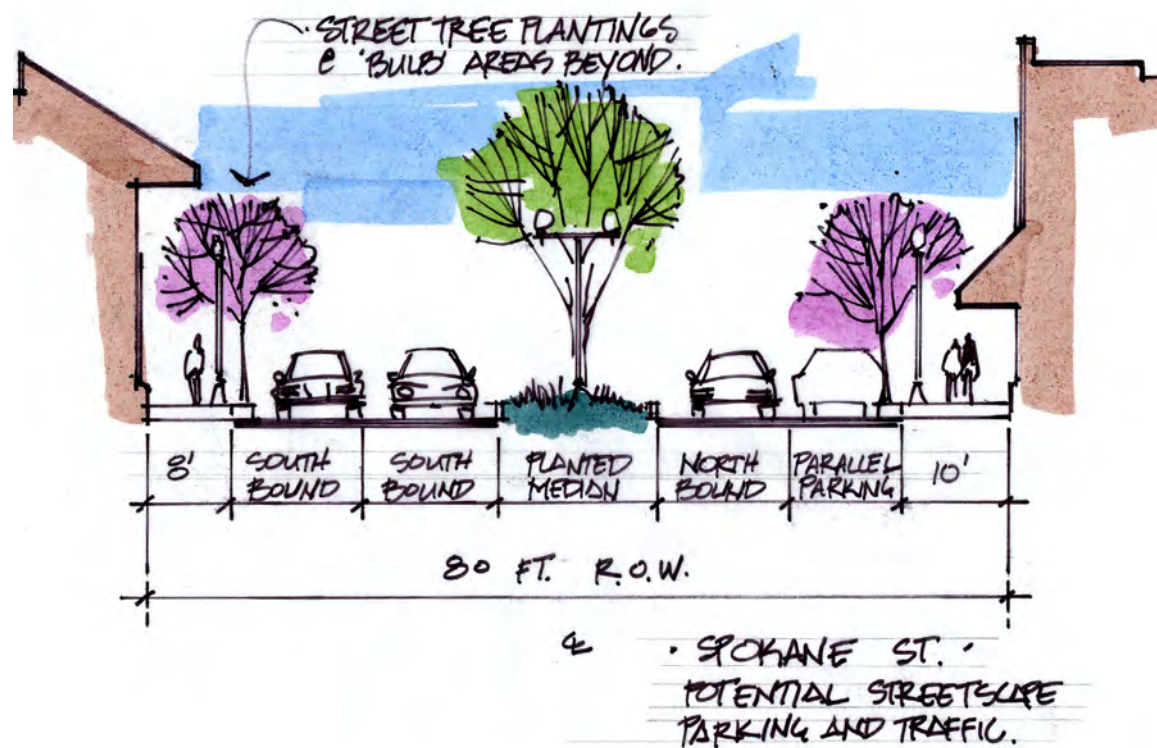
*Design Guideline Example: Instead of building typical residential structures with garages located prominently on the street edge, locate homes with porches near the street edge and provide parking access through an alley.*



*Residential 'Bonus' Example: If good design principles are embraced a developer is granted increased allowable height, parking reductions, density increases, and setback reductions.*



## Action 7 Streetscape Improvements Spokane St.



### The Action

Action 7, Spokane Street Streetscape Improvements, upgrades and reconfigures Spokane St. between 1st Ave. and Interstate 90 in a beginning phase, and later extends the Streetscape upgrades north to the public library. Spokane Streetscape upgrades would replace sidewalks, add planted medians, and accentuate pedestrian crossings, but would not substantially alter the surface of the street which is in adequate condition. The upgraded Spokane St. is envisioned as a pleasant urban boulevard that enhances City Center identity, and makes the area more attractive for new businesses and residents to locate. Streetscape upgrades to Spokane St. help to reconnect the area on Spokane St. north of the freeway to Spokane St. south of the freeway by enhancing the underpass through installation of public art or other decorative features.

The upgraded Spokane Street features four lanes between 1st Ave. to 4th Ave. including a turning lane. North of 4th Avenue the roadway expands for additional turning lanes onto the I-90 onramps. The turning lane is attractively landscaped in non-turn areas with a planted median. This reconfiguration maintains or increases traffic capacity on Spokane St. Two signalized intersections are added at 4th Ave. and 3rd Ave. The upgraded Spokane St. maintains safe, and clear parallel parking stalls in appropriate locations on the north side of the street.

A 10' sidewalk is included on the east side of Spokane St. and an 8' sidewalk is located on the west side of Spokane St. Sidewalks include attractive pedestrian lighting and street furniture on both sides of Spokane St. Additionally, well marked pedestrian crossing 'nodes' are located at 3rd Ave., 4th Ave., and in a mid-block location where the Centennial Trail crosses. These nodal crossings include wide crosswalks of a textured and/or colored paver material.

The design of Spokane St. also seeks to minimize the number of 'curb-cuts' or driveways that enter onto Spokane St. at midblock locations. Finally, along with the upgrade to Spokane Street, renaming of the street to a title more befitting of Post Falls identity such as "Spokane River Boulevard" can be explored. (See Action 12 Street Renaming.)

### Goals Supported by this Action:

1. Promotes a Distinct Post Falls identity
4. Makes Pedestrian Friendly Connections
5. Creates and Strengthens City Center Attractions
6. Promotes a Vibrant Mix of Infill Development and Uses

### Key Issues: Action 7

Spokane Street Improvements addresses Spokane Street from the I-90 interchange to First Street in an 80 ft. right-of-way and designated as a principal arterial in the Post Falls Comprehensive Plan. The existing roadway is in good condition and is 64 feet in width between curbs. This width is ideal for a 5 lane arterial section, allowing for a dedicated center turn lane. The street width narrows to 40 feet at First Street and continues to taper to a 34 foot, 2 lane section at the Spokane River Bridge.

### Evaluate On-Street Parking

Although there is presently on-street parallel parking designated along the east side of Spokane St. between North Railroad and Fourth, this on-street parking is proposed to be eliminated as part of the proposed "Landing" development on the old LP mill site. If on-street parking is eliminated, Spokane St. could operate as a 5 lane arterial between 3<sup>rd</sup> St. and I-90. However, opportunities for on-street parking along Spokane Street should be evaluated as the Landings project is developed and traffic patterns are re-established.

### Avoid Increase to 5 Travel Lanes In the Near Term

It is the recommendation of the City Center Plan not to increase the number of travel lanes on Spokane St. to 5 lanes in the near term. While Spokane St. does experience congestion at some peak times, the City Center Plan advises against an increase in the number of travel lanes. Some congestion in an urban City Center district is to be expected, and in some ways can even be desirable. Traffic traveling at slower speeds has time to view and interact with City Center businesses and activities. Further, replacing the recommended bay of on-street parking with a travel lane would make for a very inhospitable sidewalk environment for pedestrians.

To preserve flexibility however, the City Center Plan acknowledges that bulb-outs into the row of on street parking on the east side of Spokane St. should not be added in the near term. This allows flexibility so that the row of parking could be converted to a travel lane in future years if deemed necessary.



Replacement of sidewalks and addition of architectural illumination would improve the pedestrian environment on Spokane Street.



The crossing of Centennial Trail at Spokane Street should be enhanced to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.



Sidewalks are presently not continuous along the west side of Spokane Street.



## Action 7 Continued: Spokane St. Streetscape Upgrade



Example: landscaped median



Example: Organized sidewalk amenities



Freeway Columns Used as a Canvass for Public Art

### Implementation: Action 7

As a high priority action, it is anticipated that Spokane St. be upgraded in the near term. Depending on availability of funding, upgrades to Spokane St. could be expected in the 2009 - 2012 timeframe. Spokane St. upgrades would follow the character and style set by 4th St. streetscape upgrade that would have already been completed.

Transportation and Community Development Funding sources are both appropriate for Action 7. In order to assist in decision making, Action 7 has been divided into four projects. Total estimated project costs for all four projects listed below will range from approximately \$1 million to approximately \$1.2 million. Ranges of project costs by project is listed in the action table on page 8.

#### Project 7.1: Spokane Street Landscape I-90 to 3<sup>rd</sup> St.

Although portions of Spokane Street have had streetscape enhancements added over the past 15 years, many of the sidewalks are deteriorated. Also, the addition of pedestrian scale illumination along both sides of Spokane Street would enhance the appearance and pedestrian nature of the corridor.

In order to install underground power supply for the new architectural illumination fixtures, it would be most cost effective to bring the electrical conduit under the sidewalk and replace sidewalks along the corridor. Also, landscaped medians should be added in the areas where the center turn lane is unnecessary. Landscaped medians along the Spokane Street arterial would not only enhance the appearance of the corridor, but also contributes to "calming" of traffic speeds.

#### Project 7.2: Centennial Trail Pedestrian Crossing

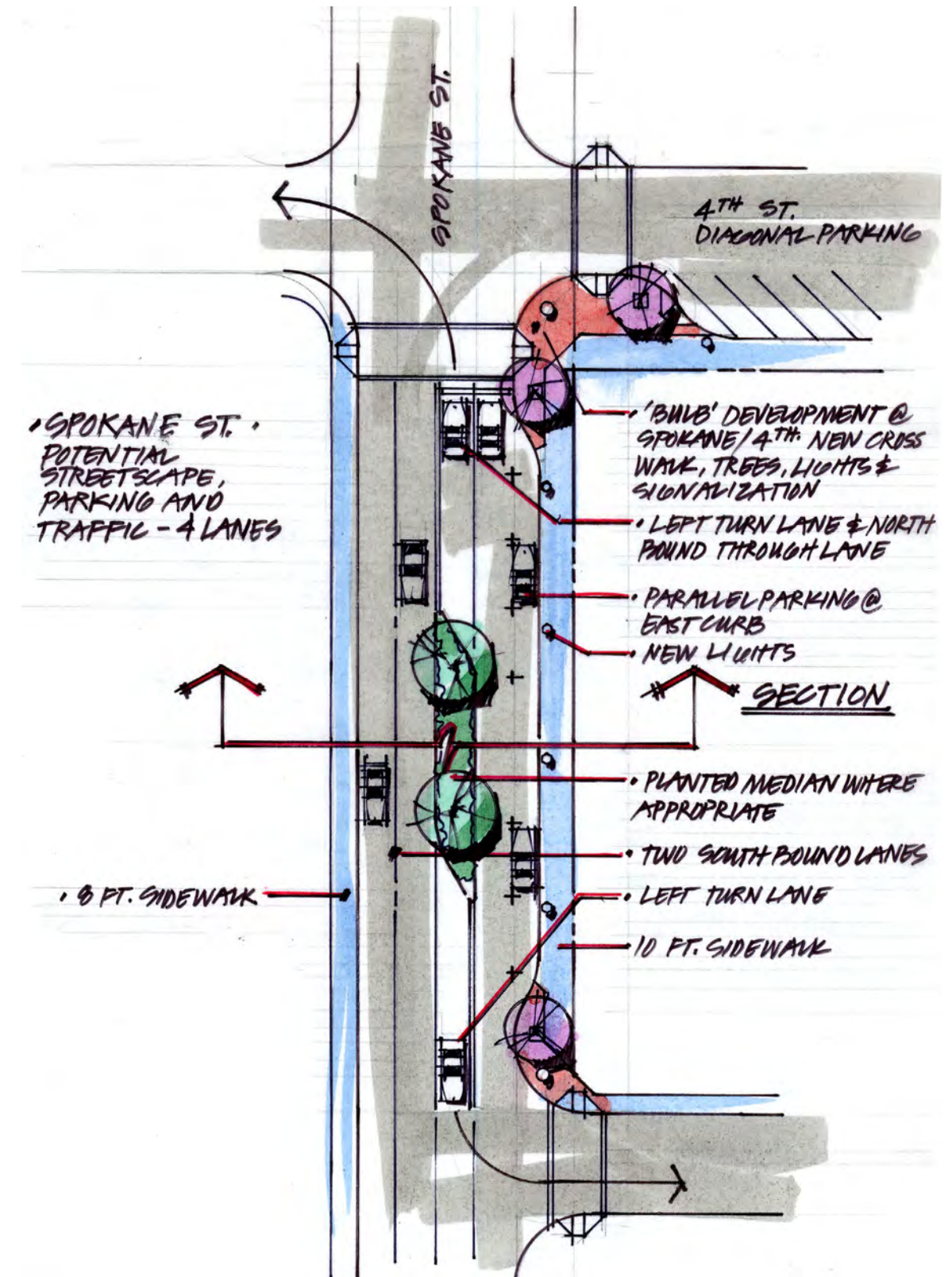
The current location where Centennial Trail crosses Spokane Street is not well marked and could be improved for enhanced pedestrian and bike safety. It is proposed that the trail crossing be re-located to mid-block between North and South Railroad Streets, with landscaped medians creating a refuge for pedestrians/bikes. The project costs also include pedestrian activated amber flashing lights plus advanced signage to re-inforce the requirement that vehicles must stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk.

#### Project 7.3: Spokane Street Streetscape 3<sup>rd</sup> St. to 1<sup>st</sup> St.

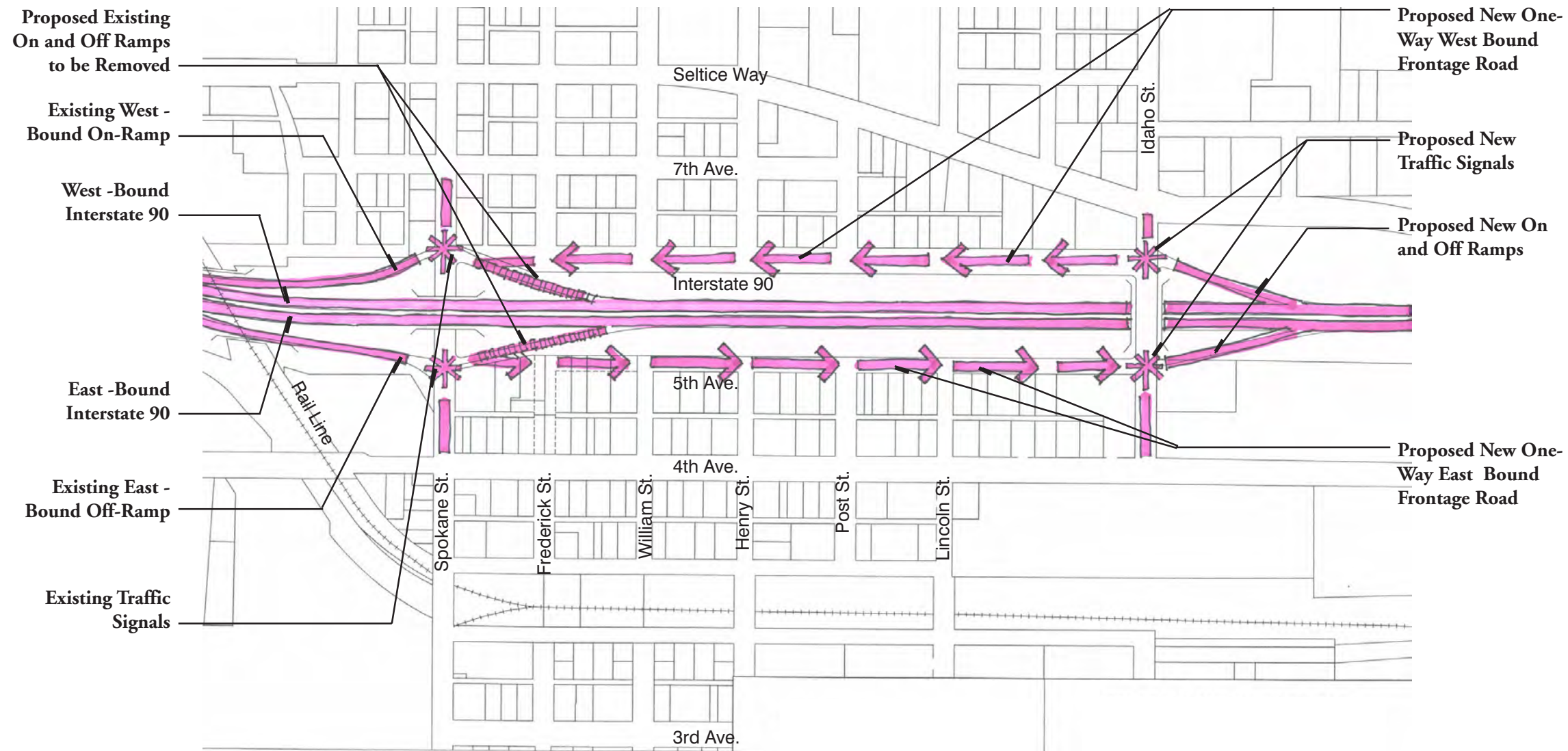
A future phase of the Spokane St. improvements will be the extension of the streetscape enhancements from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The development of the Post Falls Landing project will affect the timing and funding of this phase of the project. The visual continuity of the design elements of the entire Spokane Street corridor will be important to create the revitalized urban environment desired for the Post Falls City Center.

#### Project 7.4: Spokane River Bridge Illumination

Another priority project identified for the Spokane Street Corridor is the addition of architectural illumination fixtures from First St. to Falls City Park. Special structural assemblies will be required to support illumination fixtures along the west side of the existing bridge pedestrian walkway. Power supply would be routed in a conduit underneath the bridge structure.







**The Action**

Action 8, Split Diamond Interchange, is a nonphysical action. Action 8 is the City Center Plan’s formal endorsement of the Idaho Department of Transportation (IDT) split diamond interchange option for the Spokane St. / Idaho St I-90 on and off ramp revision. The split diamond interchange creates an eastbound frontage road in the vicinity of 5th Ave. bringing more eastbound traffic along the edge of the City Center district. The 5th Ave. frontage road creates additional connections to I-90 from Henry St. and Lincoln St., which will create alternatives to Spokane St. These alternative routes will relieve Spokane St. traffic congestion by filtering I-90 bound traffic through the City Center. By extending the east half of the interchange out to Idaho St., the project adds westbound freeway off access, and eastbound freeway on access at Idaho St., positioning Idaho St. as a future important north/south connector.

**Goals Supported by this Action:**

- 5. Creates and Strengthens City Center Attractions
- 6. Promotes Mix of Infill Development and Uses
- 7. Improve transportation choices

**Key Issues: Action 8**

It will be crucial to ensure that the character and scale of the eastbound frontage road in the vicinity of 5th Ave. is consistent with the goals of the City Center District. Efforts to ensure that auto-oriented drive-through and fast-food establishments do not proliferate in this corridor will be required, and special attention to the visual character of businesses and signs along the frontage road will be required. The freeway commercial overlay (Action 6) can help to establish quality design standards specifically for this new interchange street passing through the City Center.

**Implementation: Action 8**

The City Center Plan steering committee, and Urban Renewal Agency can implement Action 8 by formally endorsing the split diamond interchange in written form to the IDT. Implementation can be expected concurrent with Plan adoption.



## Action 9 Unique Street Signage and Palette of Street Furniture



Example - Simple Historic Lighting Fixture (Edmonds, WA)



Example - Distinct Mast Arm Lighting (Breckenridge, Co)

### The Action

Action 9, recommends the installation of any new street fixtures and furnitures and street signage according to a carefully selected palette that is unique to the City Center District. An attractive, distinct style of light fixtures including both mast arm traffic signals, and low level pedestrian street lamps should be installed within the City Center. The palette of fixtures selected for the City Center District should not be installed anywhere else within the City of Post Falls.

Example types of fixtures and furnitures recommended for the City Center District are displayed on this page. It will be important to select a consistent color or color palette for the street fixtures which reinforces the Post Falls brand and identity. A simple traditional design style is recommended for both traffic signal mast arms, and pedestrian lamps. Fluted columns and decorative bases on lighting fixtures enhance the character of the street environment.

### Street Signage

Street signage is also an important cue for indicating that the City Center District is unique. Distinctive signage for the street names that is a different color and typeface than elsewhere in the city can be installed. A simple traditional design style as on the images to the left may be appropriate. Installation of new fixtures and street signage can happen concurrently with streetscape upgrades.

### Goals Supported by this Action:

1. Promote a Distinct Post Falls Identity
2. Reconnect with Post Falls History and Heritage
3. Make Pedestrian Friendly Connections

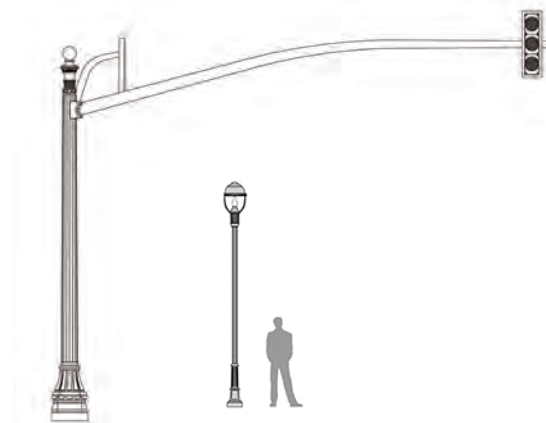
### Key Issues: Action 9

A palette of fixtures and furniture should be formally established in advance of streetscape projects. In this way, if the need arises for new or replacement signals or furniture on a case by case basis, a standard will be in place. For example, signalization of the 4th Ave. / Spokane St., and 3rd Ave. / Spokane St. intersections have already been recommended based on projected future traffic demands. These and other new fixtures should be in accord with a formally established City Center fixture palette.

### Implementation: Action 9

Action 9 is a high priority action that is readily implementable. Selection of a formal City Center streetscape fixture palette can be expected within the year 2005. Implementation of the palette portion of Action 9 requires no direct cost beyond coordination and staff work in the Post Falls Community Development Department.

Costs for installation of fixtures and furniture consistent with examples shown here are included within the estimated project cost of streetscape upgrades listed for streetscape projects. For reference, the approximate cost of a pedestrian streetlamp is in the \$6,000 - \$12,000 range per lamp.



Example Mast Arm and Example Pedestrian Lamp



Example Street Furnishings



**The Action**

Action 10 is an aggressive action to spur commercial development in the City Center to demonstrate the potential for development that responds to the Plan, providing an example project according to the new design and incentive overlay district. (See Action 6.) Under Action 10, the Urban Renewal Agency and/or City (the “Agency”) seeks out an underused or vacant parcel for purchase on one of the future mixed use commercial corridors: 4th Ave., 3rd Ave. or Spokane St. After purchase, the Agency will seek development proposals from qualified developers through a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) to the development community. The RFP offers the property to a developer at little or no initial cost under the condition that the selected developer finance and build a mixed use commercial project on the site that reflects the new design guidelines and bonuses of the Commercial Investment Overlay (See Action 6). Upon construction completion and lease-up of the project, the developer is then required to pay the Agency for the project rights, a pre-negotiated sum. The pre-agreed payment is often the full amount of the initial land purchase, or a lesser ‘residual value’ amount that ensures a pre-agreed, reasonable level of developer profit.

Such a commercial demonstration project illustrates the style, character, and economic viability of commercial development for which the City of Post Falls is striving. The public / private partnership generates interest and awareness of Post Falls commercial viability in the development community. The project also creates a strong visual statement in the City Center District and serves as a catalyst to bring more workers, residents and tax revenue to the area.

**Goals Supported by this Action:**

- 1. Promotes a Distinct Post Falls Identity
- 5. Creates and Strengthens City Center Attractions
- 6. Promotes a Vibrant Mix of Infill Developments and Uses

**Key Issues: Action 10**

Key issues include the following: developer activity; level of incentives; adoption of standards; legal liability & risk to City & Urban Renewal Agency.

**Implementation: Action 10**

Implementation for the Commercial Demonstration project is a high priority, however due to lack of funding the project it may not be possible in the near term. Although the URA and/or City will be reimbursed at project conclusion, a sizeable amount of capital is required ‘up front’ to spur this project. Given this constraint, Action 10 can be expected in the 2009 - 2012 timeframe.

The developer RFP process can take several forms. One common form is illustrated as follows:

**1. Task Force**

Select and convene a task force of 8 to 12 Agency members and community representatives who will meet regularly with the specific goal of guiding the development and implementation of the demonstration project. The Task Force would advise the Agency and assist in communications with the public.

**2. Preliminary Market Analysis**

Using available real estate market data, determine a preliminary target market and product mix. Product mix would determine the proportion of retail, housing, its general configuration (type and number of units), and commercial / retail development.

**3. Preliminary Site Vision, Goals & Program**

Based on the preliminary market analysis, establish a preliminary vision, goals, and program for the demonstration project. This preliminary discussion will help guide further refinements.

**4. Site Selection**

Analyze the vacant properties in the designated target areas to determine which properties are best suitable to meet the established project goals and objectives. As a real estate matter, this review may be accomplished in “executive session”. The task force would then make recommendations to the Agency for selection of the preferred site that meets the vision and goals of the program.

**5. Site Feasibility**

Once a site is selected, analyze the site to determine the feasibility of development. The financial component would be a preliminary development pro forma. The physical component would analyze factors such as availability of utilities, sun exposure, stormwater considerations, and circulation / site access. The analysis would synthesize site opportunities and constraints and produce a concept-level design as the basis of the pro-forma.

**6. Refined Program**

Based on the preliminary pro forma, the site program is refined. The pro forma will serve as a guide to negotiate terms with the successfully selected developer.

**7. Public Involvement**

Although communications with the public would occur throughout the demonstration project process, the public will be involved in a formal process at this stage to comment upon the refined program with a series of meetings targeting special stakeholder groups. An open house for local businesses would occur to allow the opportunity for the established business owners to voice their concerns and support of the ideas. An open house for the community would also occur (they could occur at the same meeting). A developer panel would also be solicited to provide input as to whether the preliminary program is feasible in the current market and opinions regarding details of the proposed development and viability of the preliminary pro forma.

**8. Developer RFP**

Public and developer comments will be taken into consideration to prepare a detailed RFP for the project. The RFP will include findings from the market analysis, a suggested development mix, and any assistance the City would provide from a regulatory perspective to spur the development. The RFP can be as detailed as necessary to produce the intended results.

**9. Project Implementation**

Select a developer, negotiate terms of the agreement, and assist the developer in successful implementation of the project. Engage media to highlight the project’s success.

Cost for purchase of an underused or vacant lot on one of the future Post Falls commercial corridors is estimated in the \$160,000 to \$430,000 range. This is based on recent sales at the time of the Post Falls City Center Plan and on approximate per square foot land values in 2005.



*Example Mixed-Use development with residential character*



*Example mixed-use development with no corner setback and commercial character*



*Alternative mixed-use development with view units.*



# Actions 11 - 13



*Parking lots improvements in the City Center near convenient Centennial Trail access points can encourage more visitors to start and end their ride in the City Center.*

## Action 11 - Centennial Trail Parking Lot Upgrades

Action 11 suggests improving parking lots for access to the Centennial Trail in the vicinity of Falls Park and 4th Ave. The Centennial Trail is a major recreational destination. Creating a convenient access point to the Trail within the City Center District brings additional visitors into the area, and strengthens it as a destination.

## Action 11 implementation & Issues

Upgrading parking lots for the Centennial Trail is a relatively easy action to implement. It is anticipated that this could occur in years 2006 - 2008.

**Spokane River Blvd.**

**Post Falls Blvd.**

## Action 12 - Rename Spokane St. & 4th Ave.

Action 12, renaming Spokane St. and 4th Ave. has been referenced along with several of the streetscape upgrade projects. The recommendation is to rename the portion of Spokane St., south of Interstate 90 as “Spokane River Boulevard”, and rename the portion of 4th Ave., east of Idaho St., as “Post Falls Boulevard”. These names enhance the sense of place in the City Center, and distinguish the area as a unique and special district. As recommended in Action 9, the lettering and colors of the new signage should be distinctive, different from street signage in other areas of the City.

## Action 12 Implementation and Issues

Renaming Spokane St. and 4th Ave., are relatively easy actions to implement. The renaming could occur concurrent with streetscape upgrades, or it could occur independently. Costs for this action are primarily administrative in the areas of address changes and public notification. Nominal costs for switching out existing streets signs would be incurred.

*Potential options for the renaming of Spokane St. and 4th Ave. with names that create a stronger identity for Post Falls.*



*Example - A small historic museum in the Edmonds, WA.*

## Action 13 - Create Joint Visitor Center / Historic Museum

Action 13 recommends the creation of a joint visitor center and historic museum. If the site selected is large enough for combined functions, the center would be home for both the Post Falls Historical Society, the Post Falls Chamber of Commerce, and potentially other civic agencies. The prominent location on Spokane St. would have a strong presence in the City Center, and is a central point of departure for a historic walking tour. (See action 19).

## Action 13: Implementation and Issues

Site control and funding are the two primary obstacles to implementing Action 13. Funding for the facility requires a joint effort by the Post Falls Chamber, the Historical Society, and the City. Care should be taken to identify funding for ongoing operation of the facility, as well as for initial construction.



## Action 14 - Falls Dam / Falls / WWP Bridge Accent Lighting

Action 14 seeks to enhance the prominence of the Falls themselves, the initial reason for Post Falls' settlement, and an important identity feature. During the background analysis, it was noted that accessing a good view of the Falls as well as the Washington Water Power Avista Bridge is difficult. From Interstate 90 visitors catch a fleeting glance of the Falls spillway and the WWP Avista Bridge. This view could be significantly enhanced with minor pruning or removal of several Ponderosa pines that impede the view corridor. To make the view more spectacular during nighttime hours, colorful accent lighting could be added to illuminate the flowing water and the historic WWP Bridge. This minor improvement project could significantly strengthen the identity of Post Falls within the region.

## Action 14 Implementation & Issues

An important step for implementation of Action 14 is coordination with Avista, the owner of the land in the vicinity of the Falls, and the owner of the WWP bridge. It is anticipated that the City would take the lead in this coordination effort. Capital costs for the addition of lighting are relatively minor. Ongoing electricity costs for the addition of lighting should also be considered. It is anticipated that Action 14 may be implemented within a 2007 - 2010 timeframe.



Better views onto the Post Falls spillway can strengthen the identity of the Post Falls historic City Center.

## Action 15 - Streetscape Improvement Henry & Lincoln St.

Henry St. and Lincoln St. are the only north / south connector streets in the City Center, aside from Spokane St., which cross the rail line. The presence of the rail line in the center of the district reduces the connectivity from north to south. Henry and Lincoln Streets are both underperforming streets in need of street resurfacing, sidewalks, pedestrian lighting and stormwater drainage. Action 15 recommends upgrading Henry and Lincoln Street from 1st Ave. to 5th Ave. It is recommended that streetscape improvements on Henry and Lincoln Streets adhere to a 'green' street prototype, suitable for a small town residential district. Stormwater runoff may be handled in heavily planted swales, interspersed with on-street parking. Streets should be configured with two travel lanes.

## Action 15 Implementation & Issues

Action 15 is an important step toward greater connectivity through the City Center to Interstate 90, once the Split Diamond Interchange is complete (See Action Item 8). In this respect, connections along Henry and Lincoln Streets will relieve traffic congestion on Spokane St. However, Action 15 received a lower priority ranking than other streetscape upgrade projects. Streetscape upgrades to Henry and Lincoln Streets are likely to occur after the completion of commercial corridor streetscape upgrades on 4th Ave., and Spokane St. Therefore, it is expected that Action 15 be implemented in the 2010 - 2015 timeframe.



Henry St. and Lincoln St. (green) are the only north / south connector streets in the City Center district beside Spokane St.

## Action 16 - Streetscape Improvement 3rd Ave.

The City Center envisions 3rd Ave. as a future mixed-use commercial corridor, similar to 4th Ave. and Spokane St. As a connector to the Seltice Way district to the east, 3rd Ave. receives a large amount of vehicle through traffic. 3rd Ave. will also become the main entry point to the Post Falls Landing when development is completed. Action 16 recommends urban streetscape upgrades from Idaho St. to Spokane St. on 3rd Ave. Stormwater drainage may be handled in a system of swales positioned in a roadway median, which would be interspersed with center turning opportunities. Continuous curb and sidewalk at the street edge are recommended along with on-street parking.

## Action 16 Implementation & Issues

3rd Avenue received street upgrades in the last several years, at the time of this plan. Since these upgrades will provide adequate function for a number of years, the 3rd Ave. streetscape upgrades received a lower priority ranking than several other streetscape upgrades. However, the existing 3rd Ave. streetscape features the standard major collector configuration with several elements that may be less consistent with a distinct, urban city center district. Specifically, stormwater is treated in continuous grassy swales. Also, postal service delivery occurs in the same fashion as that on 4th Ave. (See Action 1), in which the Postal Service Delivery Vehicles require "turnouts" on the street. Such turnouts would not be allowed under the suggested configuration of 3rd Ave. Therefore it is recommended that the City coordinate with the local Post Office for foot delivery of mail on 3rd Ave. It is recommended that as the City Center develops in future years, an additional round of 3rd Ave. streetscapes be implemented. These upgrades might be anticipated in the 2010 - 2015 timeframe.



3rd Ave. streetscapes have continuous swales that are less urban in character.



## Actions 17 - 19



Entry to the Centennial Trail near the unsignalized crossing of Spokane St.

### Action 17 - Improve Centennial Trail Crossing

Action 17 suggests creating a prominent and clear crossing of Spokane St. for the Centennial Trail at a location slightly south of the North Railroad intersection. Currently an unsignalized crosswalk is in place at North Railroad to guide cyclists across Spokane St. Action 17 recommends making the crossing more prominent and relocating it slightly further south, so cyclists have a more direct route from where the trail emerges on the south side of the Railway Line. A potential feature to explore is the installation of hand activated traffic signal, or hand-activated flashing crosswalk lights. Either of these options would greatly increase the safety of the crossing for pedestrians and cyclists.

### Action 17 Implementation & Issues

The most effective way to implement Action 17 is to include an extra allocation in the Spokane St. Streetscape upgrade specifically for the Centennial Trail crossing. If executed in conjunction with the Spokane St. upgrade (Action 7), implementation can be expected in the range of 2009-2012.



Example - Textured pavers installed throughout an intersection to create a node intersection and calm traffic.

### Action 18 - Mullan Ave. / Spokane St. Improvement

The intersection of Mullan Ave. and Spokane St. is an important node at the Post Falls Library, and the north boundary to the City Center District on Spokane St. Streetscape treatment is recommended to emphasize this north gateway. A range of general options were discussed for the intersection during the planning process including a roundabout. However, due to traffic volumes and limited ROW space a roundabout may not be the most appropriate nodal streetscape feature. Instead adding ample crosswalks, and decorative textured pavers throughout the intersection may be a more suitable technique. Textured pavers signal an entry, and have the effect of calming traffic.

### Action 18 Implementation & Issues

Action 18 received a medium priority ranking. However, the focused streetscape upgrade is of moderate scale and expense. It is expected that Action 18 may be implemented in the 2010 - 2015 range.



A number of sites of historic significance are scattered throughout the City Center district.

### Action 19 - Create a Historic Interpretive Walking Tour

Action 19 suggests creating a formal, self guided, historic walking tour. The action consists of documenting and describing the full range of historically significant sites in the Post Falls City Center and publishing these in an attractive tour-guide brochure. Visitors pick up the brochure at a designated location (e.g. joint Historic Museum / Visitor Center - Action 13) and can stroll the City Center's historic landmarks at their own pace. The walking tour can be enhanced by installing interpretive placards at a number of the historically significant locations. Where historic locations are on streets slated for streetscape upgrade, historic placards should be included in the streetscape project.

### Action 19 Implementation & Issues

The lead agency for implementation of Action 19 is the Post Falls Historical Society. Major work items for Action 19 include accurate documentation of historical information, and graphic design for an attractive brochure. The largest cost associated with establishing the walking tour initially is for printing of the tour-guide brochures. Interpretive placards at locations can be added at a later time. Due to the relatively low cost of implementation, it is anticipated that a Action 19 be achieved in the 2006 - 2008 range.



## Action 20 - Streetscape Improvement 1st Ave.

Action 20 suggests an urban style streetscape upgrade on 1st Ave., but at a quieter residential scale than the commercial corridor streetscape upgrades on 4th, 3rd, and Spokane St. 1st Ave. is envisioned in future years as a stable, townhouse-style residential district that relates to the Spokane River. Streetscape improvements are needed to widen sidewalks, add pedestrian lighting and fixtures, and increase the number of street trees, and add on-street parking where appropriate.

## Action 20 Implementation & Issues

With the lowest priority ranking among City Center streetscape upgrades, it is expected that Action 20 be implemented in the medium to long term. At the present time 1st Ave. streetscape is in adequate condition, with curbs and sidewalks for a large portion of the street edge. As 1st Ave. receives a greater amount of residential investment in future years, Action 20 should be implemented. The timeframe might be in the 2012 - 2016 range.



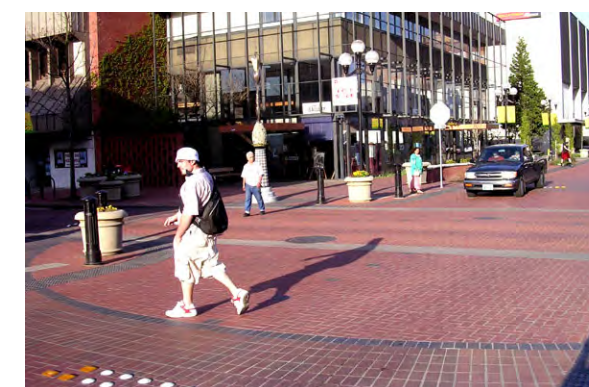
Example - Streetscape treatment on a medium density

## Action 21 - Improve 3rd Ave. Crossing

3rd Avenue will be the main point of entry to the Post Falls Landing development, and it is envisioned as a future mixed-use commercial corridor. Therefore the crossing at Spokane St. will be an important one. Action 21 recommends a nodal crossing at 3rd Ave., which could be achieved with large and distinct crosswalks, or with textured paving throughout the intersection (as in Action 18). Action 21 could be achieved in conjunction with Spokane St., Streetscape upgrades (Action 7), or it could be achieved independently.

## Action 21 Implementation & Issues

The most effective way to implement Action 21 is to include an extra allocation in the Spokane St. Streetscape upgrade specifically for the 3rd Ave. crossing. If executed in conjunction with Spokane St. upgrade (Action 7), implementation can be expected in the range of 2009-2012.



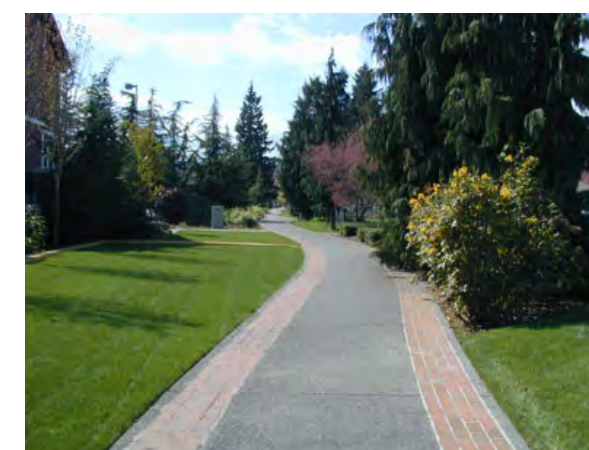
Example - Textured pavers used to create a prominent street crossing.

## Action 22 - Centennial Trail Spurs

The centennial trail is a regional bicycle and recreation artery passing through the City Center district. Clearly marked trail spurs to destination locations can entice more visitors to spend time in the Post Falls City Center, and help 'get the word out' about positive changes. Potential trail spurs to current and future attractions might include: a clear spur to the new Post Falls City Hall (Action 3); a spur across the bridge to the Q'emiln Park and Natural area; spurs to points on the historic walking tour like Treaty Rock; and spurs to the public features in the Post Falls Landing development.

## Action 22 Implementation & Issues

Capital costs for centennial trail spurs are limited in cases where signage, and on-road connections are adequate. In these cases implementation can be expected in the 2008 - 2010 timeframe.



Bicycle / Pedestrian trails can be major attractions that draw visitors to destinations throughout the City Center.



## Actions 23 - 25



Example - Quality medium-density housing providing views in upper stories onto the water.

### Action 23 - Residential Development Demonstration Project

Similar to Action 10, *Commercial Mixed-Use Demonstration Project*, Action 23 suggests a Residential Demonstration Project in the Post Falls City Center. A residential demonstration project seeks to illustrate the scale and character of desired infill development in areas covered by a residential investment overlay district. A demonstration project would be implemented through the same methodology as Action 10. The City and / or U.R.A acquires an underused parcel and issues a Request for Proposals to developers for a project on the site. The City and / or U.R.A recoups the value of the land at project conclusion. Such a project would seek to strengthen the residential base in the Post Falls City Center, and would be a catalyst for other infill developments by example.

### Action 23 Implementation & Issues

An obstacle to implementation of action 23 is that public agencies in Post Falls have not been significantly involved in housing-related issues in recent years. An important consideration here is that within the Tax Increment Financing district, incremental tax income generated through residential investment is equally valuable to income generated through commercial investment. Further, local-serving commercial development needs a stable and sizeable residential base in order to thrive. The residential demonstration project seeks to address these issues. With a low prioritization ranking, a residential demonstration project is not likely to be implemented in the near term. A timeframe of 2012 - 2018 might be expected for a residential demonstration project.



Example - Small scale farmer's market gathering area that doubles as a parking lot when not in use.

### Action 24 - Plan For Future Events / Gathering Center

During the City Center Planning process a community desire for a Civic Focus and gathering place was articulated. At present, several potential civic spaces are in the works, including the courtyard at the new City Hall, and civic features in the Post Falls Landing development. Action 24 suggests another future civic events / gathering space near the railroad corridor in the center, or at the east edge of the City Center District. The gathering area could be created on land acquired initially for parking and green space (See Action 5). An early stage gathering center could include uses such as a farmers market. In future years the area could transition to a more intense facility such as an auditorium or small stadium - especially if the current Idaho Veneer Mill ceases operation. This would free up additional land in the area currently occupied by a rail spur to the mill.

### Action 24 Implementation & Issues

Action 24 is a long range, low priority action. In the near term, steps towards implementation are limited to ongoing discussion and review of the issues. Action 24 should be considered in tandem, or in conjunction with Action 25. Continued discussion on these allows the City of Post Falls to have a strategy in place for quality planning and incorporation of civic features, 'just in case' the Idaho Veneer mill ceases operation in future years. Assigning a timeframe for implementation is premature at the time of this Plan.



Example - Multi-modal transit center serving pedestrian, local bus, Greyhound, and rail in downtown core Mount Vernon, WA

### Action 25 - Plan For Future Multi-Modal Transit Center

Action 25 anticipates increased demand for additional transportation choices in future years and takes a regional view of transportation issues. Post Falls is a central location along the Spokane to Coeur d'Alene metro region. With continued growth in the region a regional transit system may become more feasible in future years. Action 25 recommends proactive steps to ensure that the City Center becomes a destination stop in any future regional transit network. The presence of the rail line in the City Center provides strong opportunity for a future station in the heart of Post Falls. Light-rail tracks in a number of metro regions nationally have been laid out within old heavy-rail corridors. Land acquired near the rail line initially for parking or green space (See Action 5), can be converted to accommodate transit in future years. The same land might also be used in a nearer term for a bus transit center. Proximity to the Centennial Trail provides opportunity for a truly multi-modal hub.

### Action 25 Implementation & Issues

Action 25 is a long range, low priority action. In the near term steps towards implementation are limited to ongoing discussion and review of the issues. Action 25 should be considered in tandem, or in conjunction with Action 24. Continued discussion on these allows the City of Post Falls to have a strategy in place for quality planning and incorporation of civic features, 'just in case' regional transit becomes a more immediate topic, or the Idaho Veneer mill ceases operation in future years. Assigning a timeframe for implementation is premature at the time of this Plan.



## 2. Community Participation & Vision Statement

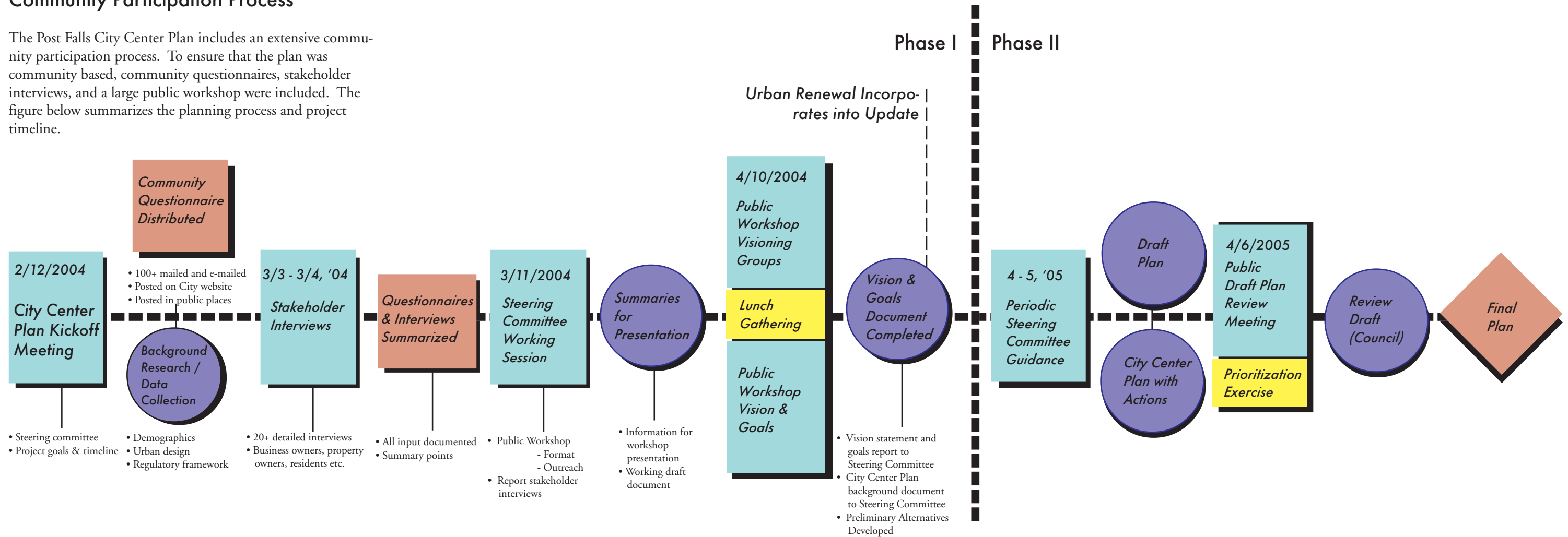
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## Community Participation Process

The Post Falls City Center Plan includes an extensive community participation process. To ensure that the plan was community based, community questionnaires, stakeholder interviews, and a large public workshop were included. The figure below summarizes the planning process and project timeline.



### Steering Committee

A steering committee was assembled to guide the consultant team. The steering committee consists primarily of Urban Renewal Agency commissioners and City officials, as well as a range of additional Post Falls stakeholders. The steering committee provided feedback on techniques to reach out to the Post Falls community. The committee also provided assistance for making community contacts, and arranging meetings and outreach.

### Stakeholder Interviews

Interviews of a cross-section stakeholder group were conducted on March 3, and March 4 of 2004, and through additional telephone interviews. The group was selected by the steering committee, and intended as a representational sample of Post Falls interests.

### Community Questionnaire

A community questionnaire was directly distributed via mail and e-mail to 100+ Post Falls residents and stakeholders. Questionnaires were also posted on the Post Falls web site and made available for pickup at the City Hall and the Public Library. Questionnaires recorded the strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats facing the city center district from the perspective of Post Falls residents.

### Public Workshop

A community wide public workshop on April 10, 2004 was the key event for establishing a Vision Statement and Goals for the city center district. The public workshop built on all of the input from earlier interviews and community questionnaires. Nearly 60 Post Falls stakeholders gathered for the event. Working in groups, residents discussed earlier ideas from interviews and documented their preferred directions for the future of the city center district. The outcome of the meeting was a consensus and set of goals documented in this plan.

### Phase II Participation

Phase II public participation reminded the community of the work completed in Phase I, and encouraged community participation in refining the final plan and prioritizing project actions. Phase two was guided by a series of Steering Committee meetings to develop a draft plan and logical sequence of actions. These actions and draft plan were reviewed at a public open house. Public response and community preferences were recorded and incorporated into the final plan.



## City Center Vision Statement

The Vision for the future of the Post Falls city center district comes directly from broad-based community participation. Between December of 2003 and April of 2004 residents, business owners, public officials, and stakeholder in Post Falls shared their ideas for the district in interviews, questionnaires, meetings, and a large public workshop. The following vision statement is a product of the April 10, 2004 public workshop, where nearly 60 Post Falls stakeholders convened to synthesize community ideas into a consensus direction for the future of the city center district...

### Post Falls City Center Vision Statement

*The city center district is the city's heritage center, the focus of Post Falls identity, and is distinctive in character, look and feel. The district celebrates and reconnects with Post Falls' heritage as a historic mill and railroad town. The city center fully capitalizes on wonderful natural resources in close proximity to downtown including the Spokane River, Post Falls, and Q'emiln Park. A network of safe, pleasant pedestrian connections are in place, linking key landmarks and attractions, and these connections are clearly marked and understood. Civic, cultural, and business attractions draw both I-90 travelers and Post Falls residents into the area. A safe, livable residential core is in place especially in the southern part of the district. The residential core provides basic support for a mix of retail shops, small offices and services nearby, that are also available to regional patrons as well. Because of the falls, natural character and parks, the Post Falls city center is a great place to live, work, recreate, do business and visit.*

### *"City Center" vs. "Downtown"*

During the planning process a number of Post Falls stakeholders felt that calling the study area "downtown" was not the right term. With more vibrant business activity in other Post Falls commercial corridors, many felt that the commercial downtown of the city is elsewhere. In addition, downtown connotes an urban character that may not be quite right for Post Falls. Due to these concerns, the title of this study was renamed from a downtown study to a city center study. If not the current commercial hub of Post Falls, the study area remains the geographic center of Post Falls, and the city's heritage center.



## City Center Goals

The following list of city center goals directly supports the Vision Statement. These goals reflect the shared elements of the Post Falls city center vision. The goals provide direction and a specific pathway for the City of Post Falls to realize its vision for the city center. These goals are primarily a product of the Public Workshop, with input also from community questionnaires and interviews.

### 1. Promote A Distinct Post Falls Identity

*The city center district should have a distinct character, and should be the center of Post Falls identity. Identity should be enhanced with a range of elements including consistent streetscape treatments, design style, amenity features, and naming that helps brand identity.*

#### Distinct Identity Goals:

- 1.a Formally name district to enhance identity - possibly Post Falls “Heritage Center”.
- 1.b Rename Spokane Street to emphasize the river connection - possibly “Spokane River Boulevard”.
- 1.c Rename 4th Avenue to reflect the connection to the falls - possibly “Post Falls Boulevard”.
- 1.d Adopt consistent, distinct, street and directional signage within the district.
- 1.e Install consistent street lighting, street trees, sidewalks, and street furniture throughout the district.
- 1.f Promote a Post Falls design style for new development that capitalizes on the city’s heritage and does not emulate Coeur d’Alene. Potential tools include design review, design guidelines, façade improvement assistance, and development incentive programs.
- 1.g Retain comfortable and friendly ‘small town’ atmosphere.
- 1.h Explore installation of a landmark element or public art near the I-90 interchange to create interest from the freeway.

*See Also: 6.a, 5.a*

### 2. Reconnect with Post Falls History and Heritage

*Post Falls’ history and heritage should be strongly emphasized in the city center district and incorporated into revitalization actions.*

#### Reconnect with History Goals:

- 2.a Create and market a historic walking tour to capitalize on Post Falls historic resources.
- 2.b Strive for a historic museum in the city center district in close proximity to the new Post Falls Civic Center Campus.
- 2.c Encourage preservation of older structures and historic cues in the landscape, and enhance important landmarks such as Treaty Rock, the Old Church, and historic homes.
- 2.d Allow a combination or mixing of historic elements, with context sensitive new design.
- 2.e Strive for better public access to the Avista Powerhouse and the Washington Water Power Bridge historic resources, while meeting essential public facility safety requirements.
- 2.f Explore collaboration with the Coeur d’Alene tribe to commemorate Native American History, possibly with a landmark or statue near Q’emiln Park.

*See also 1.f, 5.a*

### 3. Capitalize on Natural Character - The River, The Falls and the Landscape

*The city center district should establish strong connections to the picturesque natural resources in immediate proximity to the district: the river, the falls, and the natural landscape. Access to and enhancement of natural resources should improve the livability and vitality of the city center by attracting visitors.*

#### Natural Character and Resources Goals:

- 3.a Strive for increased public access to the Avista properties while meeting essential public facility security requirements. Explore creative funding sources and partnerships including Federal sources to accomplish this goal.
- 3.b Enhance and market Q’emiln Park as a regionally unique recreation destination. Enhance activities such as rock climbing, kayaking, fishing and cross country skiing opportunity in addition to boating. Explore conversion to State Park.
- 3.c Increase connection between the city center district and Q’emiln Park with signage, pedestrian and bicycle pathways, including a possible spur from the Centennial Trail.

*See also: 2.e, 4.b, 5.a*

### 4. Make Pedestrian Friendly Connections

*Pedestrian connections in the district should provide an opportunity for residents and visitors to safely enjoy the district by walking or biking, especially between key destinations and attractions.*

#### Pedestrian Friendly Connections Goals:

- 4.a Install safe, pedestrian friendly, sidewalks, lighting, and street trees throughout the district that enhance the experience for pedestrians. 4th Avenue and 2nd Avenue are in particular need of upgrade. Lighting should be high cutoff to illuminate pathways for pedestrians and minimize stray ambient lighting.
- 4.b Link attractions with a network of trails and pathways and possibly a “walking loop”. Linkages might include pathways to Treaty Rock, Q’emiln Park possibly via a pedestrian bridge, a connection along the River in the Post Falls Landing, attractions on 4th Avenue, and better connections to the Seltice Way business corridor.
- 4.c Address connection of Spokane Street across the I-90 Interstate. Tools could include lighting public art, and pedestrian upgrades near the I-90 underpasses and interchange.
- 4.d Provide street furniture that accommodates a full range of age groups and meets Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) needs, when implementing pedestrian upgrades.

*See also: 1.e, 7.b*



## 5. Create and Strengthen City Center Attractions

*The city center district should feature a range of attractions: civic, cultural, business and recreational. Attractions are needed to draw people and bring life into the district.*

### Create an Attraction Goals:

- 5.a Draw more attention to the falls and the Washington Water Power Bridge from the I-90 freeway, with attractive flood lighting and a clear view corridor.
- 5.b Create a parking / rest area in close proximity to the I-90 interchange, or near the rail line for both through travelers and local visitors.
- 5.c Provide safe clean public restrooms for travelers, local visitors and for other Post Falls attractions and events.
- 5.d Provide a designated future location for a Farmers' Markets or other open air market in the city center district.
- 5.e Continue to develop the Civic Center Campus as an anchor, including a civic gathering space or plaza.
- 5.f Promote regular events, festivals, fairs and gatherings in the district. Examples may include: extension of Post Falls parade to Spokane Street, a Farmers' Market, Christmas Tree Lighting at new Civic Center, street closure 'block parties'. Consider development of an entertainment district.
- 5.g Enhance highly visible locations including freeway interchanges with public art and other aesthetic improvements.
- 5.h Acknowledge the Post Falls Landing civic features as important public attractions. (eg. band shell, public water access and river promenade.) Facilitate realization of these features.

*See also: 1.h, 2.a, 2.b, 2.c, 2.e, 7.a*

## 6. Promote a Vibrant Mix of Infill Developments and Uses

*The city center should strive for mixed infill development, which reflects the desired Post Falls style and character. A strong residential core in the southern and western half of the district should support future local commercial development.*

### New Development Goals:

- 6.a Support new development that adds to the overall character of the district, with design guidelines for street-edge development, quality of materials, and design in keeping with Post Falls image. Tools could include zoning overlay, development incentive, design guidelines, public design review and others.
- 6.b Facilitate progress of the Post Falls Landing project, especially where civic gathering and public benefit features are present. (eg. band shell, public water access and river promenade.)
- 6.c Promote quality infill residential development, especially along 1st and 2nd Avenues. Possible tools include: developer incentives, property consolidation actions, or city-sponsored housing demonstration action. A residential core should be in place as a good place to live, in order to support future commercial opportunity.
- 6.d Support upgrades to residential properties throughout the district. Potential tools include facade improvement or weatherization programs.
- 6.e Promote street-front commercial development in a corridor along Spokane Street. Support storefront specialty shop options, offices and services - not competition with 'big box' retail areas.
- 6.f Promote a destination business district along Spokane Street near the intersection with Seltice Way. Explore collective marketing and organization among businesses.
- 6.g Encourage development of live/work spaces where appropriate, possibly including 3rd and 4th Avenues.

*See also: 5.h, 1.f, 2.b*

## 7. Improve Transportation and Choices:

### Transportation Goals:

- 7.a Consider future localized public transportation in the Spokane Street corridor connecting from the Library to Q'emiln Park – possibly a small-scale trolley.
- 7.b Acknowledge that ample parking to accommodate automobiles is essential, but design parking and vehicle access in ways that are secondary to the pedestrian pathways. Where possible, screen parking areas from the street edge.
- 7.c Begin to consider long-term regional transportation needs including a possible linking point in the city center of Post Falls. Consider 'reservation' of space, possibly along the rail line, for a future multi-modal transit hub.
- 7.d Ensure that 2nd and 4th Avenues remain at an appropriate scale for the desired city center character and image. Consider overall distribution of east/west traffic to preserve community scale of streets in the city center.
- 7.e Develop distinctive street design guidelines for city center streets, which help realize goals 1 and 4.
- 7.f Allow special design attention to node intersections where collector streets intersect with Spokane Street

*See also: 4.b, 4.c*



## Public Workshop

The April 10, 2004 public workshop synthesized a wide range of community-based ideas into a consensus Vision Statement and a series of shared goals. The session was also a fun gathering to generate energy and momentum for the city center area. Nearly 60 people joined in for at least part of the session. The process and outcomes of the workshop are summarized below.

### Information Display

Much of the background information and analysis included in this document was displayed for stakeholders to view. At the beginning of the meeting stakeholders had an opportunity to familiarize themselves with background data.

### Presentation and Examples

The consultant team presented background information and provided a number of examples of cities that have successfully rejuvenated deteriorating city centers. Examples profiled cities including Eugene, OR; Edmonds, WA; the Ballard neighborhood of Seattle; and the newly constructed Redmond Town Center, WA. Examples were intended as food for thought and inspiration for visioning working groups.

### Visioning Working Groups

Post Falls stakeholders broke into four working groups. Each group was provided with a stack of example visioning images and visioning points, which were used to help generate ideas for the future of the city center district. These vision points and images were based on previous input from the community during stakeholder interviews, and community questionnaires.

### Consensus Vision

After the four breakout working groups presented their suggestions and ideas, the full group reconvened. Commonalities between the different groups' work were collected and recorded. The full group discussed and debated which items should go to the final vision board.



*Post Falls stakeholders gathering for discussion at the public workshop*



*Viewing background information on the Post Falls city center district*

*Four visioning working groups comprised of Post Falls stakeholders. Participants discussing their ideas for the future of the city center district.*





## Commonly Selected Vision Points

The most commonly selected vision points include the following:

- Celebrates History
- Center of Post Falls Identity
- Small Town Feel
- Distinct Identifiable District
- Civic & Cultural Center
- Regular Events & Activities
- Mix of Uses
- Natural Character & Landscape
- Consistent Design Style
- Pedestrian Friendly Streets
- Great Place to Live / Work / Play

## Commonly Selected Vision Images

The images below were the most commonly selected example images.



Civic plaza for gathering



Farmer's Market in a designated area



Streetscape upgrades to make a better city center environment



Strong pedestrian / bicycle linkages between important landmarks



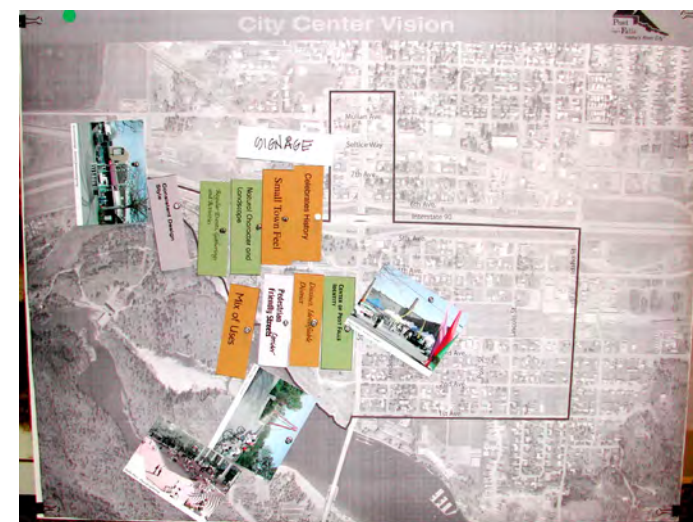
Storefront business in a historic style befitting of Post Falls heritage

## Working Group Vision Boards

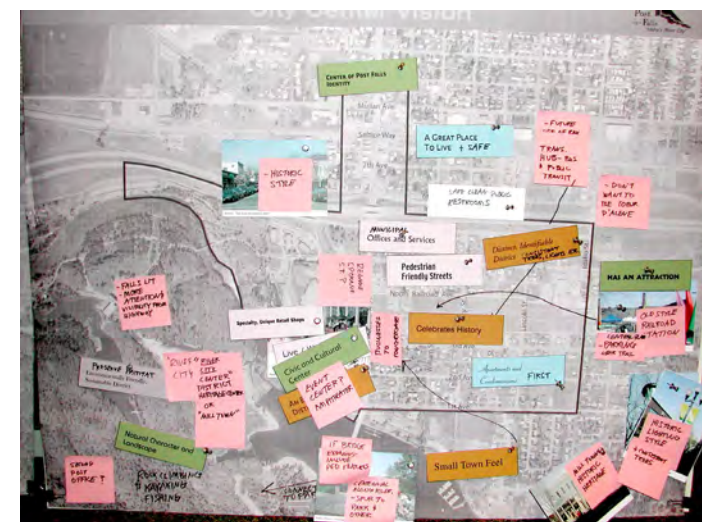
Four separate working groups comprised of Post Falls stakeholder prepared boards documenting their ideas for the future of the city center district.



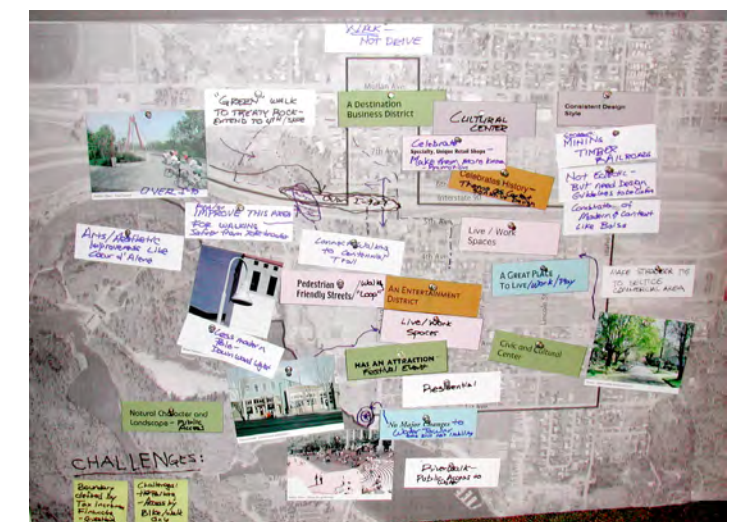
Group blue vision board



Group green vision board



Group red vision board



Group yellow vision board



## Stakeholder Interviews

A total of 20 interviews were conducted on March 3, and March 4 of 2004, and in follow-up telephone interviews. Stakeholder interviewees were from a cross-section group selected by the steering committee. The group was intended as a representational sample of Post Falls interests. Interviewees included business interests, residents, and public officials. Interviews were a chance for detailed and meaningful input in a short period of time. Information gathered included 1.) general factual information about the district, 2.) perceptions and thoughts on strengths and weaknesses, and 3.) ideas for the future of the district. The following summarizes input gathered from interview sessions.

### Summary of Stakeholder Interviews

#### Background / General Information / Valuable Facts:

- **3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Changing:** Increasingly a through route. More light industry moving in.
- **Favorable Housing Market:** Tax differentials will fuel market for years to come.
- **Avista Security Concerns:** Homeland Security, increasingly tight restrictions.
- **Spokane to Coeur d'Alene Region:** Integrated region for business and residents.
- **Bedroom Community:** Most people see Post Falls as such.
- **Downtown District Not Always Seen As Downtown:** Some question considering the study area 'down town' in light of much more vibrant Seltice development.
- **Historical Downtown Post Falls:** Many historic cues remain in the Post Falls city center, which could be better emphasized.
- **City Center Not Good For Business:** High turnover rate of businesses in city center when compared to other commercial strips.

#### Strengths:

- **Q'emiln Park:** A major draw that could be improved further.
- **The Water and The Falls:** Great natural assets.
- **Civic and Community Presence:** Government, and churches draw people.
- **Central Location and Economic Position in the Region:** Strong market position.
- **Historical Assets:** Museum, structures, landscape elements.
- **Centennial Trail:** Nice asset, could be accentuated more.
- **Falls Park:** Excellent nearby park space.
- **I-90 Access:** Provides very strong accessibility and exposure to traffic.

#### Weaknesses:

- **No Attraction:** Currently few reasons to go to the city center district.
- **Lack of Identity:** Post Falls is a city without an identity or a center.
- **Unattractive Streetscapes:** Sidewalks and curbs are often missing, lack of good trees, and lighting.
- **Lack of additional I-90 Onramps and Offramps are Problematic:** Inadequate Seltice interchange.
- **Retail market in District Comparatively Weak:** City center not on the main drag.
- **'Waiting' for Green development:** Vacant site affects entire district.
- **Poor housing and building conditions:** Unattractive. Makes area less viable.
- **I-90 Divides City Center:** Not enough places to cross.

#### Ideas / Vision for the Downtown Area:

- **Mix of Uses:** Opportunities for live, work, play desired. Mixed use buildings, residential above.
- **Need an Attraction:** Need an anchor or draw to 'bring people in'. Different ideas for this – 'open market' often suggested.
- **Increase Outdoor Rec. Opportunity:** Avista natural areas are untapped resource.
- **Residential, then Service/Office then Retail:** Residential seen as most viable. Quality multifamily / condo. development supported. Service/Office second.
- **Civic and Cultural Center:** Civic, cultural functions should be a draw.
- **Light Manufacturing Along 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Use seen as a good, market-viable, 'fit'.
- **Difficult to Envision Revamped Downtown:** Some question effort to recreate.
- **Live / Work:** Live/work district a viable use. Dove tails with light industry.
- **Assist with the Post Falls Landing Development:** Agencies can help jumpstart.
- **If Retail, Specialty Shops / Restaurants:** Retail will have to be local, and specialty. Must be destination. Can't compete directly with Seltice.
- **Reconnect with History:** Accentuate history. Knit assets together. Museum.
- **Delineate with Streetscape Improvements:** Curb, SW, lights, trees, flowers.
- **Need an Organized Core Business Group:** Business interests can spur action.

- **Events & Promotions:** Market and advertise Post Falls better.
- **Farmers Market:** Repeatedly suggested as a possible attraction for downtown.
- **Civic Square:** Incorporated into Civic Center campus.
- **Tax / Zoning Revisions to Encourage Development:** Incentives for quality development.
- **Limit New Commercial Development On Fringes:** To concentrate activity in downtown, may have to restrict new development in outlying areas.
- **Government Is Not A Good Anchor Tenant:** City's efforts will not be enough to revitalize area.



## Community Questionnaire

Community questionnaires were distributed to the public via mailings, e-mail, and in hard copy at public locations. More than 100 Post Falls stakeholders were directly mailed questionnaires. A total of about 30 questionnaires were completed and returned. Questionnaires prompted Post Falls stakeholders to think about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the city center district. Questions were intentionally open-ended to encourage a full range of creative responses.

It is important to note that this is not a statistically valid survey. Rather, responses are loosely tallied to give an overall impression of community concerns and ideas. The following provides a general summary of questionnaire responses.

### KEY TO RESPONSES

- Common answer, suggested by most respondents.
- Shared answer, suggested by multiple respondents.
- Answer suggested by a few, or one respondent.

## General Background Questions

### How long have you lived worked or done business in Post Falls?

- 20 years or more
- 10 to 20 years
- 5 to 10 years
- Less than 5 years

### Describe the overall character and personality of the city center district.

- No identifiable downtown
- Needs revitalization
- Downtown not where map locates it
- Sprawl
- Limited retail and shopping
- Confusing traffic patterns
- Fragmented
- Generally clean, but could look better
- Not conducive to foot traffic
- Traffic moves too fast
- Not very impressive
- Small, home town feel
- In transition

### What routes do you use to travel to and within the city center district?

- Driving:
- Seltice Way
- Spokane Street
- 3rd Avenue
- 4th Avenue
- 2nd Avenue
- Bay Street
- Idaho Street
- 1st Avenue
- Walking Biking:
- Centennial Trail
- Falls Park
- Seltice to Library
- Spokane Street
- Idaho Street



## City Center Strengths

### What characteristics of the people and community in Post Falls make it special ?

- Still has 'small town' feel
- People are friendly
- People care about Post Falls, pride
- People are connected
- Supportive of business
- Hard working

### What institutions, and agencies are an asset to the city center district?

- Library as community attraction
- Old Church (Community Builders)
- Community Volunteers
- Good school system
- Lion's Club

### (continued from left)

- Good city government
- Rotary
- Good police department
- Presbyterian Church
- Historical Museum
- Community Building Partners
- Women's Center
- Riverbend Business Park
- Banks
- Chamber of Commerce
- Kiwanis
- New restaurants
- Immaculate Conception Academy
- The newspaper
- City Parks & Recreation

### What about the city center district makes it a good place to live work or do business?

- Accessibility / Location
- Business friendly attitude
- Lack of congestion
- River
- Falls Park
- City Hall
- Growth
- Includes civic functions
- Ample streets

## City Center Weaknesses

### What places, landmarks, opportunities are missing from the city center district?

- A gathering place / event center
- An attraction
- Business vitality
- A community / cultural center
- Historical Society Museum
- Movie theater
- Small, retail, storefront shopping district
- Access and views to the river
- Public transportation to Spokane Airport
- Civic meeting center
- Swimming pool
- A town square area

### What about the city center district might make it not such a good place to live work or do business?

- Still a bedroom community
- No sense of downtown
- No long term plan for downtown
- No long term plans for land north of city
- Nothing unique except for Library
- Not very attractive buildings on Main Street
- Low traffic volume to support business
- Scattered feeling
- Run down area
- Lack of retail and professional services

### Other general weaknesses of the city center district.

- Pedestrian unfriendly
- No attraction or draw to the area
- No "downtown" feeling
- Post Falls has no nucleus or center
- Lack of organized vision
- Railroad tracks
- Idaho Veneer 'out of place'
- 'Clutter' south of I-90
- Spread out
- Traffic congestion at Seltice / Spokane
- Shortage of residential options
- Not enough trees



## City Center Opportunities

*What places and sites in the City Center district have new opportunity for improvement?*

- Old LP mill site can be exciting gathering area
- Old Church building
- All of historic downtown (south of freeway)
- Old LP mill site fore residential district or tourist area
- Old LP mill site, but it will not make a downtown
- Spokane Street, vacant, developable properties
- Q'emiln Park can host large community events
- Parks & Recreation building (possible museum)
- Historic museum / walking tour
- Spokane Street
- Potential City Hall expansion
- Mullan Avenue (edge of district)

*What organizations, community groups or businesses are bringing opportunity to Post Falls?*

- Jobs Plus
- Mayor Larkin, and good city government
- Library
- Community Volunteers
- Community Building Partners
- University of Idaho
- Riverbend Business Park
- Green developments
- Templin developments
- Lions Club
- Post Falls School District
- Buck Knives Inc.
- Historical Society
- Cliff Mort
- Potential development of City campus

*Describe any other trends and factors creating opportunity for the future of Post Falls and the City Center district.*

- NIC Workforce Training Center
- Growth
- Opportunity for investment growth
- Regional Chamber partnership on water study
- U of I Training Center
- Post Falls is a progressive city
- Expansion of highways and infrastructure
- Historic preservation efforts

## City Center Threats

*What areas, buildings or development patterns show trends that might threaten the future of Post Falls?*

- Subdivision and rapid housing development
- High turnover of businesses
- Losing the community pool
- Too many pawn shops
- Weak preservation of the past
- Nondescript buildings and design
- No sense of place
- Congested freeway interchange

*What trends might threaten the future of Post Falls as a place to live?*

- 'Out of business' signs along Seltice Way
- Urban sprawl
- Cheap - not well built housing
- Limited job growth opportunities
- Crowded I-90 traffic
- Mismanaged growth (not evident yet)
- Not encouraging LP site redevelopment
- Not addressing downtown urban renewal
- Rapid growth
- Stigma as a place of intolerance

*What trends in the business climate might threaten Post Falls as a place to do business?*

- Big box retailers Eg. Wal Mart
- Emphasis on low wage service jobs
- Outlet mall 'shriveling up and dying'
- Population growth
- No vision
- Layoffs at Flexex
- Layoffs in lumber industries
- Weak new job growth
- No plan for waterfront development
- No plan to encouraging local development
- Cheaper land elsewhere

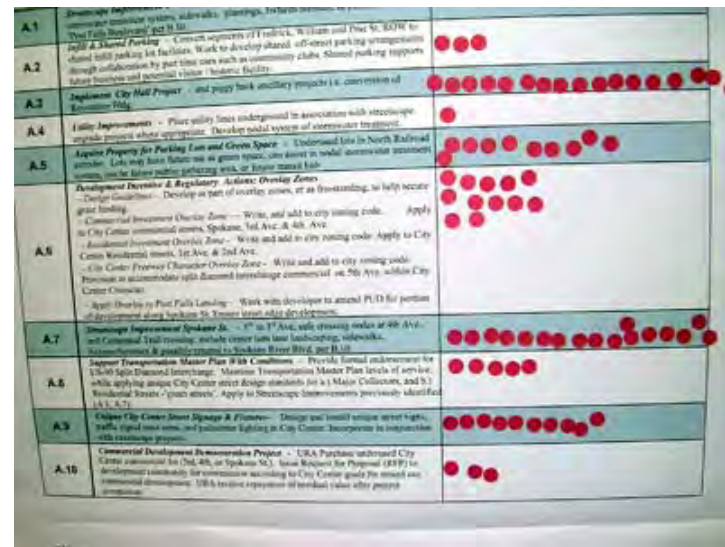
# Community Prioritization Workshop

The second phase of the City Center Plan continued active participation by members of the Post Falls Community. Throughout the process a steering committee comprised of business owners, URA representatives, public officials and residents assisted the consultant team to synthesize alternatives and generate project actions. The steering committee held regular guidance meetings with the project team.

The most valuable opportunity for public feedback came on April 6, 2005 when a presentation of the draft plan was made to the public at large. The presentation provided an overview of the draft City Center Plan, and invited residents to view a display of project actions. At the conclusion of the meeting residents were asked to help prioritize actions by placing 'votes' next to the actions they believed to be the most important for the future of the City Center. Residents' direct feedback on project actions helped the team to refine the prioritization of projects for the final plan.



Members of the community review the plans and prioritize actions.



Popular action items receive the most "votes"



### 3. History & Existing Conditions

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# City Center History: Historic Cues



Samuel Anne Young Home



Historic Presbyterian Church at 4th / William (Now home of Community Builders)



A Historic Character Home



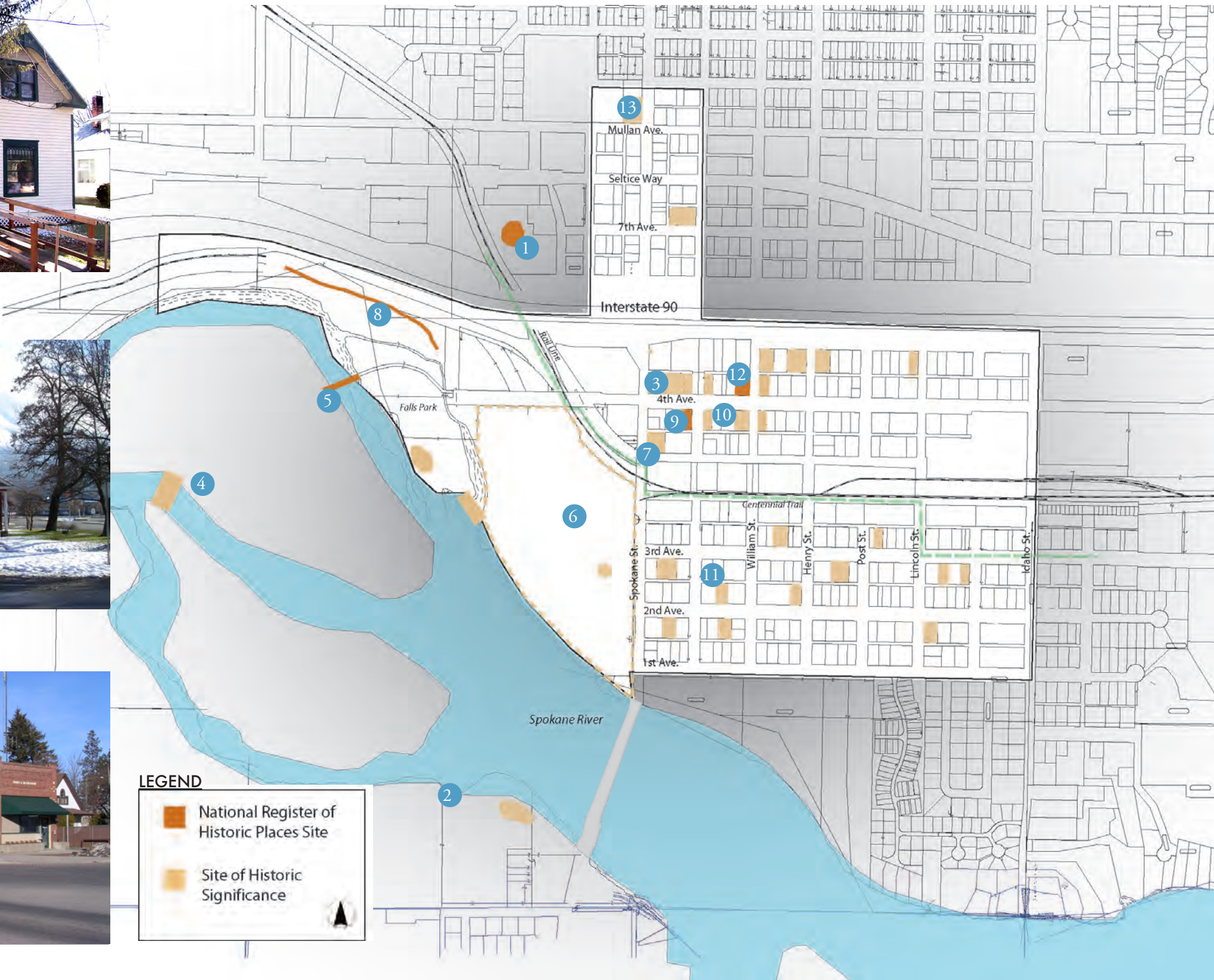
Currently vacant building with historic character



Post Falls Parks & Recreation Building (Formerly Chapin Drug)



1918 John Mullan Statue





## Reconnecting With History

The city center district holds important significance as the historic, and symbolic core of Post Falls. While recent development along E. Seltice Way, W. Seltice, and in the Highway 41 corridor has shifted energy away from the study area, it is important to underscore that the original economic and cultural center of Post Falls is south of I-90 and both east and west of Spokane Street. The bulk of Post Falls' history unfolded along the river and the rail line. Efforts to strengthen identity, or rejuvenate a struggling district can benefit from the connection to the City's rich history. History can also serve as an attraction, an economic engine, and a guide to quality design.

Although many of the historic buildings and structures in the city center area were removed or demolished in the second half of the 20th century, a large number of 'cues' to the history of Post Falls remain intact.

### Early Settlement

Early settlement and relations between Native Americans and pioneers is well-preserved and documented in Post Falls. Few cities can claim as clear a historical connection to this era than Post Falls'. The following landmarks illustrate this historic connection.

- 1 Treaty Rock:** National Register of Historic Places. City founder, Frederick Post's name is etched into the rock. Treaty Rock signifies early relations between Native American groups and settlers.
- 2 Q'emiln Park and Natural Areas:** Important significance in Native American history. Gathering place for salmon fishing. Q'emiln is the native word meaning 'throat of the river'.
- 3 John Mullan Statue:** 1918 Marble Statue of John Mullan. Commemorates early settlement of inland northwest, and building of the first engineered road in the region.

### Industrial and Economic History

For the bulk of Post Falls history the economic vitality centered on the falls, the river and the rail line. Frederick Post's founding of the city was to generate power at the falls, a function that continues even today. Several excellent landmarks preserve the City's early economic development and the long tradition of mill-related industry in Post Falls.

- 4 Washington Water Power (Avista) Hydro Electric Facility and Island:** Stately brick facility completed in 1906. Has continuously operated ever since. Though not open to the public, 600+ persons visit annually in Avista led tours.
- 5 Washington Water Power Bridges:** National Register of Historic Places. Attractive span bridge. Visible from I-90, and Falls Park overlook, though not accessible to the public.
- 6 Frederick Post Mill Site:** Operated as a mill from settlement by Frederick Post, until the Louisiana Pacific mill closure in 1985. Key piece of city center history.
- 7 City Center Commercial Buildings:** Spokane Street was original 'Main Street'. Remaining buildings include old Chapin Drug (Parks and Recreation building) and the old Seyforth's Grocery (Handy Mart). Some historic commercial structures remain along 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, where commercial buildings backed up to the rail line. Hohl Butcher Shop (today incorporated into the Body by Scotty business) is an example.

### Agricultural History

Post Falls also has a rich agricultural history, preserved in several features close to the city center district. Most notably the Spokane Irrigation Canal (Corbin Ditch) provided water to the prairie for farming.

- 8 Corbin Ditch:** National Register of Historic Places. Constructed to irrigate the Prairie for farming.

### Residences

A number of historic residences are scattered throughout the downtown district. (See map). Many of these are homes of important early settlers, or longstanding Post Falls families and business owners. Most homes are in a simple but attractive wood frame vernacular style. Some homes are better preserved than others.

- 9 Samuel and Ann Young Home:** National Register of Historic Places. Yellow home on 4th Avenue, currently houses a day care. (See photo opposite page.)
- 10 Other 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Homes:** Several homes with historic significance dot the west end of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Red house at the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Frederick (see photo opposite page).
- 11 3<sup>rd</sup> and Second Avenue Homes:** Higher concentration of surviving residential structures to the west edge of the district. Some older homes are poorly maintained. (See map for distribution of historic residences throughout district.)

### Civic and Cultural Places

Several historically significant institutions and cultural places remain in the city center district. These mark early civic and social networks of the City.

- 12 Old Church (M.E. & Presbyterian):** National Register of Historic Places. 4<sup>th</sup> and William. is currently used as a community / cultural center. Ongoing restoration lends strong historic character and presence on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue (See photo opposite page.)
  - 13 Original Public Schools Site (Current PF Library):** The original public schools in Post Falls (now torn down) was located at the intersection of Mullan / Spokane Street
- Other Cultural Places:** Several former manses associated with churches in the district. Alameda Berry's Boarding School (116 E. 4<sup>th</sup>).



# Images of Historic Post Falls



(A)



(B)



(C)



(D)



(E)



Ⓐ ***Spokane Street as Main Street***

For most of Post Falls' early history, Spokane Street functioned as a main street. Key commercial stores were located here north of the mill operation. Visible in the right hand side of the photo are the Chapin Drug store and the old Seyforth's Grocery, which are still in place today.

Ⓑ ***Spokane Street Buildings that Have Been Removed***

A number of the original buildings on Spokane Street were removed in the latter half of the 20th century. The photo displays buildings that formerly stood on the west side of Spokane Street north of the railway line.

Ⓒ ***Chapin Drug Store***

The original Chapin Drug store located at 4th / Spokane Street is a building of historic significance that remains in the district. The building will be carefully incorporated into a new Civic Center Campus. Currently, the building functions as a Parks and Recreation building.

Ⓓ ***Operational Mill***

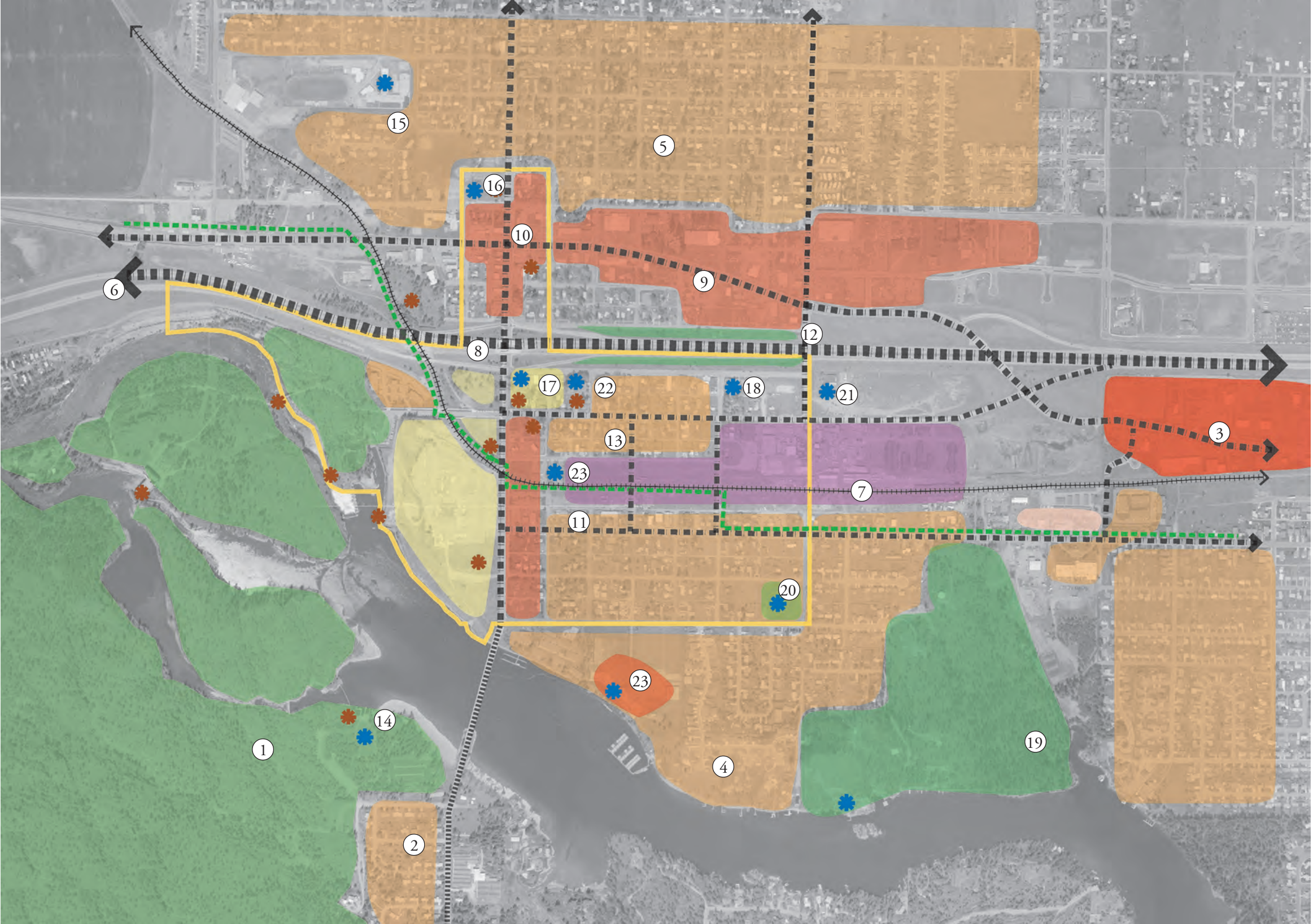
The mill that Frederick Post founded operated continuously until its closure in 1985. The photo depicts the mill in full operation during the 1960's. The mill site has important historical significance to Post Falls even as new uses are being considered for the site.

Ⓔ ***Aerial View of Post Falls 1930's***

This aerial photo of Post Falls in the 1930's confirms the study area as the historic center of Post Falls. Visible in the photo are the early development of 4th Avenue, 3rd Avenue, Spokane Street, and the prominence of the rail line. Outlying areas have yet to be extensively developed. In the foreground the Washington Water Power dam and powerhouse (completed 1906) are visible.



# City Center Context: Land Use, Circulation & Landmarks



**LEGEND**

- Community Gathering Place
- Historic Site
- Study Area Boundary
- Rail Line
- Arterial Roadway
- Arterial Roadway, Connector
- Interstate 90
- Centennial Trail
- Redevelopment Opportunity
- Semi-Industrial Use
- Mixed Commercial Use
- Residential Use
- Rapidly Growing Commercial
- Office / Support Use
- Open Space



# Context: Land Use, Circulation & Landmarks

The city center's relationship to overall land use and transportation patterns is critical. The following is a brief overview of land use, and transportation inside and outside of the district.

## Land Use Context

### ① Open Space and Natural Areas

Large landholdings of the Avista company to the west and the south of the city center effectively preserved this area (including the falls) as open space.

- Open space is generally not accessible to the public.
- Open space includes Q'emiln Park and the open water of the Spokane River.

### ② Limited Residential development south of the River

Although Spokane Street is the only bridge across the Spokane River between Coeur d'Alene and Spokane. Land south of the river is developed at a very low density.

### ③ Rapidly Growing E. Seltice Way Commercial Corridor

The Seltice Way corridor east of the city center, especially south of the Freeway has seen explosive growth in commercial development.

- Commercial strip is economic hub of Post Falls.
- Many fast food, drive up, and 'big box' type businesses.
- Essential services including grocery stores, banks etc. locate here.

### ④ River Related Residential Areas

- Several subdivisions of single family homes to the east and south of the city center district.
- Primarily single family. Stable property values and housing quality.

### ⑤ Residential District to the North

- Extends north of the freeway to the east of Spokane Street.
- 'Mature' residential district similar in some ways to downtown residential area.
- Primarily single family housing.

### ⑥ Riverbend Research and Industrial Park

- One I-90 exit west of the city center district.
- Research park in early stages, houses public and private business research agencies.
- Greyhound track and event center.

### ⑦ Light Industrial and Office Support

Semi-industrial land uses extend in the rail corridor and along 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. to the east of the study area.

- United States Post office located on N. Greenferry Road.
- Self storage businesses.

## Vehicular Circulation Context

### ⑧ Interstate 90 and Interchanges

- Principal regional transportation corridor.
- Full interchange at Spokane Street provides direct access into downtown and affords entry and exit in both eastbound and westbound directions.
- Half interchange at Seltice Way provides eastbound highway onramp and westbound highway offramp.

### ⑨ Seltice Way

- Provides regional non-freeway east / west access.
- Provides local access to commercial services.
- Approximately 330 peak hour vehicles at Spokane Street.
- Provides overpass of I-90, and partial interchange with freeway.

### ⑩ Spokane Street

- Primary north south arterial through the city center of Post Falls.
- One of few bridges across Spokane River.
- Traffic volumes much larger north of freeway than south.
- Approximately 400 peak hour vehicles at Seltice Way.
- Approximately 300 peak hour vehicles per day at 4th Avenue.

### ⑪ 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue

- Both avenues provide cross town access from the Spokane Street interchange to the Seltice Way commercial district.
- Additional regional east / west connection north of Seltice Way.

### ⑫ Idaho Street

- Overpass of freeway.
- Does not continue south of Idaho Veneer mill.
- Principal arterial.

### ⑬ Henry and Lincoln Streets

- Provide north south connection across the railway tracks within the district.
- Collector roadways.

## Context Landmarks

### ⑭ Q'emiln Park

### ⑮ Post Falls Public Schools

### ⑯ Public Library

### ⑰ City Hall

### ⑱ Immaculate Conception Church and Academy

### ⑲ Black Bay Park

### ⑳ Warren Playfield

### ㉑ Post Falls Fire Station

### ㉒ Community Presbyterian Church

### ㉓ Kootenai County Licensing

### ㉔ Templin's Resort and Hotel



# Existing Conditions: Existing Land Use



Mixed Retail, Service, Office at intersection of Spokane Street and Seltice Way is entry to area of new commercial development



Business exist along 5th Ave due to favorable visibility from I-90



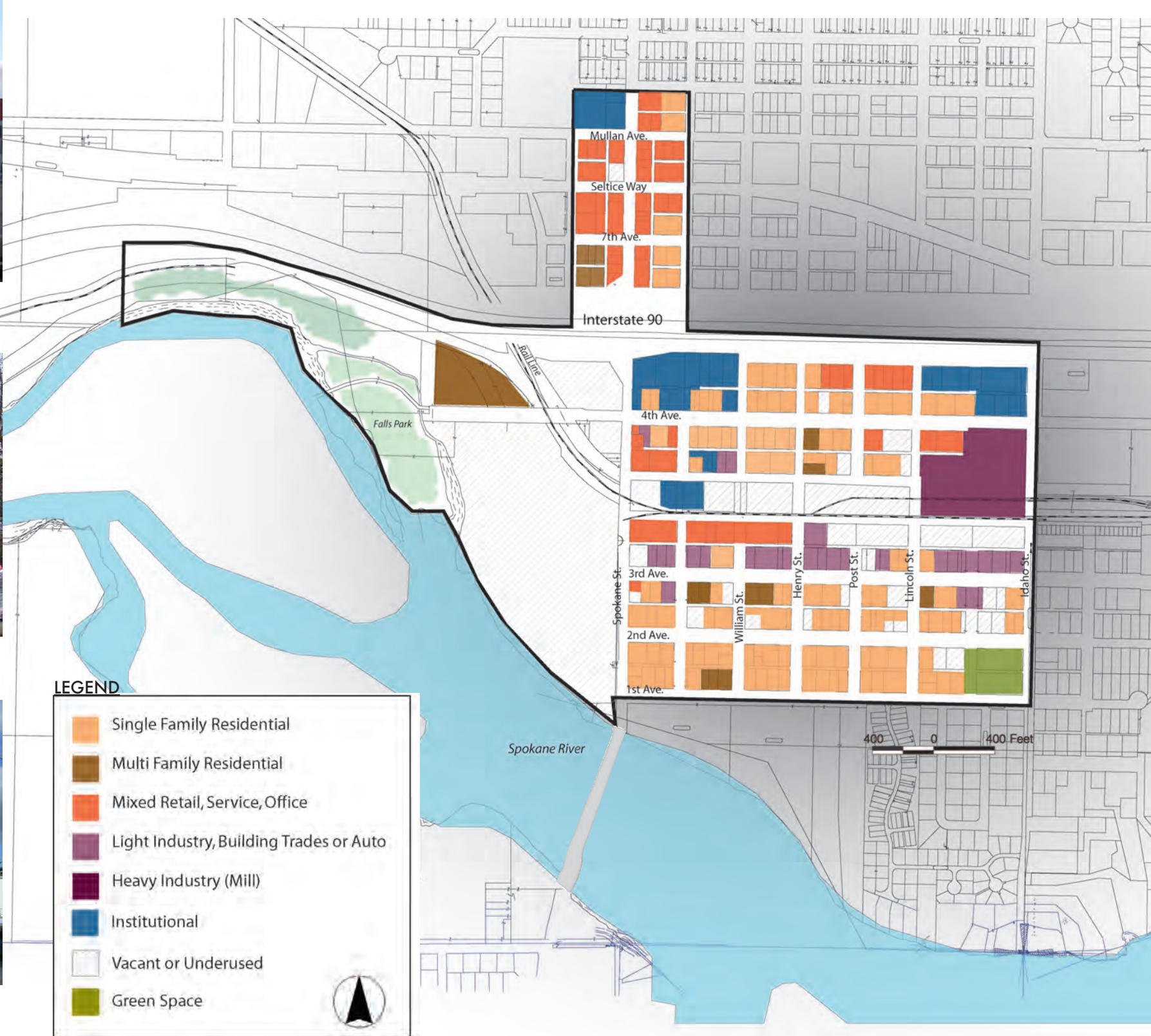
New multi-family housing on 5th Ave demonstrates allowable height



Well maintained single family housing adds to the character of the district as a desirable place to live



Institutional uses mix with residential uses along 4th and 5th Ave. Photographed is the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church and Academy



Green Space at Idaho Street between 1st Ave and 2nd Ave provides recreational opportunities



## Existing Land Use

The district land use figure gives a good indication of how the city center district currently ‘works’. With widely permissive zoning in the area, the current land use pattern reflects the natural evolution of market, and individual decisions that have shaped the character of the district.

### *Vibrant Spokane Street North of I-90*

- Vibrant and lively commercial area centers on Seltice / Spokane intersection.
- Strong access from the Freeway interchange, and Seltice Way traffic supports high traffic volume.
- Cluster of ‘attraction’ restaurants.
- Restaurants mixed amongst service stations, and drive-up type uses.
- Businesses have regional client base. Spokane to Coeur d’Alene.
- Public library at Mullan / Spokane adds vibrancy.

### *4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Civic and Residential (East of Spokane Street)*

- 4th / Spokane holds a cluster of civic and government uses.
- Community center at Old Church (4<sup>th</sup> & William) and daycare in the Samuel and Anne Young historic home, add to community / civic focus.
- Civic focus will become stronger with redevelopment of the Civic Center Campus.
- 4th Avenue ‘middle’ blocks are more residential in character. At least one recent multi-family development mixed in.
- Residential quality varies.
- Idaho Veneer Mill operation and the Immaculate Conception Academy give a large scale institutional feel approaching 4th / Idaho.

### *Changing 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue*

Third Avenue has the widest range and mix of uses of any corridor in the study area. Reports during the planning study suggest that 3<sup>rd</sup> is increasingly relied on as a cross-town connector to the Seltice Way business district to the east of the study area. This is fueled in part by a newly added Bay Street connection from 3<sup>rd</sup> to Seltice Way, and the relocation of the Post Office to Greensferry.

- North side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue increasingly dominated by light industrial, or auto-oriented commercial services.
- Multifamily structures interspersed along 3rd Avenue.
- Some single family structures remain on both sides of the street. Moreso on the south. A number of the Third Avenue homes are in poor condition.
- Some vacant or underutilized lots dot both sides of the Avenue.

### *Spokane Street South of Freeway*

Spokane street south of the I-90 overpass does not have the vibrancy, or consistency of the section to the north. This is largely attributable to vacancy of the entire west side of the street in the study area. However, even the east side has an inconsistent pattern of uses.

- Civic campus anchors the street to the north.
- Small scale commercial services occupy the block between 4<sup>th</sup> and N. Railroad.
- The Milltown Grill building just south of the rail line continues commercial services, and the busy latte stand at the intersection with 3<sup>rd</sup> continues retail services.
- Two vacant lots interrupt the rhythm of the commercial uses.
- South edge of Spokane Street, before the River reflects residential character of 1st and 2nd Avenues.
- Vacant parcels north of the rail line.
- Vacant Post Falls Landing site south of the rail line.

### *2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Residential Character*

2<sup>nd</sup> Ave is the ‘quietest’ and most protected residential street in the study area.

- Nearly all lots fronting on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue are single family residential homes.
- Some homes have historic significance.
- Street holds several newer homes.
- Many older structures are poorly maintained or even vacant.
- Vacant or underutilized lots dot the street.
- A city owned park is present at the east edge of the study area.

### *Limited Multi-Family Interspersed*

Notably few multifamily developments have located within the downtown district.

- Multifamily developments are not concentrated.
- Falls Park Apartments to the west along 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue are the only large scale residential development.

### *4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Mix*

- Strong civic / community presence with Civic Center, Presbyterian Church and Immaculate Conception Church and Academy.
- Commercial businesses with freeway orientation.
- Single family homes mixed in, some with historic significance.

### *Rail Corridor*

- A string of open, underutilized spaces along the railway line. The railway and associated industrial character interrupts the continuity of the north and south halves of the district.
- Milltown Grill, and recent live/work development extends along western edge of the rail corridor.
- Civic / community uses including Kootenai County Licensing Department, and the Odd Fellow Club recently added along North Railroad Avenue.
- Some industrial and auto type uses back-up to the rail corridor.

### *Open Space and Natural Character to the West*

- Interesting natural features and geology on Avista Island and around falls. (Not accessible to the public.)
- Q’emiln Park trail system, boat launch and recreational opportunity south of the river.
- Falls Park, overlook to the falls, pleasant recreation area in close proximity to the center of downtown.



# Existing Conditions: Streetscape Conditions



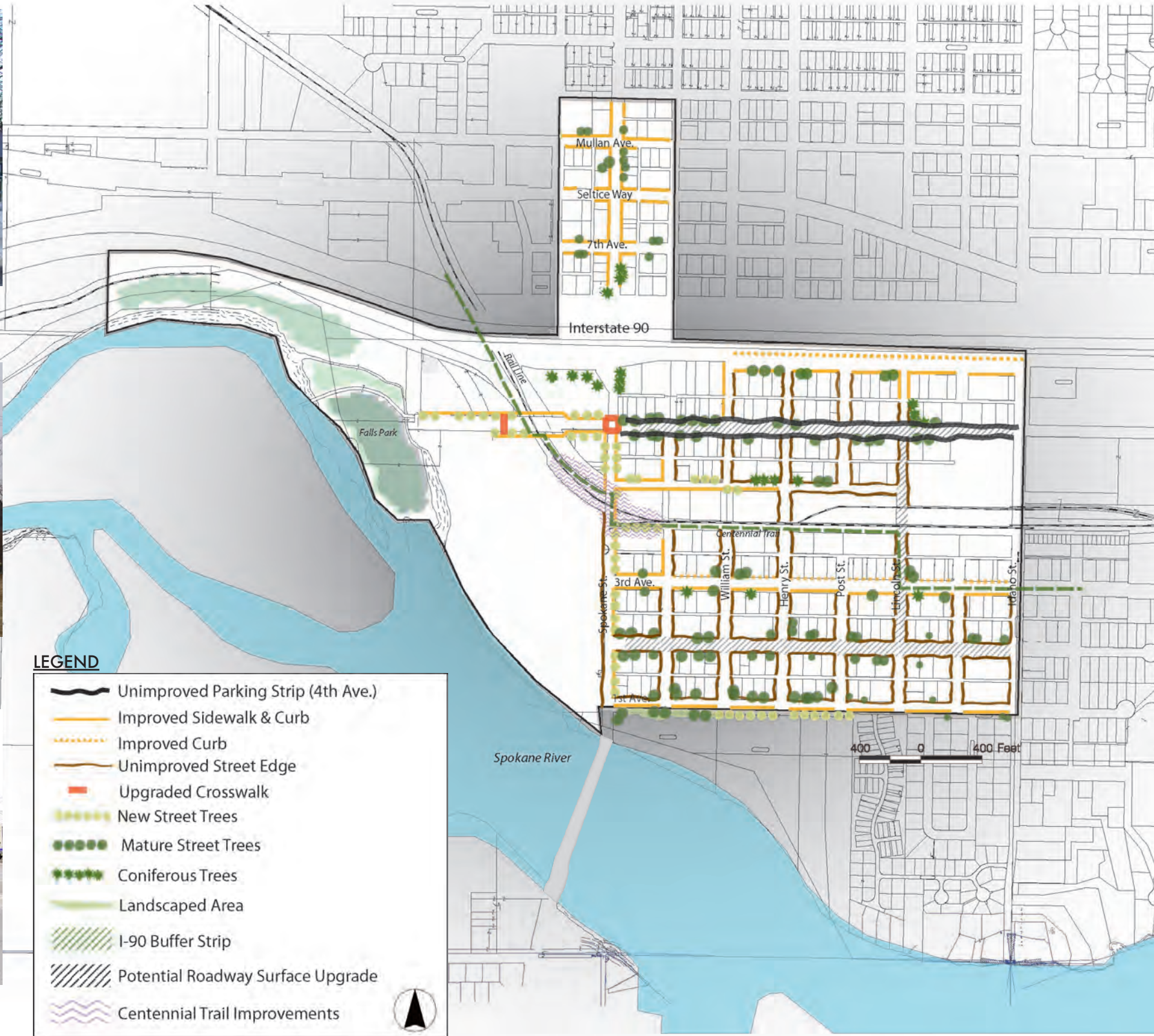
Mature trees, including these in the 4th Ave. ROW, add to the character of Post Falls' streets, and provide pleasant shade in summer months



Centennial Trail Improvements - Banners / Streetlights / Bollards



Recent sidewalk improvements along 3rd Avenue



The 100' Wide 4th Avenue ROW provides ample room for streetscape and sidewalk improvements



Recent streetscape improvements at the west end of 4th Avenue make downtown Post Falls more walkable and attractive



Recent Streetscape improvements include Centennial Trail Signage and trees



# Streetscape Conditions

Discussion of streetscapes refers to the level of infrastructure improvements, as well as the look and feel of the public Right of Ways and streets. In the city center district the generously wide Rights of Way are an important issue. The major thoroughfares of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Spokane Street are all 85' to 100' wide. Wide ROWs provide ample room for improvement and circulation but also challenge the neighborhood scale.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue

- Curb and sidewalk improvements in place for length of south side of roadway.
- Curb improvements and grassy open space buffer along full length of north side of roadway.
- Mature trees in front yards of some homes along south side of street.
- Sparse tree planting in grassy buffer north of roadway.
- No pedestrian lighting.
- Freeway noise and chain link fence along freeway detract from overall ambience of the street.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue E. of Spokane Street

- Muddy, unimproved parking strip detracts significantly from streetscape.
- Intermittent sidewalk, in poor repair for most of the length of street.
- No curb improvement along length of street east of Spokane Street.
- Attractive brick crosswalk improvements at Spokane Street.
- Mature trees in front yards of several homes, especially in first block east of Spokane Street.
- Some of the mature trees in first block east of Spokane Street are in the ROW - inside the existing sidewalk.
- No pedestrian lighting.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue W. of Spokane Street

- Sidewalk improvements extending west from Spokane Street both north and south side of street.
- Crosswalk improvement just east of Falls Apartments.
- Series of street trees planted, both north and south side of street.
- No pedestrian lighting.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue

- Curb and sidewalk improvements for the length of the street along the south side.
- Curb improvements for length of the north side of the street.
- Postal delivery 'pull-outs'.
- Few plantings in planting/drainage swale at south side of street.
- Bicycle lane / shoulder on both sides of the street.
- Relatively few mature trees in front yards of buildings along street.
- No pedestrian lighting.

## North Railroad Avenue

- Improved curb and sidewalk along south edge of the street to William.
- Improved curb and sidewalk in first block east of Spokane on north side.
- Vast vacant areas with few trees give inhospitable feel to streetscape.
- Some newly planted street trees near Odd Fellows, Kootenai Licensing, and at Handy Mart.
- Some mature trees in yards to north of street.
- No pedestrian lighting.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue

- Significant number of mature trees in front yards at eastern half of both sides of the street.
- No curb or sidewalk improvements for length of street.
- Unpaved parking strip both sides of street.
- Open vacant areas at east end of street with few trees.
- No pedestrian lighting.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue

- Curb and sidewalk improvements in good condition for length of south side of street.
- No curb or sidewalk improvements for length of north side of street.
- Mature trees in front yards of many homes especially at west end of street.
- Full landscaping in front of condominium at west edge of street.
- New street tree plantings near Templin's Resort.
- No pedestrian lighting.

## Spokane Street

- Curb and sidewalk improvements for length of east side of street.
- Tree plantings with tree grates along most of east side of the street.
- Curb and sidewalk improvements along west side of street from 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue to railway.
- Tree plantings with tree grates along west side of street from 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue to railway.
- No curb or sidewalk improvements along the length of former LP mill site.
- Large vacant areas with few trees create barren streetscape and wind exposure.

## Other North / South Streets

### (Frederick, William, Henry, Post, Idaho)

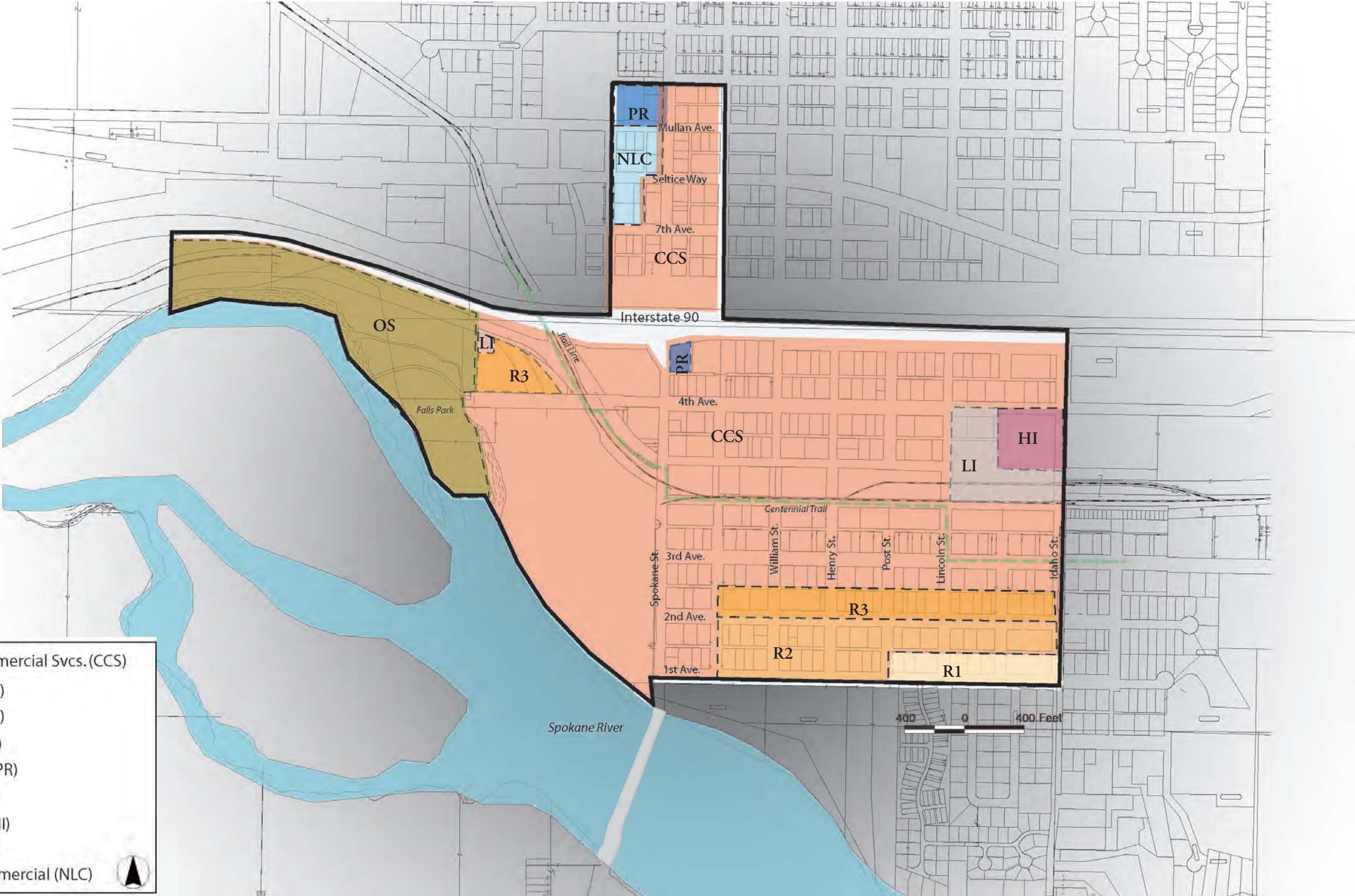
- No curb or sidewalk improvements along length of streets in north south direction.
- Limited curb and sidewalk improvements along Lincoln and William Street in the block south of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- Difficult to tell which streets are through-streets (Lincoln and Henry) and which streets dead-end at the Railroad crossing.
- Henry street features Riverwalk signage leading towards Templin's Resort, and improved shoulder striping.

## Centennial Trail Improvements

- Significant streetscape upgrades along centennial trail in vicinity of Spokane Street.
- Tree plantings, Colored Banners, and Pedestrian lamps along centennial trail east of Spokane Street.
- Bollards in several locations along trail to west of Spokane Street.



# Existing Conditions: Zoning and Regulation



**LEGEND**

- Community Commercial Svcs. (CCS)
- Residential - 3 (R3)
- Residential - 2 (R2)
- Residential - 1 (R1)
- Public Reserve (PR)
- Open Space (OS)
- Heavy Industry (HI)
- Light Industry (LI)
- Neigh. Local Commercial (NLC)



# Zoning and Regulation

## *Community Commercial Services (CCS)*

The CCS zone covers the vast majority of the study area. It is intended to allow for community scale commercial and retail services.

- Allows for extensive site buildout.
- Allows retail, office, or residential uses.
- No yard setbacks required.
- Height limit of 45’.
- 80% lot coverage maximum.
- CCS does not allow light manufacturing outright.

## *Public Reserve (PR)*

Covers the small area of the existing city hall building. The intent of the public reserve district is to provide a district to perpetuate public facilities, municipal buildings, churches and other semipublic uses and shall apply to property now owned by public agencies and any required in the future.

- Maximum height 35’.
- Required yards: front 10’, rear 10’, interior side 10’.
- Maximum Lot Coverage - 60%.

## *Residential 1 (R1)*

R-1 zoning is in place for a small section at the east edge of the study area along 1st Avenue. R-1 encourages single family housing development.

- No commercial uses allowed.

## *Residential 2 (R2)*

R-2 zoning is in place for the block between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue from Frederick Street east. R-2 zoning is intended to allow multi-family housing of medium density.

- No commercial uses allowed.
- Max height 35’.
- Required yards: Front 20’, rear 10’, interior side 5’.
- Maximum Density 12 Units / Acre.
- Maximum Lot Coverage 40%.
- Minimum floor area per unit of 800 sf.

## *Residential 3 (R3)*

R-3 Zoning is in place in two locations in the city center district. The south half of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue east of Frederick Street, and the area north of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and west of Spokane Street. R-3 zoning is intended to allow high density residential development.

- No commercial uses allowed.
- Max height 35’.
- Required yards: front 20’, rear 10’, interior side 5’.
- Maximum Density 18 Units / Acre.
- Maximum Lot Coverage 35%.
- Minimum floor area per unit 600 sf.

## *Open Space (OS)*

Open space zoning is in place for Falls Park and the natural area to the west of the Park.

## *Light Industrial (LI)*

A small area of LI is located just east of the Idaho Veneer mill along Lincoln Street between 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the rail line. This zone is intended to allow light industrial uses that conform to high performance standards.

## *Heavy Industrial (HI)*

The heavy industrial zone HI underlies most of the Idaho Veneer mill site, and is intended to accommodate uses like the mill.

## *Select Parking Requirements*

- Apartments or multi-family dwelling units (3 or more): 2 Spaces per unit.
- Single or two-family residential: 2 Spaces per unit.
- Banks and financial institutions: 1 per two employees.
- Restaurants and bars: 1 space per 100 sf.
- Retail stores: 1 space per 250 sf.
- Offices and administrative: 1 space per 200 sf.
- Other business or commercial uses: 1 space per 300 sf.

## *Fire Code Related Regulations*

One requirement related to development of multifamily housing, is that sprinkler systems must be installed in any 4+ unit multifamily residential structure.



# Existing Conditions: Infill Opportunities



Vacant Lot at 4th Avenue and Spokane Street



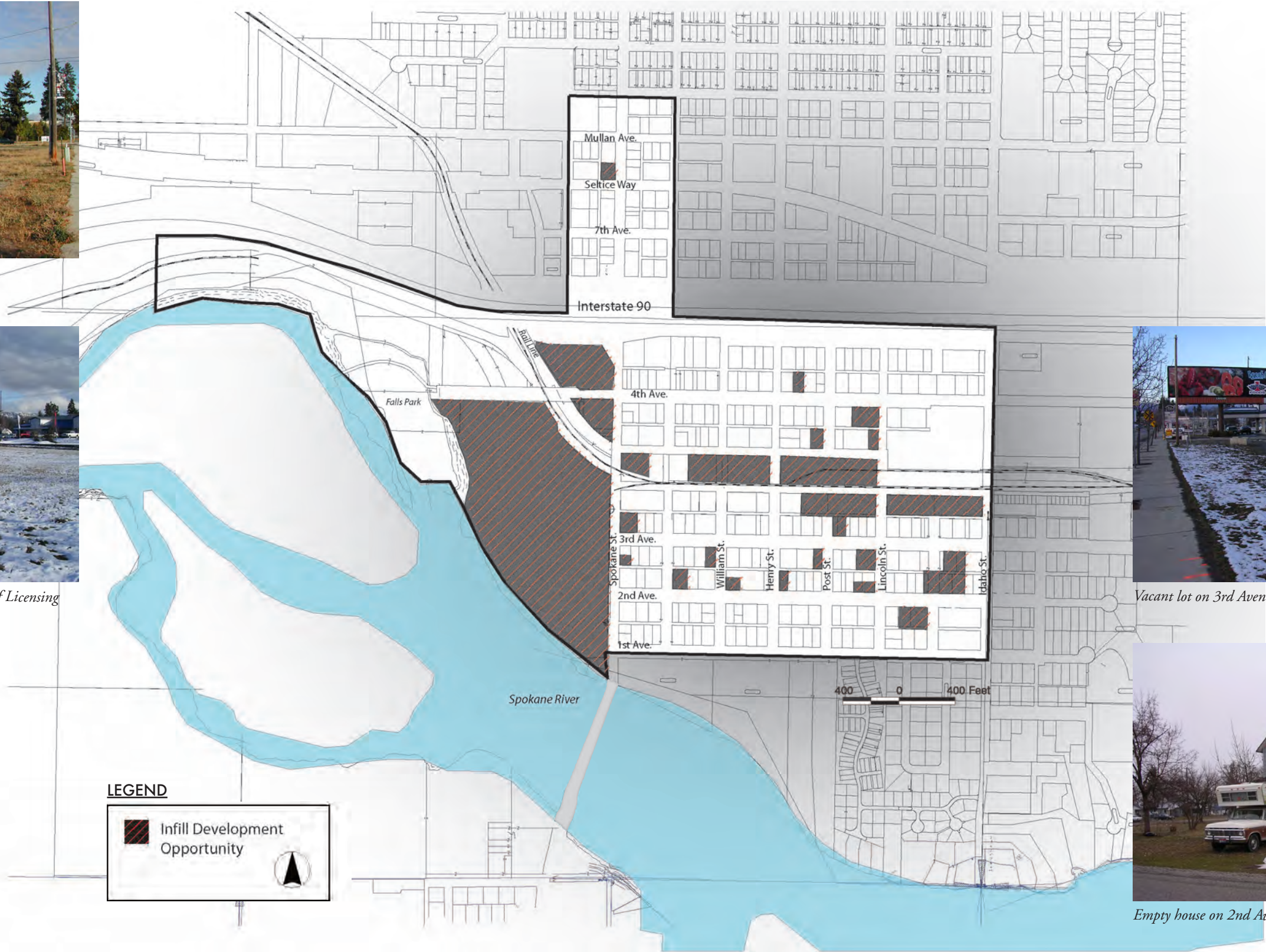
Large vacant lot near Kootenai Department of Licensing



Vacant lot on 3rd Avenue / Spokane Street



Empty house on 2nd Avenue used for storage





# Infill Opportunities

## *Post Falls Landing / Former LP Mill Site*

The former LP mill site has great locational and historic significance to the city center of Post Falls. Redevelopment of the LP mill site will have key implications for revitalization of the entire city center area.

- Occupies most of city center riverfront.
- Occupies the bulk of W. Spokane Street frontage.
- Vacancy of large site effects economic vitality of whole S. Spokane Street corridor.
- Common sentiment that the future of the city center depends on the mill site.
- Operated continuously as a mill from town's founding until mid 1980's.
- Preliminary development plans would significantly increase density of the city center.

## *Other Spokane Street Vacant Parcels*

In addition to the mill site there are a number of key vacant parcels on both sides of the Spokane Street corridor, south of the freeway. These contribute to a barren, non-vital feeling in the lower city center.

- Northwest corner of Spokane Street / 4th Avenue: A well located site at the foot of the I-90 freeway offramp. The site features interesting rocks, and trees.
- Southwest corner of Spokane Street / 4th Avenue: A doctor's office building is planned for this site, will improve urban street frontage on Spokane Street.
- Spokane Street/ N. Railroad Avenue: West of the Kootenai County Licensing building is a large vacant space along the rail line.
- Spokane Street / 3rd. Avenue (north): A vacant lot at this key corner is currently used as a parking area.
- Spokane Street / 3rd Avenue: Though the latte stand occupies the corner. Vacant space extends south of the stand, interrupting street frontage.

## *Vacant Parcels Along Railway*

Several large vacant tracts of land are positioned in the city center along the rail line. Some of these lands provide space for the Idaho Veneer Mill rail spur. Other sections of the land south of the railway backup to 3rd Avenue businesses and parcels.

## *Interspersed Vacancies in Residential Core*

Vacant or underused parcels are scattered throughout the residential core of the district. Some of these feature a small home on a large lot, leaving a sense of underused land. Some existing residential structures are vacant. Other lots are entirely vacant.



# Urban Design: Strengths



View from Falls Park



Nearby natural resources are a strong asset



The Library serves as a northern anchor



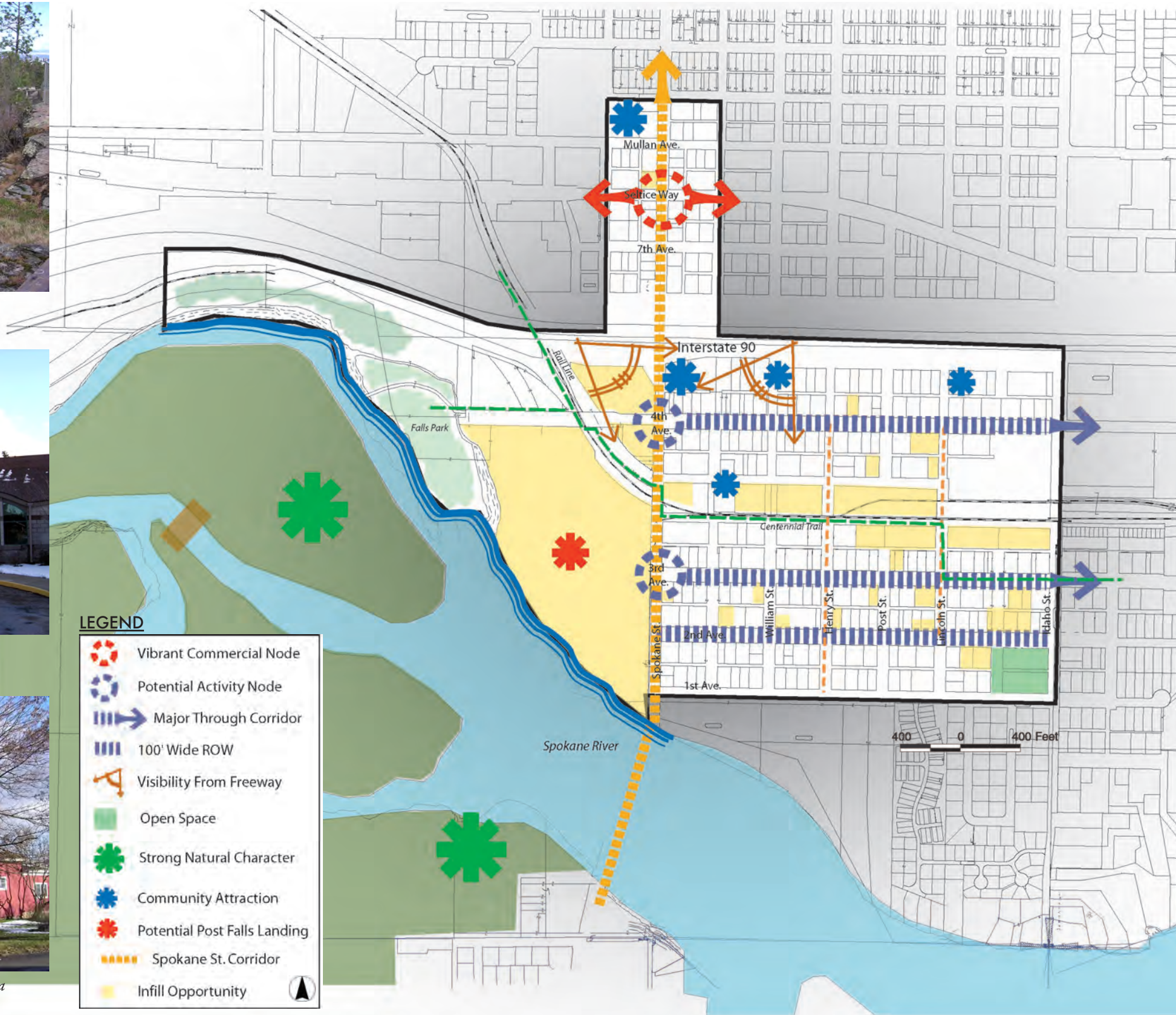
The Avista dam is an important historic resource



Historic character homes such as this make 4th Ave a pleasant residential area



Spokane Street is the key north south corridor





## Urban Design Strengths

### *Wide, 100' Rights of Way*

4th Avenue, 3rd Avenue and Spokane Street all feature 80' to 100' wide Right of Ways. This presents good opportunity for streetscape upgrades, which could take various forms.

### *Potential Activity 'Nodes'*

The intersections of collector streets 3rd and 4th Avenue with Spokane Street create opportunity for urban nodes. These are natural places for concentration of activity or urban design features due to high visibility.

### *Strong Visibility from Freeway*

Vantage points from the I-90 freeway provide excellent overview and visibility for the Post Falls city center. The city center district can have a strong appearance to the high volume of passersby.

### *Potential Post Falls Landing*

The Post Falls Landing project is a large master-planned development with pleasant urban scale. It will significantly change the landscape of the Post Falls city center.

### *Strong Natural Character*

Q'emiln Park and natural areas across the Spokane River can significantly improve the city center quality of life if adequately connected.

### *Infill Opportunities*

The large amount of underused property in the city center presents opportunity for coordinated infill development.

### *Strong Civic Presence*

Plans to create a rejuvenated Civic Center Campus can bring more vitality and energy to the district.

### *Waterfront*

Access to the Spokane River waterfront is a strong asset to the district. Visual and physical connections to the water can make the city center a more pleasant place.

### *Mix of Older Structures*

Older character homes and structures can mix in with newer development to create an interesting and varied urban landscape.

### *Vibrant Retail Node*

The cluster of restaurants and other retail establishments at Spokane Street and Seltice Way is a vibrant activity center. Collective marketing and events can help bolster business vitality.

### *Centennial Trail and Open Space Network*

The centennial trail runs through the heart of the city center. The trail can help link together pieces of an open space network.

### *Earl Warren Playfield*

The Earl Warren Playfield presents an opportunity for city-sponsored recreational upgrade or other reuse action.

### *Falls, WWP Powerhouse, and Dam*

The proximity of the city center district to the falls and the WWP powerhouse and dam is a strong asset. These features can provide interest and a landmark to strengthen the identity of the city center district.

### *2nd Avenue Residential Character*

2nd Avenue's character as a solid residential street is a design asset. Second Avenue can be accentuated as a high quality residential district, strengthening the residential core of the city center.



# Urban Design: Challenges



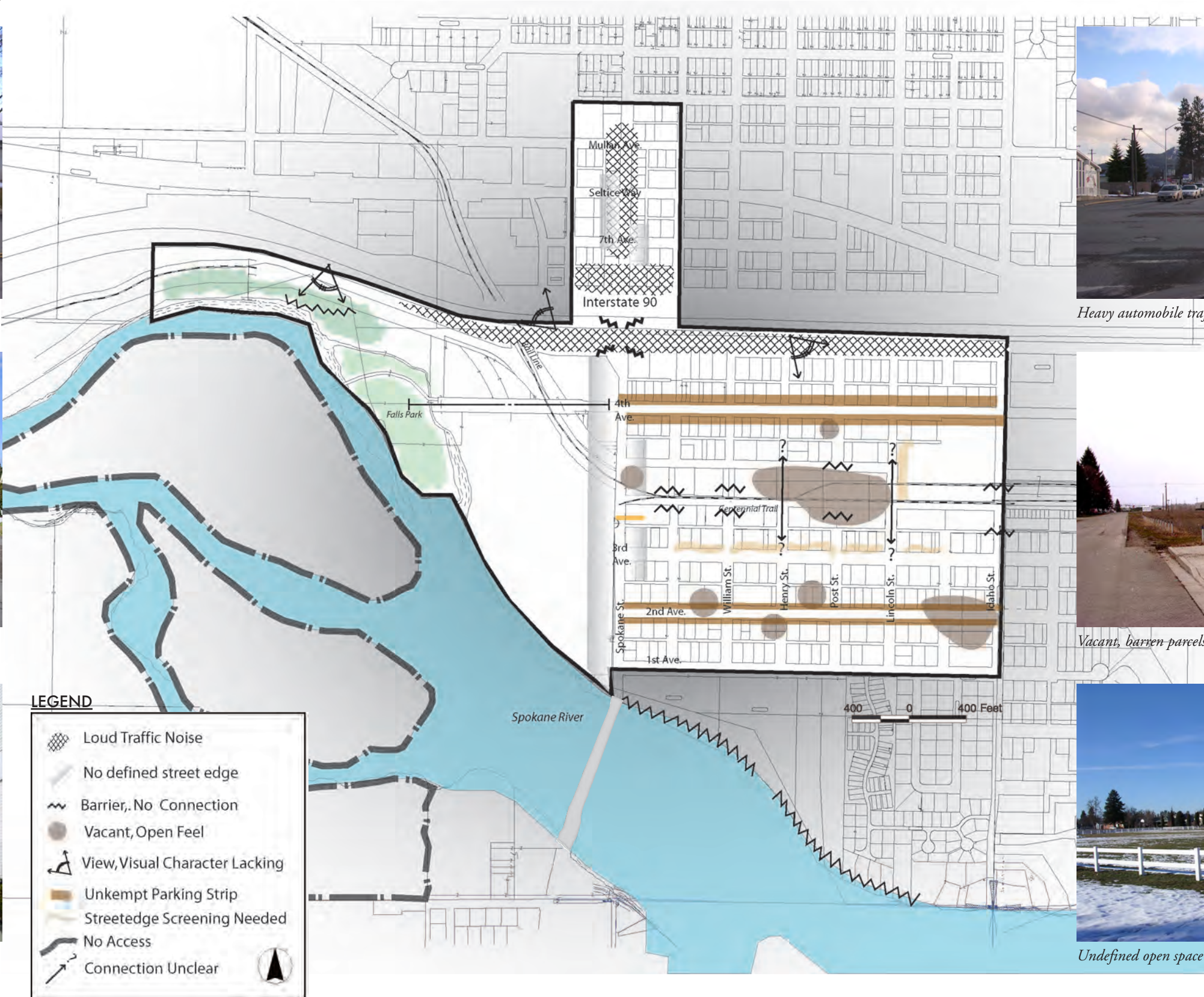
Uninviting streetside garages.



Wide, unimproved 4th Avenue parking strip.



Some buildings limit views and access to the waterfront



Heavy automobile traffic and noise



Vacant, barren parcels



Undefined open space at Warren Playfield



# Urban Design Challenges

## *Unimproved 4th Avenue Streetscape*

Wide, muddy parking strips on 4th Avenue detract from the ambience, and walkability of the street.

## *Heavy Traffic Volume and Noise*

Traffic noise from I-90 has impacts for roughly one block both north and south of the freeway. High traffic volumes and traffic noise also negatively impact the streetscape character near Spokane Street and Seltice Way.

## *Vacant Parcels*

The large number of vacant or underused parcels spread throughout the district lends a barren feel to the district. Particular examples include the vacant parcels along the rail line, and the wide open Warren playfield in the southeast corner of the district.

## *Weak Connection Across I-90*

The energy and activity north of I-90 along Spokane Street does not connect or continue south of the overpass.

## *Undefined Street Edges*

Vacant parcels and street side parking contribute to undefined street edges. Successful urban districts frequently feature clearly defined street edges.

## *Inaccessibility of Natural Areas*

Security and safety issues make the Avista lands, and historic resources inaccessible to the public.

## *Unclear Street Linkages*

Lincoln and Henry Streets are the only north / south connections across the railroad tracks except for Spokane Street. These connections are not clearly articulated.

## *Visual Character of District From Freeway*

Some views into the district from the freeway are of unkempt areas or signage. Vantages from the freeway may not project the desired character of the city center district.

## *Limited Access to Waterfront*

Clearly defined, public access to the waterfront is limited. (Post Falls Landing development may improve on this challenge.)

## *Scale and Character of Signage*

Some signage in the district is more reflective of a 'roadside' environment than of a vibrant, urban city center.

## *Unimproved Second Avenue*

Second Avenue streetscapes and sidewalks feature wide, unimproved parking strips and street edges.

## *Uninviting Street Environment*

Many buildings in the district include large, streetside garages or parking areas. These features make for an uninviting streetscape environment, and detract from a pleasant urban district.







# 4. Background Data

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Population & Growth ..... 64

City Center Housing ..... 65

Economic Vitality ..... 66



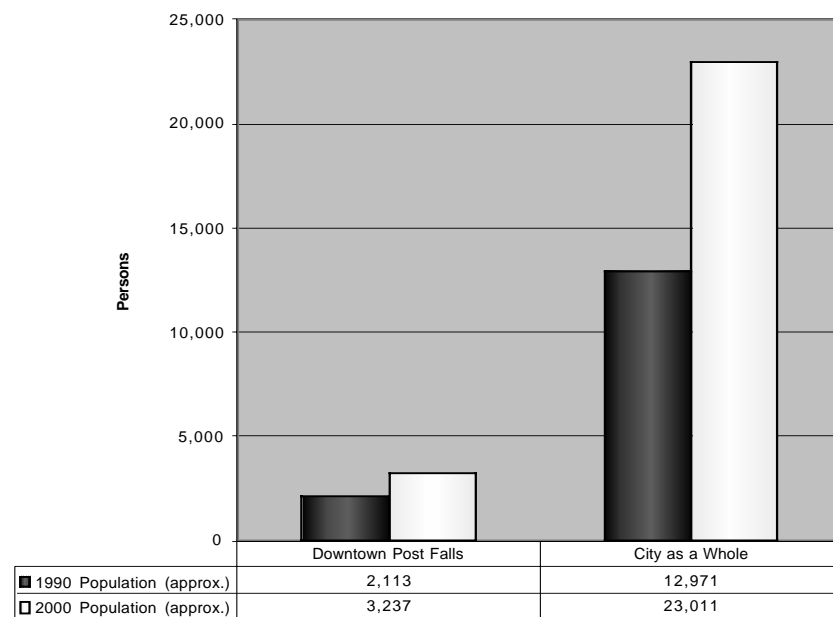
## Population and Growth

During the 1990's Post Falls was one of the fastest growing cities in all of Idaho and all of the inland northwest. Post Falls' rapid growth is consistent with rapid growth period for the entire inland northwest region during this period.

### Growth in Post Falls & City Center \*

The figure at right shows that both the City as a whole and the Census block group containing the city center grew substantially in the last decade. Population in the city center area grew by 53% while the City of Post Falls as a whole grew by 77%. Generally, areas outside the city center grew faster than the city core, probably due to more room for new development, but also because outlying areas may be considered more attractive to new households. In total, the greater city center area comprises roughly 15% of the City's overall population.

Population Growth, 1990 - 2000  
Downtown Area & The City As A Whole



Source: 1990 and 2000 Census (SF-3)

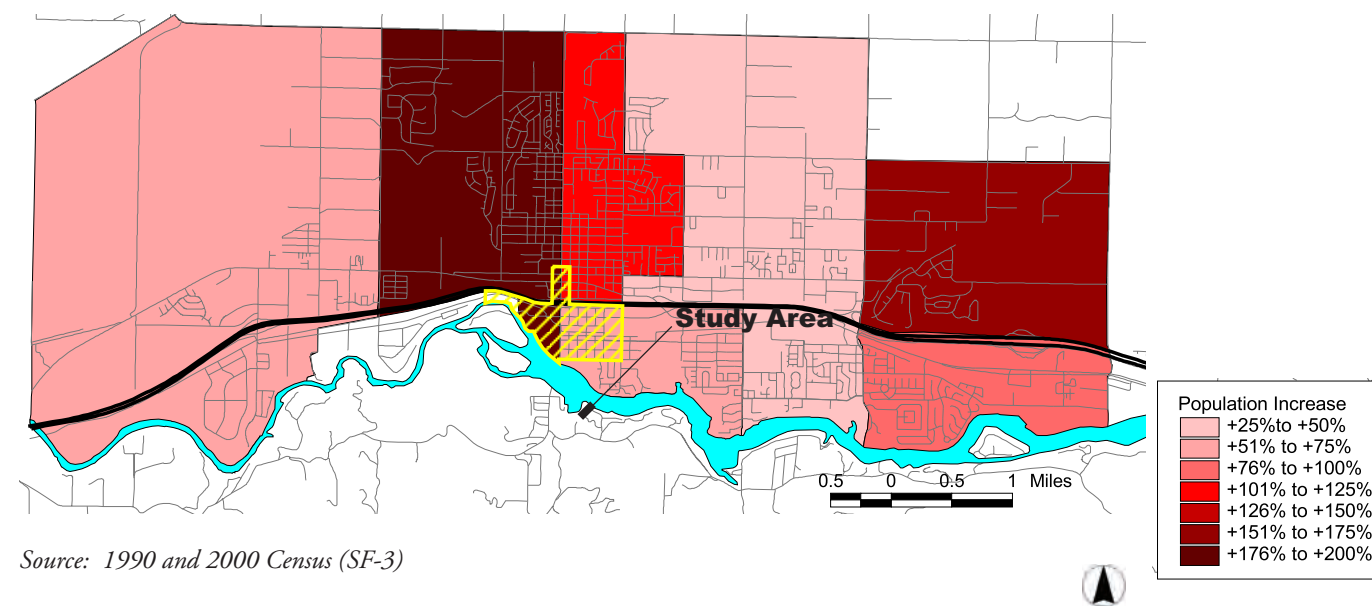
### Where did most Growth Happen?

The areas of the City that witnessed the most rapid population growth are the darker areas displayed in the map below. The section northeast of the city center, to the west of Spokane Street and the area at the West edge of the city, north of the I-90 freeway witnessed the greatest population increases during the 1990's. Explosive growth percentages in these areas (exceeding +150%) clearly suggest that Post Falls is an attractive location for new households. Attracting these households to the city center area in greater numbers is a challenge of this plan.

### Pending City Center Growth

Development plans now in the works could have substantial growth impacts on the city center of Post Falls and are important to consider. The pending Post Falls Landing project alone could add more than 600 full time residents to the city center area according to estimates from preliminary plans. This translates to a population increase of up to 20% for the city center.

Post Falls Population Growth 1990 - 2000



## City Center\* Housing

Most of the housing units in the city center area are integrated within the street grid, but primarily along 4th Avenue, 3rd Avenue, 2nd Avenue, and 1st Avenue. The swath of land along the rail line in the center of the study area contains other uses.

### Housing Units & Housing Types

The predominant type of housing units in the city center district are detached single family homes. In the 2000 Census block group containing the city center, 824 of a total 1,213 housing units were in single family homes. Beside single family homes there are a number of housing units in 3-4 unit buildings possibly suggesting some conversion of single family structures to rental property. Only a few larger multi-family buildings are located in or around the city center. Recent development of a multi family structure on 4th Avenue west of Spokane Street comprises most of downtown's higher density multi family housing stock. In general there is ample room to increase the variety of housing types in and around the city center area.

### Renters and Homeowners

Housing in the city center of Post Falls as in the city as a whole is dominated by homeownership. The Census block group containing the city center does however have a higher percentage of renters than the City as a whole: 36% of housing units in the city center are rented, versus 25% for the City as a whole.

### Housing Conditions

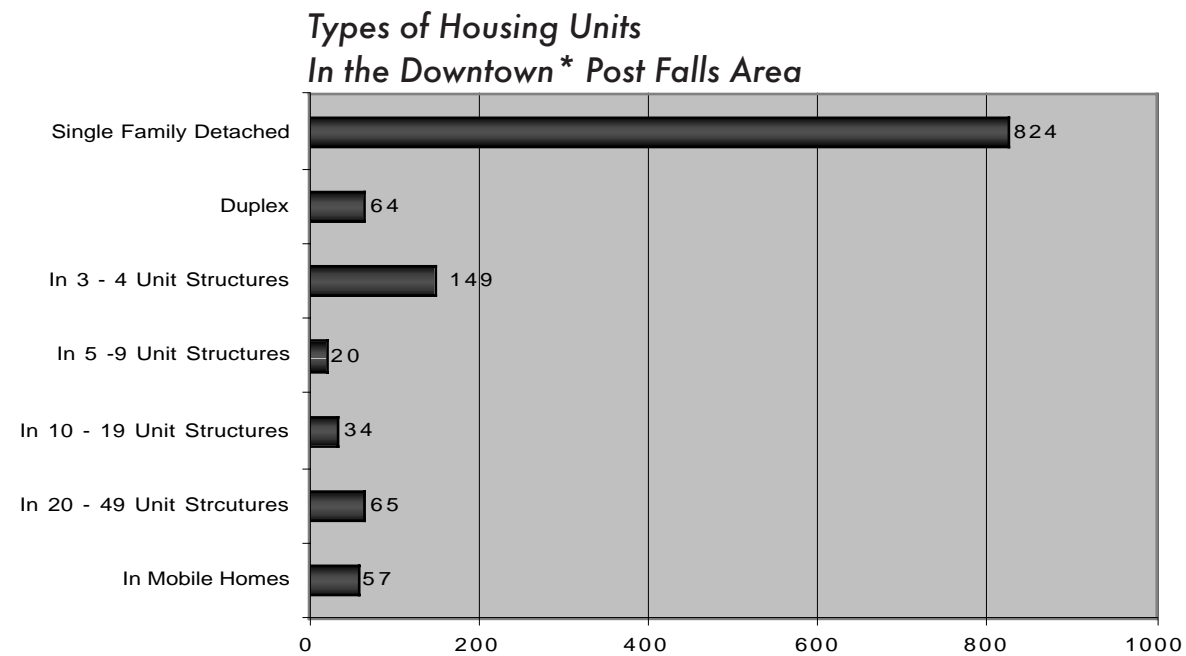
A preliminary windshield survey of housing conditions in the city center area reveals a wide range of housing conditions in the district. Many homes are well maintained, but there are multiple examples of deteriorated housing structures in the city center core. These detract from the perception of the city center as a vital district. The age of the single family housing stock ranges from early and mid 20th century vernacular homes to recent new construction. Many of the older homes have been added onto over the years, leading to interesting variety. Several lots in single family areas are vacant, or have homes that occupy only a small portion of the property. This creates a low-density feel in the city center core.

### Housing Market & Affordability

The housing market in Post Falls is expected to remain very strong in the coming years. A number of tax differential reasons make housing in northern Idaho more affordable than counterpart housing across the border in Spokane County Washington. Factors making housing more affordable in Idaho include...

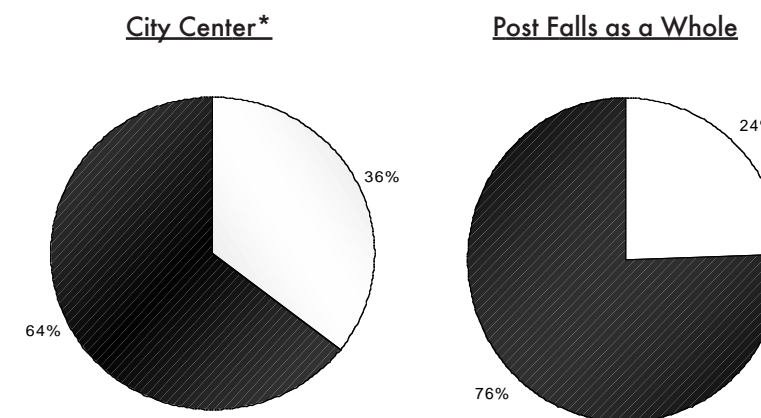
- Lower sales tax
- Lower property taxes
- Lower land prices and larger land supply.

These factors combine to make housing anywhere from 10% to 25% less expensive in Idaho than in nearby areas in Washington. This fuels construction of new housing, and provides a slight skew to younger value-seeking homeowners.



Source: 2000 Census (SF-3)

### Rental vs. Homeownership In the City Center\* Post Falls Area



Source: 2000 Census (STF-3)

\*Note: Estimates for the city center area are drawn from the 2000 Census Block group containing most of the residential area in Downtown Post Falls. The block group is larger than the downtown district boundaries drawn for this study.



## Economic Vitality

### **Strong Regional Position**

There is ample room for larger scale business development in the city center of Post Falls. Within a 40 mile radius of the city center there are hundreds of large scale businesses covering a wide range of employment sectors. Nearly all of Kootenai County, ID and Spokane County, WA are within this Post Falls trade area. The table at right lists the number of businesses by sector in these two counties during 1997. Over 2,000 business were present in the retail and trade sector, there were more than 1,000 professional, scientific and technical businesses, and more than 700 manufacturing businesses. Total sales receipts and shipments in the listed sectors alone totalled roughly \$20 billion in 1997. (Note that information for sectors including construction, utilities and mining are not included.)

Businesses that capitalize most directly on the strong regional position of Post Falls are located one freeway exit east of downtown. In this area, the Riverbend Research Park, an outlet mall center, and the Greyhound Track and Conference Center are in place. These establishments explicitly capitalize on regional position, but are unfortunately not connected to the city center district except by freeway access.

### **Types of Business in the City Center**

Private business in the city center is primarily local retail sales and services, with the exception of the Idaho Veneer mill, and more regionally focused establishments in the Spokane Street corridor. The following is an example of types of businesses operating in city center locations at the time of this plan.

#### **Idaho Veneer:**

Large mill operation that has been continuously operating since early 20th century.

#### **Spokane Street corridor, Restaurants and Services:**

Businesses in this corridor report client bases from throughout northern Idaho and Spokane County Washington. This indicates that the Spokane Street corridor is able to support regionally focused business. A notable cluster of 'attraction' restaurants has recently taken root in the area. Some establishments estimated up to 65% of business is from Spokane and Coeur d'Alene. Businesses advertise along I-90 highway and in Spokane publications.

#### **Automotive Repair and Building Trades Businesses:**

Business of this nature continue to operate, especially in the 3rd Avenue corridor. Car repair, body shops and transmission shops are present. Construction support operations are interspersed among these auto-oriented businesses.

#### **Local Community Service Establishments:**

Most businesses south of the freeway are local commercial services establishments. These include mini-grocery stores, a latte stand, massage therapy, a day care and other services. The regional business vitality does not generally extend south of I-90.

#### **Limited Regional Retail Services:**

Several businesses, especially along 5th Avenue serve a regional client base. Visibility from the Freeway enhances this opportunity. Examples include a specialty guitar shop, a printing shop etc.

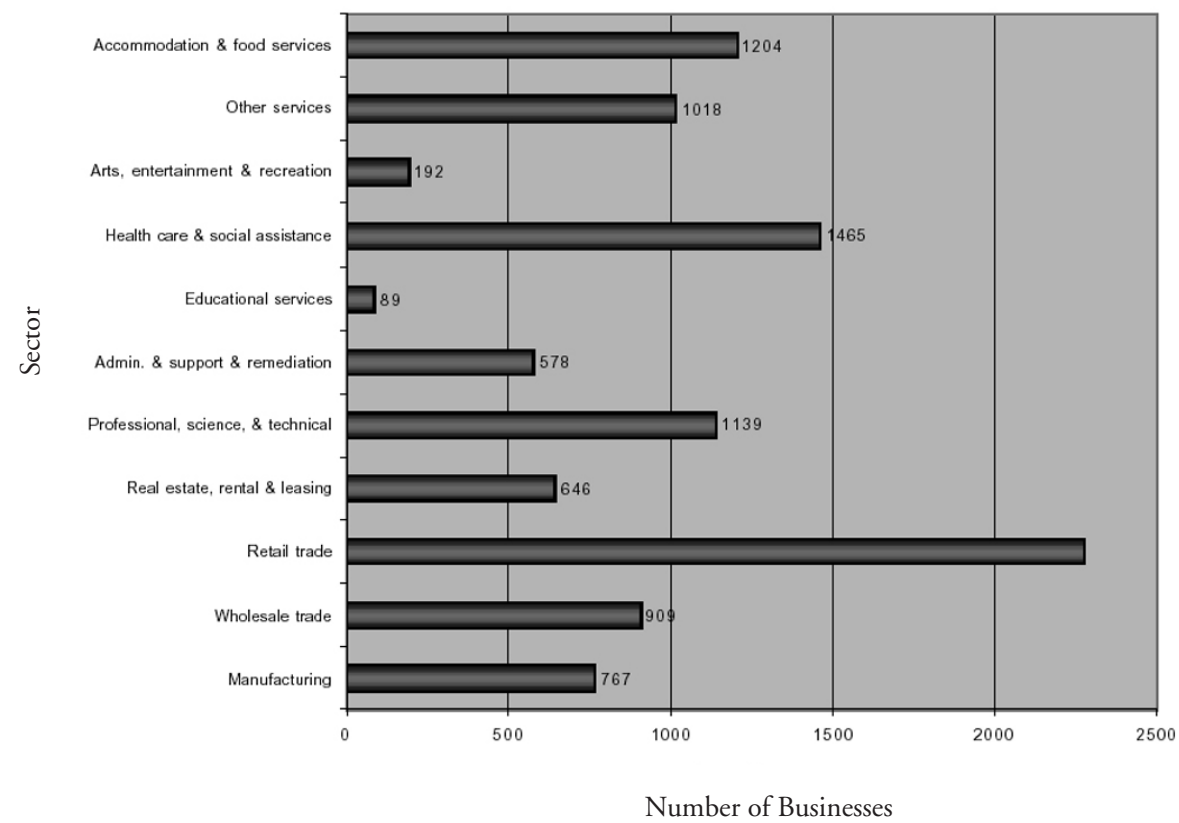
### **Jobs**

The jobs held by people living in the city center are similar to the types of jobs held by people in Post Falls as a whole. The table at right shows how jobs are distributed rather evenly between the major sectors for those living in both Post falls and in the city center area. In 2000, 28.9% worked in management professional and related occupations, 16.2% in the services, 24.6% in sales and office occupations, 13.9% in construction, extraction and maintenance, and 16.2% in production, transportation and materials moving. These amounts are consistent with the City as a whole.

### **Income Levels**

The median household income in 1999 for residents in the city center area was \$37,064, slightly lower than that of the city as a whole, \$39,061.

**Businesses in Kootenai and Spokane County  
1997 Economic Census**



Source: 1997 Economic Census.

**Jobs Held by Residents of  
Post Falls city center, and Post Falls as a Whole , 2000**

	Downtown	% of Total	City as a Whole	% of Total
Management, Professional and Related Occupations	427	28.9%	2608	24.7%
Service Occupations	241	16.3%	1710	16.2%
Sales and Office Occupations	364	24.6%	2974	28.2%
Farming, Forestry and Fishing Occupations	0	0.0%	67	0.6%
Construction Extraction and Maintenance Occupations	205	13.9%	1462	13.9%
Production Transportation and Materials Moving Occupations	241	16.3%	1728	16.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1478</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>10549</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: 2000 Census (SF-3)

\*Note: Population estimates for the city center area are drawn from the 2000 Census block group containing the Post Falls city center. The block group is larger than the city center district.



# 5. City Center Alternatives

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A - Traditional City Center ..... 70

B - Medium Density City Center ..... 72

C - High Density City Center ..... 74

Alternatives Summary:  
Meeting Community Goals ..... 76

## Alternatives / Concepts Background

Preliminary City Center Alternative Concepts stem from the Vision Statement, and supporting goals outlined in Chapter 1. Different alternatives place emphasis on different parts of the Vision Statement and community goals. In this way various arrangements for city center are shown, while still linking to the community-based Vision. City Center alternatives also represent a range of future timeframes, and differing levels of demand for future growth. The three preliminary alternatives are:

*A - Traditional City Center*

*B - Medium Density City Center*

*C - High Density City Center*

### *Preliminary Concepts*

Alternatives are preliminary and conceptual. In a future phase, concepts will be refined into a preferred alternative according to additional public input. Rather than final choices, these alternatives are a palette of options. Parts of alternatives may be combined and refined when developing the preferred alternative.

### *Meeting Vision Statement and Goals*

The table on page 46 shows to what degree alternatives emphasize different sections of the Vision Statement and community goals. The chart shows how alternatives tie back to elements of the community participation process. As preliminary alternatives are further refined, the ability of the alternative to meet key community based goals will be critical.

# Traditional, City Center "builds on existing Character & Assets"



## Summary

The Traditional City Center is intended to strengthen the historic fabric of Post Falls, retain a small town feel, and encourage targeted reinvestment. To strengthen identity, the district is formally named, Spokane Street becomes "**Spokane River Boulevard**", and 4th Avenue becomes "**Post Falls Boulevard**".

Important **historical sites** are upgraded, and linked with a self-guided walking tour. **Views of Post Falls** and the Washington Water Power bridge, from I-90 and the Centennial Trail are enhanced with tree pruning and possible lighting. **Gateway Signage**, announcing the Post Falls City Center is installed at each key entrance to the district. A **Historic Museum** is located in the old Chapin Drug building and is a satellite to the Museum of North Idaho.

The district is strengthened with a new City Hall that encourages regular gatherings in a **civic plaza**. A **Visitor's Center / Rest Area** is located near the civic center and the I-90 offramps. The **Library** continues to be strengthened as the district's **north-ern anchor**.

**Street edge commercial and mixed use development** is encouraged along the Spokane Street ("Spokane River Boulevard") and 4th Avenue ("Post Falls Boulevard") corridors with a commercial design / incentive overlay. **Public Art and Pedestrian Improvements** are incorporated below the I-90 overpass to tie together the north and south sections of the district. Residential and Commercial design / incentive overlays are incorporated into the city's municipal code and administered by a design review board. The boulevards receive extensive **streetscape upgrades**, with distinctive lighting, street furniture, signage, sidewalks and plantings. Streetscape upgrades are also executed on 2nd Avenue, and Henry Street, with 'greening' befitting of an amenity residential district. **Infill residential reinvestment** is encouraged along 1st and 2nd Avenues especially adjacent to the community park at the east edge of the City Center. Techniques to encourage potential property consolidation include a residential design / incentive overlay.

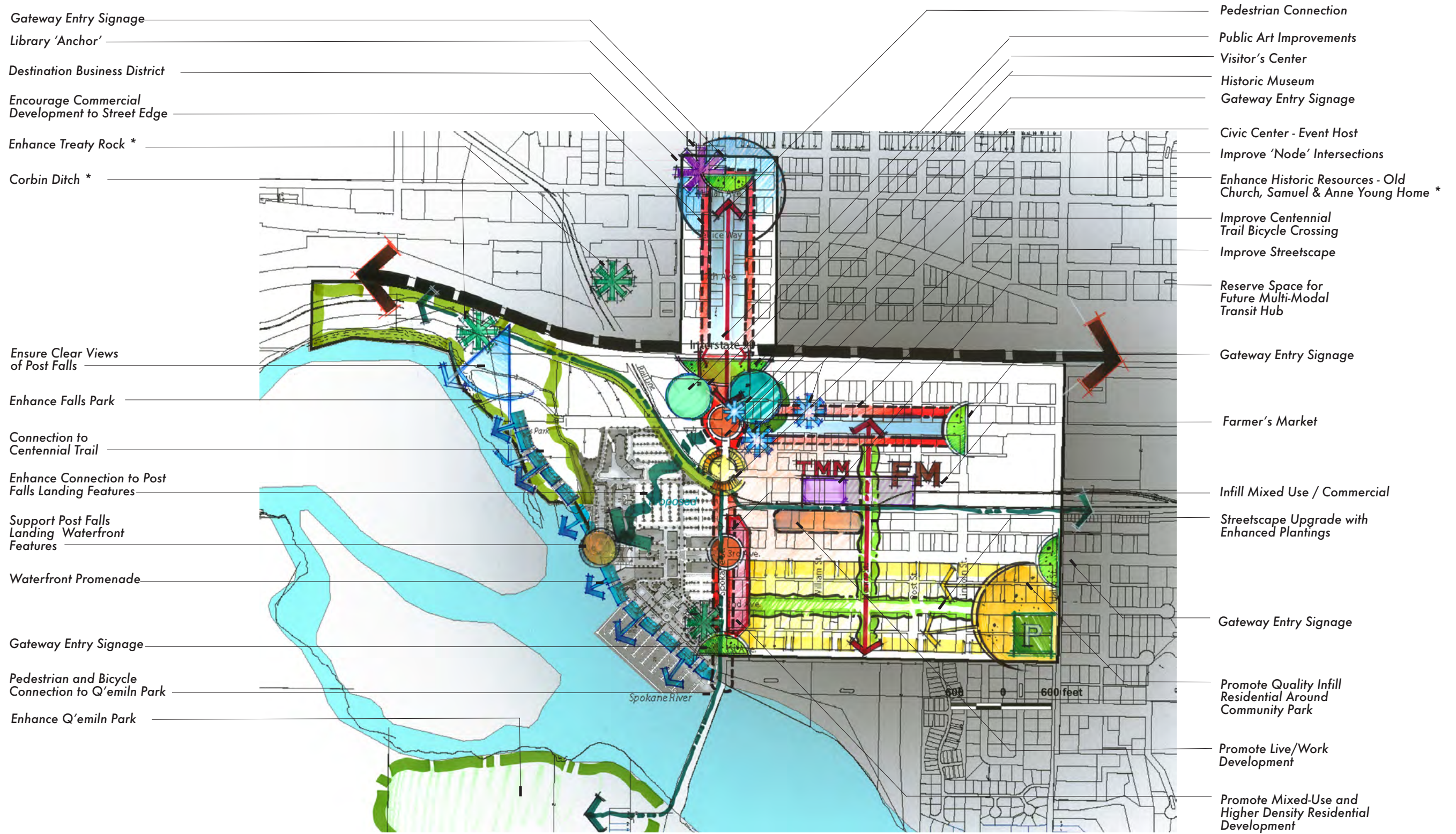
A multipurpose **Public Parking and Farmer's Market Facility** is located along the rail line in the district's center spine. This permanent covered Farmer's Market Facility captures the city's **rail line heritage** with attractive vending stalls that 'back up' to the rail line. The public parking and Farmer's Market facility may evolve into a **multi-modal transit hub in future years** with the ability to accommodate possible rail transit, bus, and Centennial Trail travel.

**Post Falls Landing** is an important anchor to the City Center. Installation of civic features are supported and assisted by the city. A strong public pedestrian / visual connection between the Civic Center Campus and waterfront is retained. Post Falls Landing buildings **respect the Spokane Street frontage** with street edge development, encouraged through the commercial design / incentive overlay. Infill development similar to Post Falls Landing continues to the east side of Spokane Street ("Spokane River Boulevard").

Q'emiln Park trails and facilities are upgraded to provide better connections to Q'emlin Park. **Centennial Trail connections are also improved** including an upgraded pedestrian crossing of Spokane Street ("Spokane River Boulevard").



# Traditional City Center "Builds on Existing Character & Assets"



\*Indicates sites to be included in Historic Walking Tour



# Medium Density City Center

- "Promotes Urban Infill with traditional character"
- "Expands Access to Natural Resources"



## Summary

The Medium Density concept is intended to allow for **infill development and reinvestment** in the city center, while preserving traditional character and **capitalizing on natural resources**. The scale of development is slightly more aggressive than the Traditional City Center alternative, yet this alternative retains the city center charm along "Post Falls Boulevard". Increased growth is offset by access to natural resources that provide greater outdoor opportunities for residents. Many features of the City Center alternative are retained including renaming of the district and key boulevards.

**Secure interpretive trail connections through the Avista Islands** allow an experience of both natural areas and the history of the Washington Water Power Dam. A **pedestrian only bridge** links Q'emiln Park to the south island. Creative security measures such as limited hours would be required for both proposals. A **lighted pedestrian connection from the Avista Natural Areas to Q'emiln Park**, and **improved Falls Park trails** offer a continuous walking loop. **Improved pedestrian and bicycle connections** are in place to Treaty Rock and Seltice Way for an extensive trail network, including an **improved trailhead at Treaty Rock**.

A multipurpose **Visitor's Center / Parking Area / Farmer's Market** is positioned near the City Hall and I-90 offramps. This location lends rugged natural character and shared parking to the facility. This facility doubles as a potential future **Multi Modal Transit Hub**. The **Civic Center Campus with new City Hall** hosts a range of community events and gatherings, which can be accommodated by 4th Avenue ("Post Falls Boulevard") with temporary partial street closures. **Public Art and Pedestrian Improvements** are incorporated below the I-90 overpass to tie together the north and south sections of the City Center. Historic resources are enhanced, similar to the Traditional City Center alternative, and a **Historic Museum** occupies a spot on Spokane Street. **Residences with historic character** are preserved and encouraged on the north side of 4th Avenue ("Post Falls Boulevard").

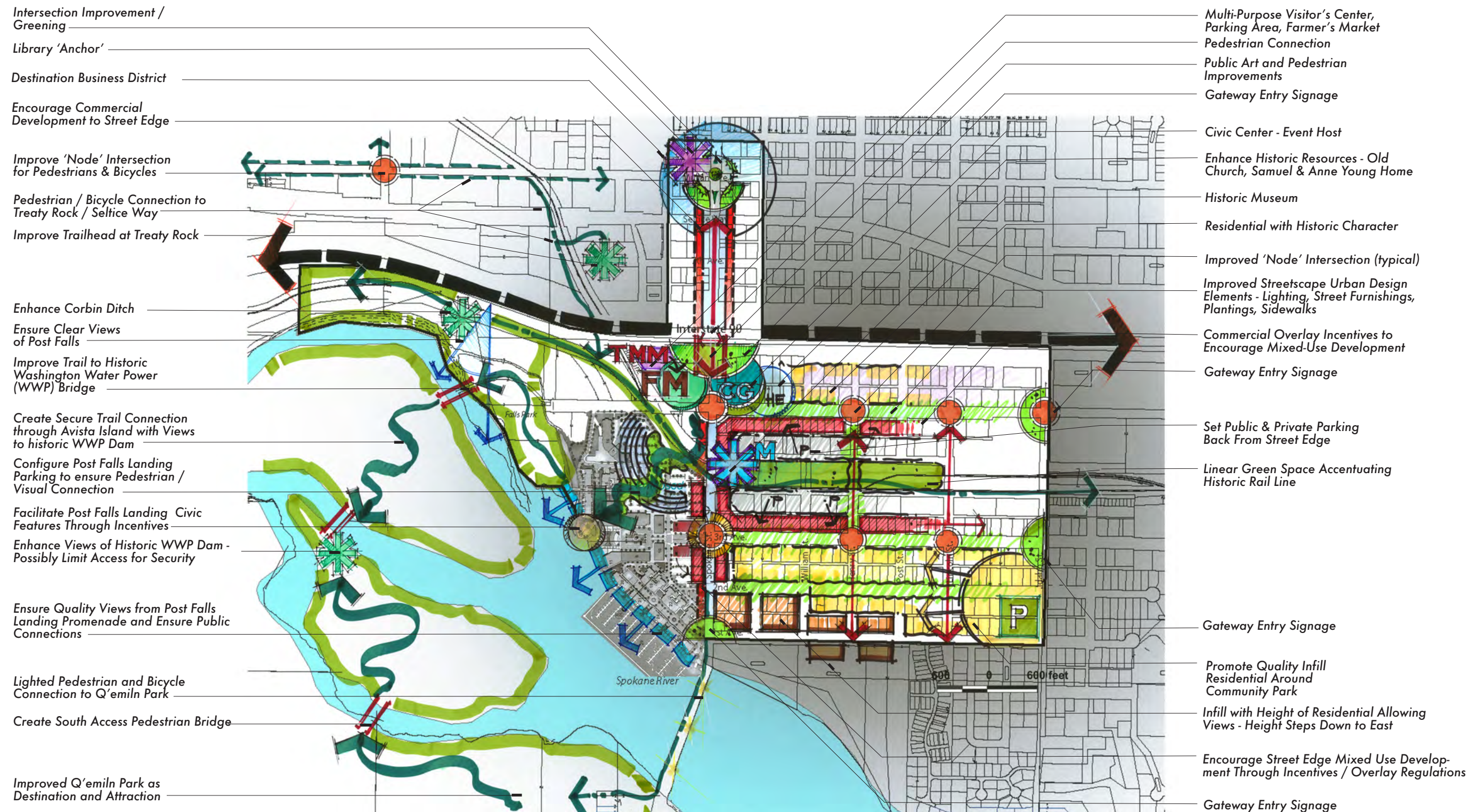
The south side of 4th Avenue (Post Falls Boulevard), along with 3rd Avenue and Spokane Street ("Spokane River Boulevard"), encourage **mixed-use commercial development with design / overlay incentives**. Public and private **parking is set back from the street edge** in these locations. A **linear green space** accentuates rail heritage in the center of the district. **Improved streetscape urban design** is in place along 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Avenues ("Post Falls Boulevard"), as well as Henry and Lincoln Streets. Improved node intersections are interspersed throughout the district.

The city promotes **quality infill residential** in the southern section of the district centering on the community park and an improved 2nd Avenue. **Medium scale residential development with height** along 2nd Avenue and Spokane Street continues the 'energy' of Post Falls Landing. New townhomes are encouraged.



# Medium Density City Center

*"Promotes Urban Infill with Traditional Character"*  
*"Expands Access to Natural Resources"*





# High Density City Center

"Anticipates increased demand for Density & Growth"



## Summary

The High Density City Center makes further reaching assumptions about future growth. This alternative **assumes a longer timeframe than the first two alternatives**. The High Density city center alternative accommodates substantial growth in both commerce and housing within the study area. Many features of the other alternatives are retained including renaming of the district and key boulevards, extensive streetscape upgrades, and node intersections.

The high density city center considers installation of a **split diamond freeway interchange** that would change 5th Avenue to an eastbound frontage road. This configuration would ease overall east west traffic flow for Post Falls as a whole based on concerns that the intersection at Spokane Avenue / Seltice Way is likely to fail. Mixed use commercial with an attractive presence to I-90 is positioned along the revised 5th Avenue. **3rd Avenue is also pictured as a mixed use commercial corridor** extending east from the completed Post Falls Landing commercial core. Spokane Street ("Spokane River Boulevard") receives street edge commercial infill between 2nd and 4th Avenues ("Post Falls Boulevard"). **Taller residential development** is in place along the east end of 1st and 2nd Avenues, which capitalizes on potential views of the Spokane River. Residential density tapers to townhomes towards the community park.

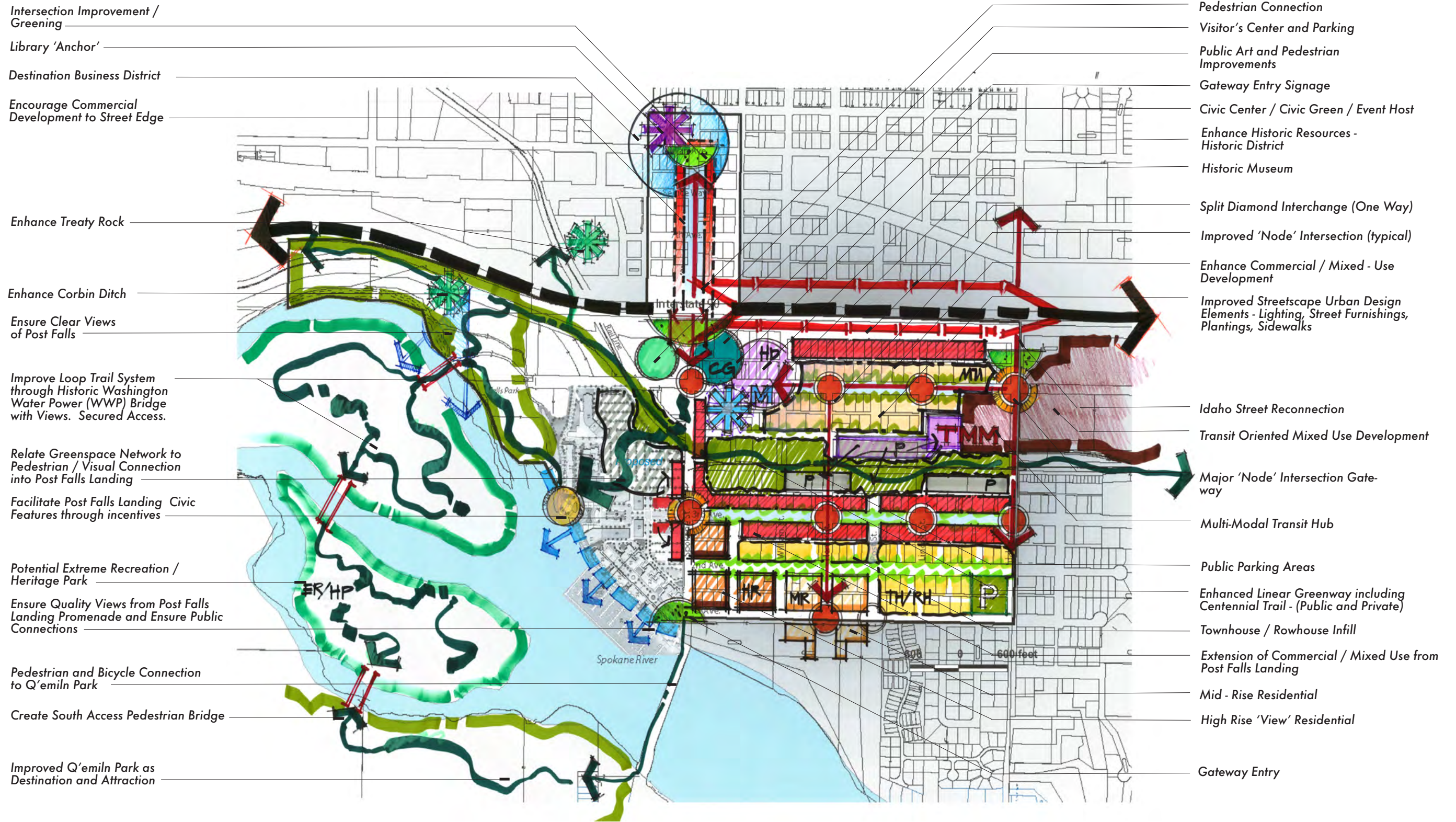
The **central rail corridor is a linear string of green spaces** interspersed with public parking, and existing developments. The greenway links to Falls Park and Q'emiln Park with careful pedestrian connections and streetscaping on Spokane Street ("Spokane River Boulevard"). The Avista properties are publicly accessible, offering **'extreme recreation' and heritage park** opportunities. The full historical value of the Washington Water Power dam is celebrated. A pedestrian only bridge connects Q'emiln Park to the southern island enabling a complete recreation loop.

Civic and cultural opportunities continue to concentrate near the intersection of 4th Avenue ("Post Falls Boulevard") and Spokane Street ("Spokane River Boulevard"). The area bounded by William Street, Spokane Street, North Railroad Avenue, and 5th Avenue forms a **historic district** where older structures are preserved. A **historic museum** is located in the Samuel and Anne Young home in this area. A **Visitor's Center / Public Parking Area**, orients visitors to the city center near the I-90 overpass.

This is the only alternative that considers future reuse of the Idaho Veneer mill site. While mill operations will continue profitably for some time, the long term trend away from natural resources industries in the region necessitates this consideration. A compact, mixed use infill development is considered for the former mill site, and **Idaho Street is reconnected with a grand civic feature** at 4th Avenue ("Spokane River Boulevard") / Idaho Street. A **multi-modal transit hub** near Idaho Street offers potential for a transit-oriented development at the former mill. It is important to note that with reuse of the second mill, the City Center is centrally positioned between two large-scale reinvestment parcels.






# High Density City Center "Anticipates increased Demand for Density & Growth"

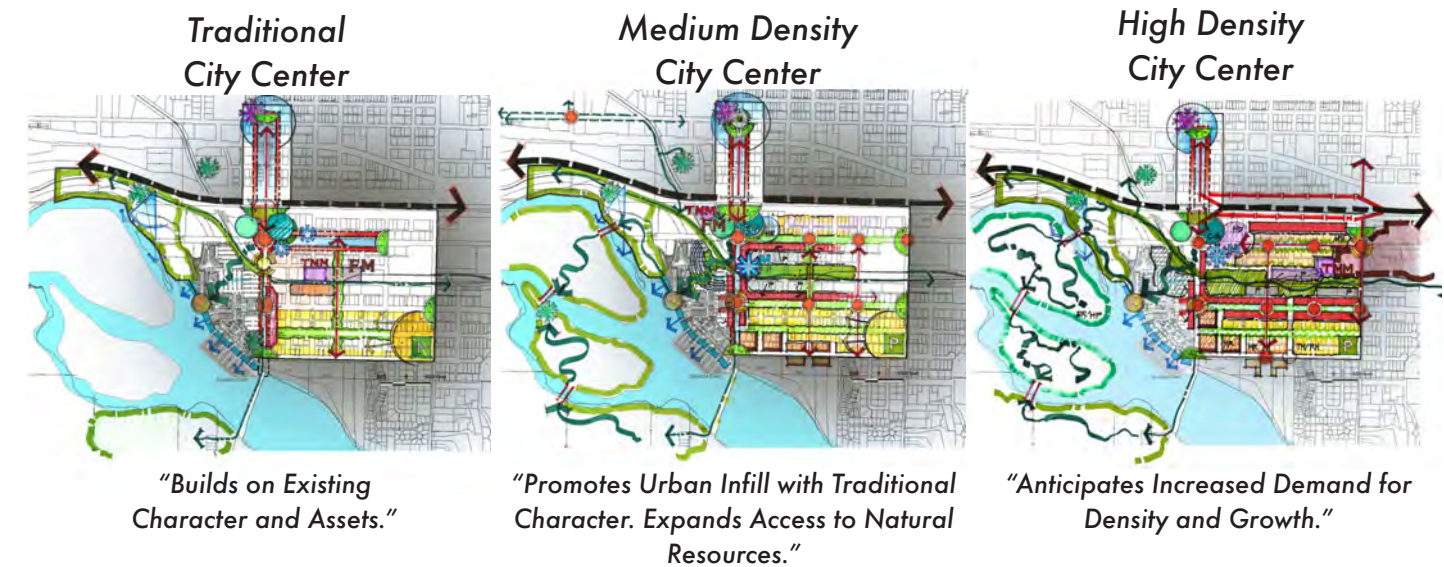




# Alternatives Summary: Meeting Community Goals

## LEGEND

	Alternative clearly emphasizes community goal.
	Alternative emphasizes community goal to some extent.
	Alternative does not significantly emphasize community goal.



## Community Based City Center Goals As Outlined In Chapter 1

### 1. Promote A Distinct Post Falls Identity

The city center district should have a distinct character, and should be the center of Post Falls identity. Identity should be enhanced with a range of elements including consistent streetscape treatments, design style, amenity features, and naming that helps brand identity.



### 2. Reconnect with Post Falls History and Heritage

Post Falls' history and heritage should be strongly emphasized in the city center district and incorporated into revitalization actions.



### 3. Capitalize on Natural Character - The River, The Falls and the Landscape

The city center district should establish strong connections to the picturesque natural resources in immediate proximity to the district: the river, the falls, and the natural landscape. Access to and enhancement of natural resources should improve the livability and vitality of the city center by attracting visitors.



### 4. Make Pedestrian Friendly Connections

Pedestrian connections in the district should provide an opportunity for residents and visitors to safely enjoy the district by walking or biking, especially between key destinations and attractions.



### 5. Create and Strengthen City Center Attractions

The city center district should feature a range of attractions: civic, cultural, business and recreational. Attractions are needed to draw people and bring life into the district.



### 6. Promote a Vibrant Mix of Infill Developments and Uses

The city center should strive for mixed infill development, which reflects the desired Post Falls style and character. A strong residential core in the southern and western half of the district should support future local commercial development.



### 7. Improve Transportation and Choices

The city center should provide a range of transportation choices to accommodate future growth.

