



University District
Spokane Washington

CONNECTIONS

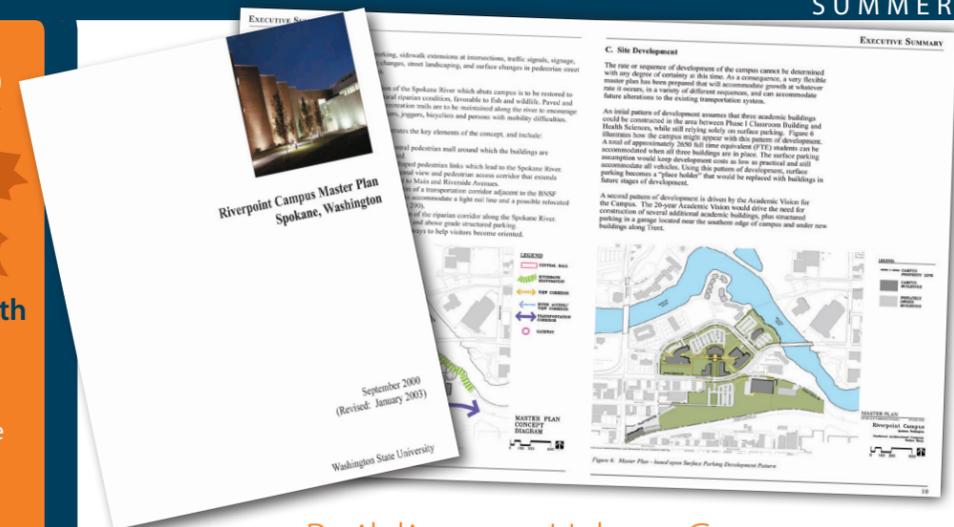
SUMMER 2009

University District
Spokane Washington
211 N. Wall Street, Suite 300
Spokane WA 99201

What's Up With U?

OCTOBER
Is University District Month

Join us throughout the month of October as we recognize the accomplishments to date in the University District, as well as share information about the direction of the District. A casual kick-off reception will be held in the beginning of the month where residents, students, workforce, property owners, businesses, and other organizations can gather, socialize, and celebrate the progress of the District. Keep your eyes and ears peeled for a media release with all the information for University District month! Information will also be posted to our website; SpokaneUniversityDistrict.com.



Building an Urban Campus: Riverpoint Campus Master Plan

Nowhere in the country will you find 50 acres on a beautiful river, in a growing downtown, ready for development as a high-end research campus. Nowhere, that is, except in Spokane's University District, at the Riverpoint Campus. The community and university vision for an urban campus was expressed in every workshop held for the recent campus master plan update, and shows clearly in materials developed by consultants NAC Architecture and MIG. Comments at public workshops emphasized easy and convenient transit connections, walkable

and bikeable design, an emphasis on sustainable design principles, strong connections to the Spokane River and to the downtown core, and a diverse mix of uses in buildings with a strong "downtown" feeling: dense, vertical, right on the street. Overview of the context for Riverpoint development: <http://twurl.cc/1bmf> Riverpoint Campus Master Plan page with notes from workshops, presentations, and more to come as additional materials are received from the consultants: <http://twurl.cc/1bmi>
-Barb Chamberlain, WSU Spokane

Current Student Enrollment

- Eastern Washington University Spokane**
2550 Students
- Gonzaga University**
7319 Students
- Washington State University Spokane**
1580 Students

Contact

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Thank you for supporting the University District

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Asuris Northwest Health | Greater Spokane Incorporated |
| Avista | Inland Northwest Health Services |
| Baker Construction | Schade Tower |
| City of Spokane | Sirti |
| Contract Design Associates | STCU (Spokane Teachers Credit Union) |
| Downtown Spokane Partnership | Washington State University |
| Eastern Washington University | Whitworth University |
| Gonzaga University | |

Interested in being added to our mailing list?
Please contact us at www.spokaneuniversitydistrict.com





GETTING AROUND The University District Safely

New Crosswalks Installed
at Riverpoint Campus

Pedestrians should always look both ways before they cross the street, but their way around the Riverpoint Campus in the University District has gotten a little safer. The new crosswalks were recently installed, thanks to a collaborative effort by the Growth and Transportation Efficiency Center program (GTEC), Spokane County Commute Trip Reduction, Spokane Regional Health District, WSU Spokane, and the City of Spokane.

Crosswalks were installed at two points on Riverpoint Blvd.: the bus stop at the east end of the street, and a midpoint crossing from the north parking lot next to the Riverpoint One Building to the campus's main parking lot. That crosswalk was further enhanced by the addition of sidewalks on either side of the parking lot entry ramp, instead of the ramp in the midst of cars and bikes. Additionally, landscaping changes will help improve pedestrian visibility and safety. Another crosswalk was re-striped at the bus stop at the west end on Riverpoint Blvd. and additional signage was installed.

"This is another example of how we are supporting multiple modes of transportation. Small improvements like new crosswalks make our community more attractive to pedestrians," says Spokane Mayor Mary Verner. "Combine that with larger efforts—like the construction of the Fish Lake Trail, the passage of our Master Bike Plan, and the addition of a Bike-Pedestrian Coordinator—and we gradually enable people to choose walking or biking to get around."

- Ann Deasy, City of Spokane



Image provided by NAC Architecture & MIG

University District & Local Revitalization Financing

The City of Spokane recently initiated the Riverside Avenue Extension's design phase, a project to reduce Spokane Falls Boulevard's vehicular traffic between Division and Hamilton Streets, creating a consolidated, pedestrian-friendly Riverpoint Campus. The City of Spokane's Business & Development Services Office is facilitating an application process to secure a funding mechanism for the University District. In 2009, the approval of Washington Senate Bill 5045 created Local Revitalization Financing (LRF) districts, a new type of tax increment financing authorized by Washington state legislators. The bill identified the University District Revitalization Area (UDRA) as one of seven pilot areas in the state.

Under 2SSB 5045, cities may create "revitalization areas" and may use certain future tax revenues which increase within the area to finance local public improvements including roads, pedestrian bridges, landscaping, utilities, and sidewalks. Projects financed by tax increment financing must be expected to encourage private development and increase the fair market value of real property within the tax increment area.

Local revenue will be captured through a new financing tool similar to TIF and LIFT.

TIF, Tax Increment Financing, captures a portion of future property tax revenue. LIFT, Local Infrastructure Financing, captures a portion of future sales tax revenue. The pilot designation for UDRA allows Spokane to receive \$250,000 in state tax revenue as long as we can demonstrate a potential match of \$250,000 in new local tax revenue. There is no increase in the tax rate paid by consumers. The bill, in effect, allows growth to pay for growth.

Although Spokane has previously designated TIF districts at Iron Bridge and West Quadrant (Kendall Yards area), Local Revitalization Financing (LRF) provides a stronger potential revenue source for University District projects within the boundaries of the UDRA. The formation of a local revitalization area is accomplished by an ordinance passed by City Council, which requires a public hearing, currently scheduled for August 17. Community meetings regarding the UDRA were held on July 1 and July 14 at the WSU Nursing Building on the Riverpoint Campus. Business & Development Services continues to offer informational sessions and presentations regarding the initiative until the formal hearing is held.

CORRIDOR OF OPPORTUNITY

The Riverside Avenue Extension Project creates the opportunity to provide a unified, safe, accessible, and pedestrian-friendly Riverpoint Campus within the University District. Using Federal and State dollars to complete the project, the City of Spokane will reduce vehicular traffic on Spokane Falls Boulevard and create an inviting setting for a variety of commuters.

"The University District is an important economic growth catalyst for the City and Inland Northwest," says Mayor Mary Verner. As part of the design process, the City and area stakeholders hosted a Community Workshop on May 6, 2009 led by MIG, Inc., a consultant who worked on the *Downtown Plan Update* and other local projects.

Participants learned about the project scope and provided input on design elements and connections to other planned area projects. While a landmark pedestrian/bike bridge, Main Avenue's and Spokane Falls Boulevard's improvements are outside the project scope, they remain highly related elements critical to the area's overall success.

"Public involvement strengthens the planning and design process assuring that the community wants and needs are addressed and helps guide future development," says the Mayor. The workshop participation determined that streetscape design should distinguish the area as highly attractive, easy to navigate, and pedestrian-oriented. Multiple transportation modes including rapid transit, light rail, transit corridors, sidewalks, and bicycle routes should link the area to the university, downtown, and other districts.

Recent traffic calming examples are the newly restriped crosswalks with sidewalk and landscaping improvements for pedestrian safety on Riverpoint Boulevard. "This collaborative effort is another example of how we are supporting multiple transportation modes and making our community more attractive to pedestrians," says the Mayor.

Strategies to create a pedestrian-friendly streetscape include interpretive signage, distinct crosswalks, street furniture, and ample street lighting. Existing connections should be maintained and enhanced to reflect the area's unique architectural character. Incorporating sustainable practices in redevelopment efforts as well as utilizing natural topography will exemplify the City's support of "green" design.

To create a welcoming sense of arrival, a unified gateway and way-finding signage system will link the Riverside Extension area with nearby districts and neighborhoods. Integrating existing historic urban remnants into future developments' design adds character and unifies the landscape and architectural elements to distinguish the district.

Construction of Phase 1 begins summer 2010, providing a half-mile extension of Riverside east from Division, curving to the north near the eastern campus border on the river's west side, then connecting to Spokane Falls prior to the new Trent Avenue Bridge. An application is currently being reviewed to change the public right of way street name within the Riverside Extension to "Martin Luther King Jr. Way," which will be heard at a City Council hearing in August.

Art

In The District

With the recent relocation of her store, Peters and Sons Flowers and Gifts, to the University District, Susie Matteson felt it was a time to draw some attention to her new neighborhood. Combining their appreciation for the neighborhood and the arts, Peters and Sons partnered with Pacific Flyway Gallery to come up with something new. On July 11 twenty-four local artists set up shop on E. Pacific Avenue in the University District, to participate in the first annual University District Art Fair.

The event was a success thanks to crucial volunteers, organizers' efforts and live TV coverage by KHQ, in addition to a University District story that aired on both the 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. news. As a result, Peters and Sons and Pacific Flyway Gallery plan to expand the event in future years to include even more of the neighborhood, food vendors and additional activities for kids.

The most immediate task for the art fair, however, was to find a proper name for the event. A naming contest began the day of the fair, and will continue through the end of August. The contest winner will receive a prize and bragging rights for coming up with the name, so get your thinking caps on and submit a name before summer is over!

To submit a suggestion or to get involved in next year's event, contact Susie at susanm@petersandsons.com or 509.624.4151.