What Does the Future Hold for the University District?

The University District Strategic Plan envisions the University District as a center for intellectual and research excellence; an economic engine of innovation. The District is imagined as a vibrant, pedestrian friendly destination with an eclectic mix of uses, including homes, offices, shops, university uses, clinics, professional services, manufacturing and warehouses.

The District will be a diverse place that is home to a cross section of the community: young professionals, families, seniors and students. It is anticipated that the district will include a mix of housing including apartments, townhouses, lofts and condominiums. All striving to be units that are live/work single and multi-family homes.

To ensure the University District can gain momentum and secure a sense of place with strong brand awareness will take the commitment from all the parties who will benefit from this endeavor. Those parties include all universities, property owners, businesses, government agencies, non-profits and residents.
What is the University District?

The University District offers opportunities to address economic development issues, urban growth, environmental restoration, transportation and affordable housing needs.

Connecting the core strengths of the educational institutions with regional economic drivers to create an urban laboratory for the creation of new knowledge and innovation anchor for the region. Sirti, a state economic development agency headquartered at Riverpoint, provides 40,000 square feet on-campus incubator space to technology based companies.

To enhance its ability to connect and serve the needs of the business community, Community Colleges of Spokane relocated its district administrative offices to the University District.

Around the campuses are businesses that draw on this population for their customer base, along with dozens of opportunity sites for development of additional housing, services, dining, entertainment, professional and clinical offices.

Knowledge + Collaboration = Innovation

Knowledge—Spokane's University District offers a multi-institutional learning environment, providing abundant opportunities for world-class scholars in intellectual activity, career advancement and recreational bliss. Our talent pool is cultivated by the presence of award-winning K-12 systems, renowned institutions of higher learning and targeted skill-building workforce development activities.

Collaboration—the University District provides a key asset that leverages educational and research collaborations with hospitals, clinics, practitioners, federal and state laboratories and agencies to transform the regional economy and standard of living via a globally competitive approach to medical research and care. Over 500 research studies and clinical activities are currently occurring in Spokane, showing the collaboration between healthcare institutions and academia is leveraged and growing.

Innovation—University-inspired research is the principle source of technology innovations and economic expansion for our region and country, through the successful transfer of research results to commercial ventures. The University District provides the catalyst for collaboration between universities and commercial enterprises, creating a rapidly increasing rate of intellectual property development.

Assets and Progress

The University District’s key assets include:

- The presence of a top research university
- An award-winning healthcare sector, support services and organizations for emerging research-based startups
- Biomedical development and manufacturing firms
- A national leader in electronic medical records and health IT
- Location—its proximity to downtown, the Spokane River, historic residential neighborhoods, the medical district and major transportation routes
- Recreation— the Centennial Trail in the heart of the District provides for an excellent resource for alternative transportation and recreation along the beautiful Spokane River corridor

Progress and More Progress

- A multi-year community planning effort conducted, resulting in the University District Strategic Plan.
- City received $45K for the Technical Assistance from the Environmental Protection Agency.
- $34.6 Million Nursing School
- Riverside Realignment
- $58 Million assorted projects on Gonzaga Campus, including a new athletic center, new residences, new baseball stadium and major remodels.
- $6 Million Sirti Technology Center
- Residential Development—The Edge Condos
- $6.5 Million Applied Sciences Lab
- Expansion of Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, Idaho (WWAMI) program
- 11,000 students
- Pine Street Development Proposal
- The creation of the Innovation Partnership Zone (IPZ)—designated as a Washington State IPZ, the University District will have the opportunity to leverage state funding and incentives to drive technology transfer and commercialization.
- The Downtown, University District, Kendall Yards Transportation Study