

YOU BELONG HERE

"The river really is a central member of this community in the University District and is the center of everything for us..."
—Katelyn Scott, Spokane Riverkeeper

The 40-year framework transforms 770 acres around the Spokane River into a connected, regenerative district where ecological repair, cultural identity and shared opportunity guide every investment.

A DUAL REGIONAL ECOTONE DISTRICT

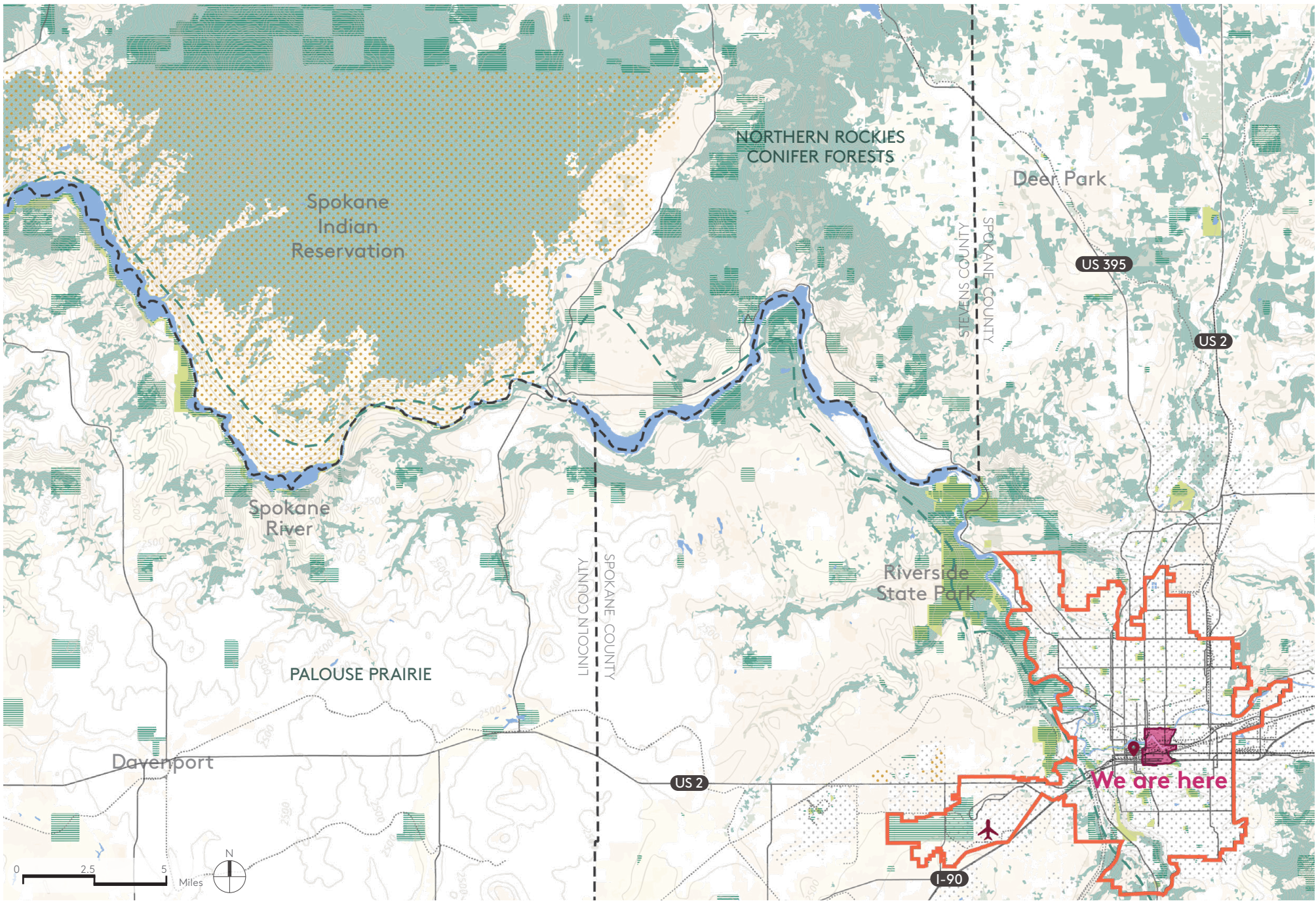
At the bend of the Spokane River, the district connects downtown, six higher education institutions, health and research partners, neighborhoods and regional trails—yet highways, rail and auto infrastructure fragment access and opportunity.



SPOKANE RIVER



BASALT BEDROCK



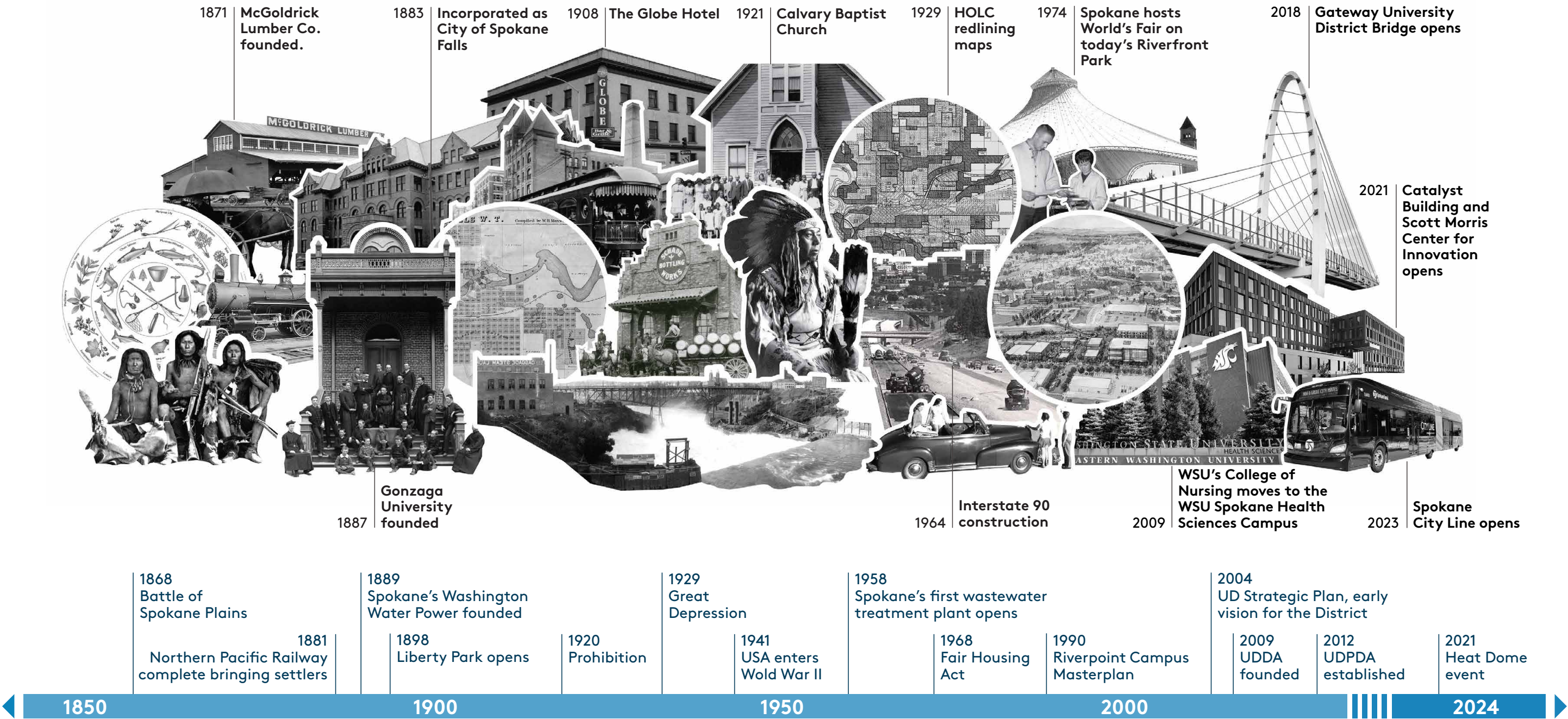
LEGEND

- COUNTY BOUNDARIES
- SPOKANE CITY
- HIGHWAYS
- RAILROAD
- ▨ URBAN AREA
- ▨ NATIVE LANDS

- SURFACE WATER BODIES
- ▨ ECOREGION BOUNDARY
- ▨ NATURAL PROTECTED AREAS
- FOREST
- GRASSLANDS

- ▨ TOPOGRAPHY, 100 FOOT CONTOURS
- ▨ UD BOUNDARY
- DOWNTOWN SPOKANE
- ✈ SPOKANE AIRPORT
- PARKS

INTEGRATING PLACE-BASED HISTORY



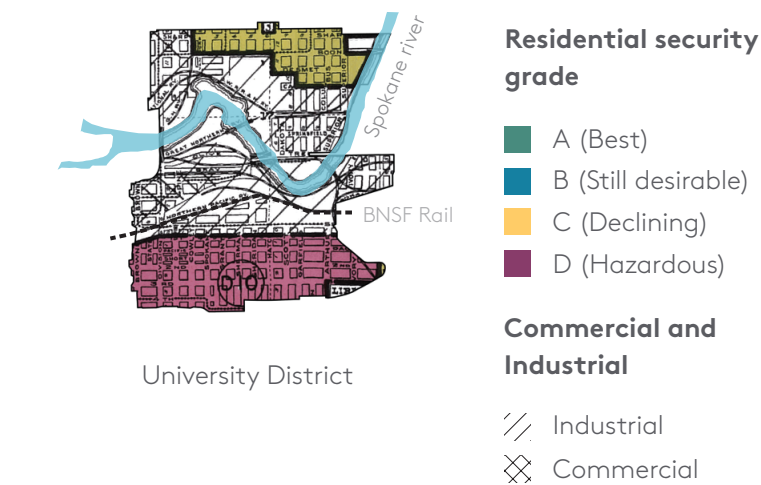
◀ The bedrock of the University District is basalt, crystallized lava that was laid down in the Miocene Epoch of the Tertiary Period, between about 25 million and 12 million years ago.

◀ The Spokane have lived along the banks of the river for millennia. They lived and migrated across the landscape according to seasons.

A Board power analysis compared who would be most affected with who traditionally holds influence. It identified people experiencing houselessness, service providers and nonprofits as high-impact, low-power voices—reshaping the engagement strategy.

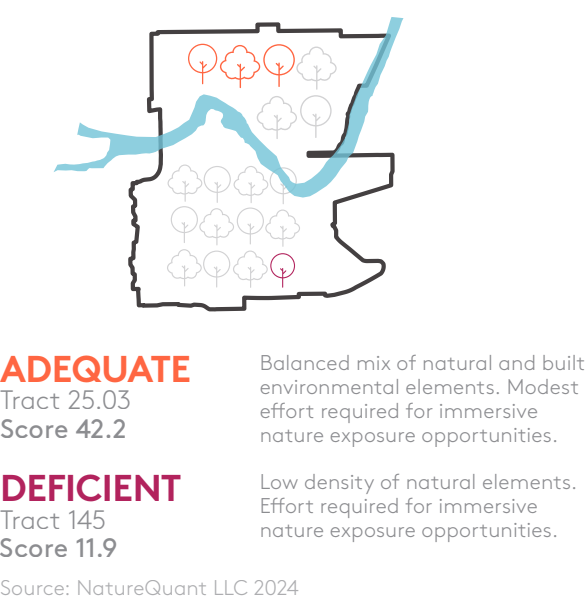
UNEQUAL BURDENS, UNEQUAL OPPORTUNITY

HISTORIC REDLINING POLICIES, 1935 - 1940

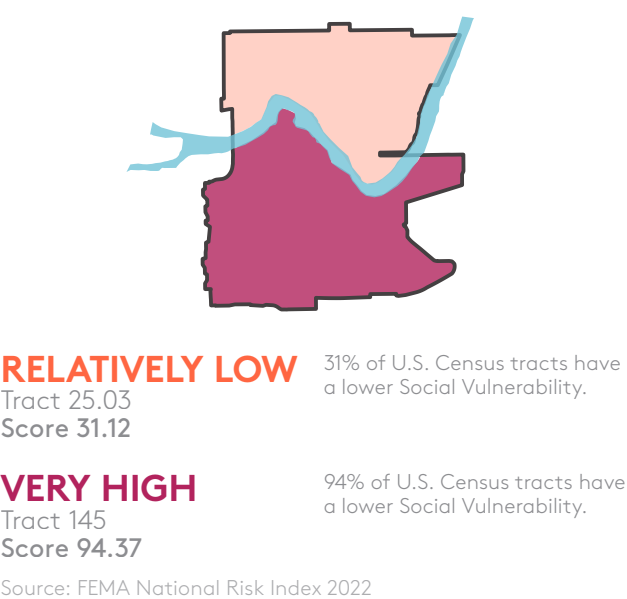


Source: Nelson, R. K., Winling, L, et al. (2023). Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America. Digital Scholarship Lab. <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining>.

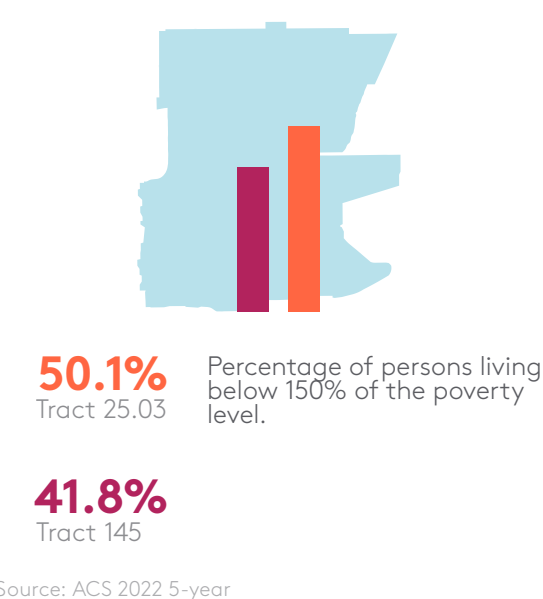
HEALTH SUPPORTIVE NATURE



SOCIAL VULNERABILITY INDEX



POVERTY LEVEL



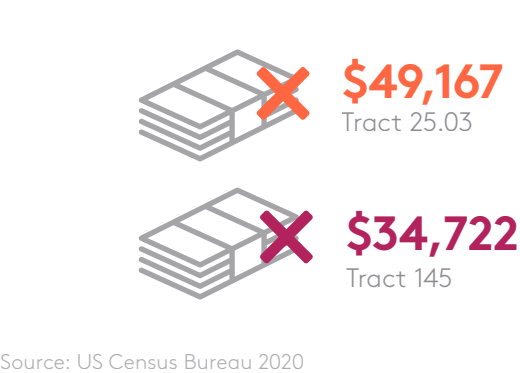
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Percentage of people 25+ years with no Highschool diploma.



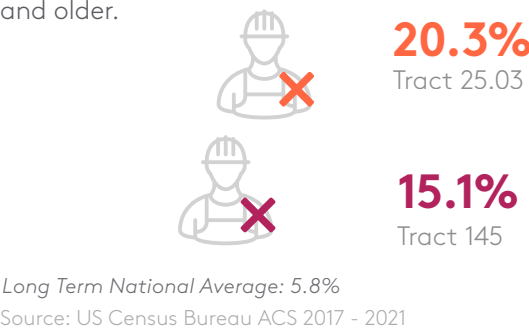
US Census Bureau 2021 National Average: 8.9%
Source: US Census Bureau ACS 2017 - 2021

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



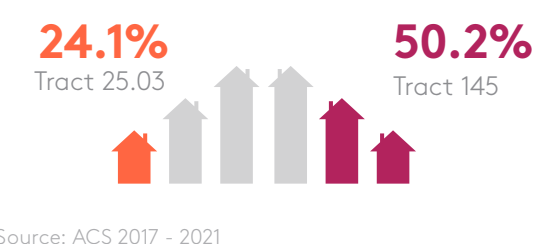
UNEMPLOYMENT LEVEL

Percentage of unemployment among 16 years old and older.



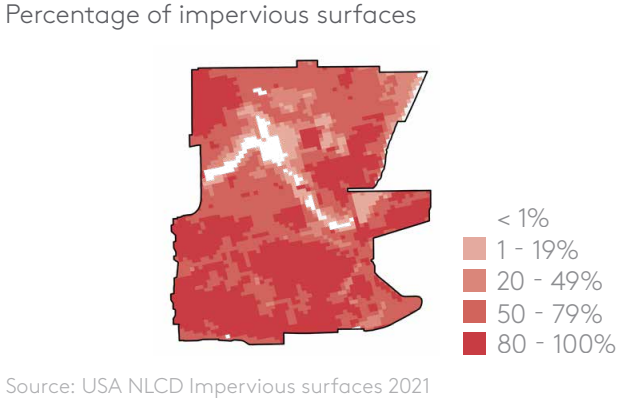
HOUSING COST BURDEN

Share of households making less than 80% of the area median family income and spending more than 30% of income on housing.

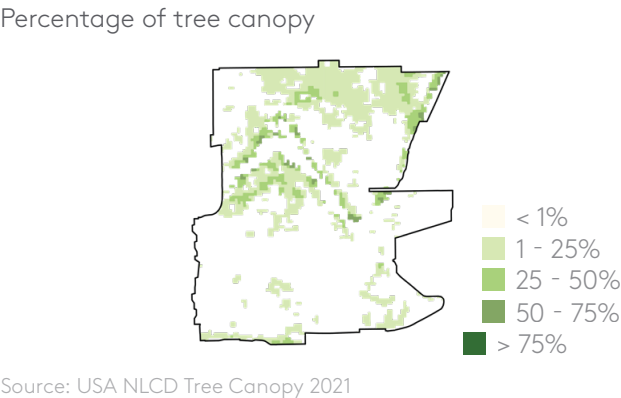


The southern district combines greater social vulnerability, heat, impervious surface and housing burden with a NatureScore of 11.9—compared with 42.2 north of the river. The evidence established where investment must begin.

IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

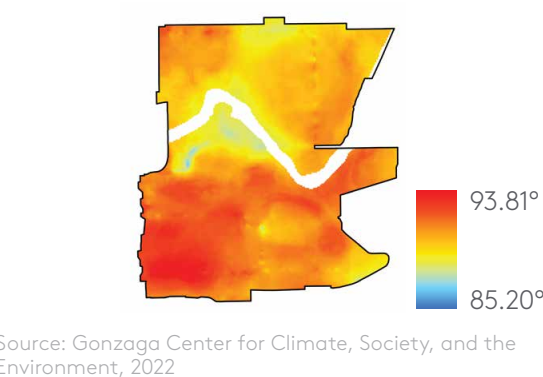


TREE CANOPY



HEAT

Afternoon heat temperatures comparison.



POWER MAPPING CHANGED THE PROCESS

Guided by the Just Communities framework and concept of Belonging, the power analysis highlighted communities most affected yet underrepresented, including people experiencing houselessness, service providers, and nonprofits as high-impact, low-power voices. These insights reshaped engagement and informed placemaking interventions prioritizing shade and welcoming places to gather.



STAKEHOLDER MAPPING AND POWER ANALYSIS

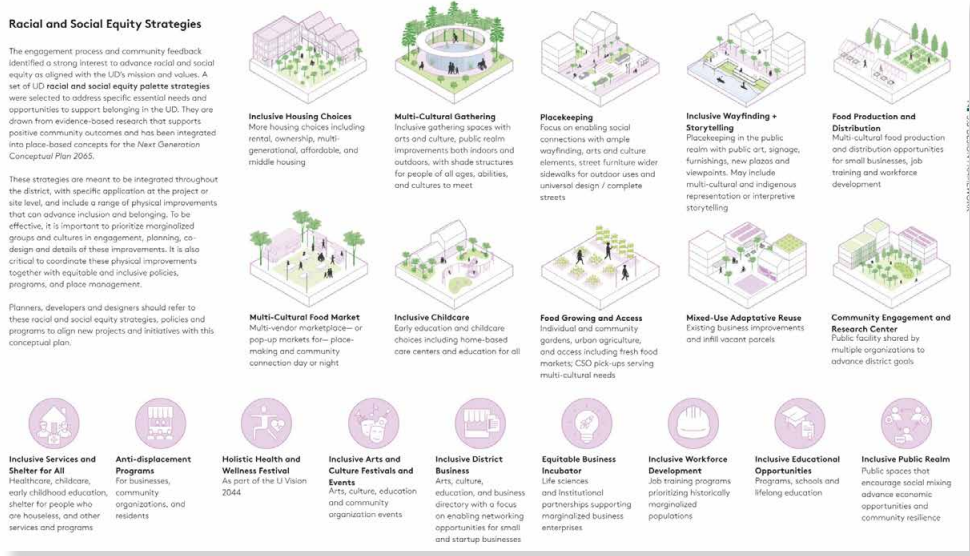
GROUNDWORK FORUM BUILT A FOUNDATION OF LONG-TERM ADVOCACY



The Groundwork Forum brought more than 40 stakeholders together to map assets, add to a living community timeline, imagine 2065 and define what a joyful, healthy district should provide.

EQUITY AND ECOLOGY SHAPE THE PLAN

Racial and Social Equity Strategies



Inclusive Housing Choices
More housing choices including rental, ownership, multi-generational, affordable, and middle housing.

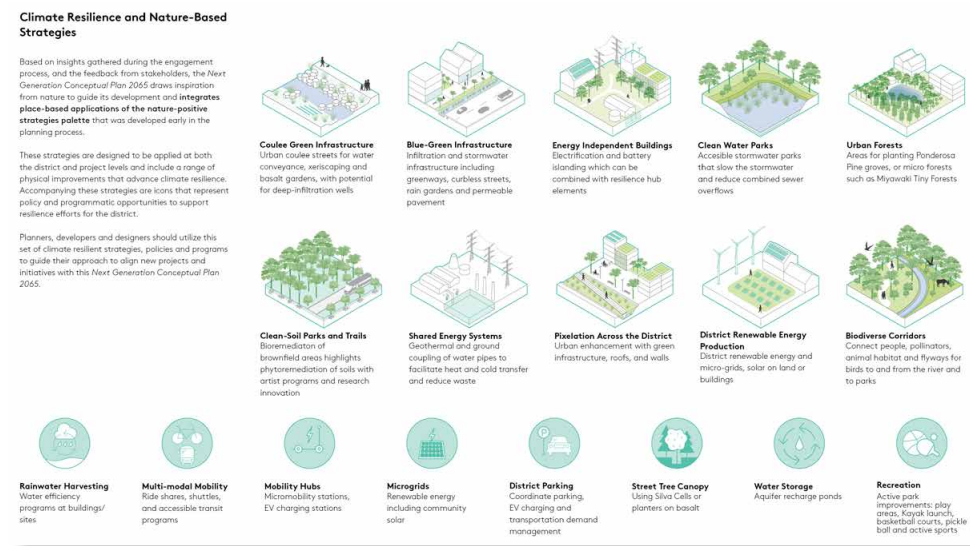
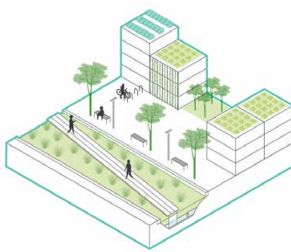


Multi-Cultural Gathering
Inclusive gathering spaces with arts and culture, public realm improvements both indoors and outdoors, with shade structures for people of all ages, abilities, and cultures to meet.

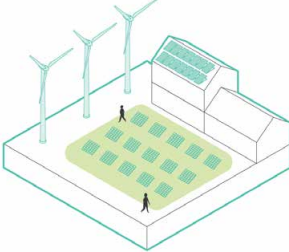


Placekeeping
Focus on enabling social connections with ample wayfinding, arts and culture elements, street furniture wider sidewalks for outdoor uses and universal design / complete streets.

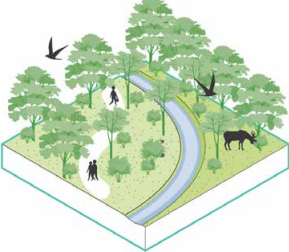
Climate Resilience and Nature-Based Strategies



Pixelation Across the District
Urban enhancement with green infrastructure, roofs, and walls.



District Renewable Energy Production
District renewable energy and micro-grids, solar on land or buildings.



Biodiverse Corridors
Connect people, pollinators, animal habitat and flyways for birds to and from the river and to parks.

Racial and social equity strategies were paired with climate resilience and nature-based solutions to identify opportunities, shape the plan's focus areas and ensure every investment advances community well-being and ecological performance together.

ONE FRAMEWORK, SIX CATALYTIC PLACES

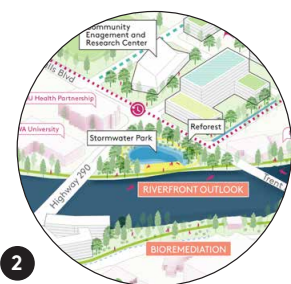
The plan enhances the University District’s sustainability, livability, commercial viability, and academic vibrancy, transitioning from an industrial past to a resilient, knowledge-based economy. Gateway Commons, now in design, marks the first phase of implementation.



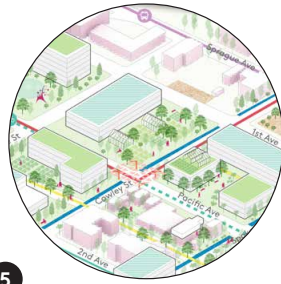
1
CYCLE OF LIFE FOOD HUB



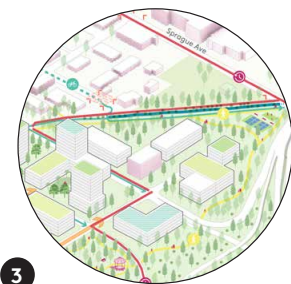
4
INNOVATION COMMONS



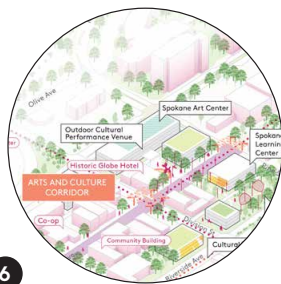
2
HEAL THE RIVER



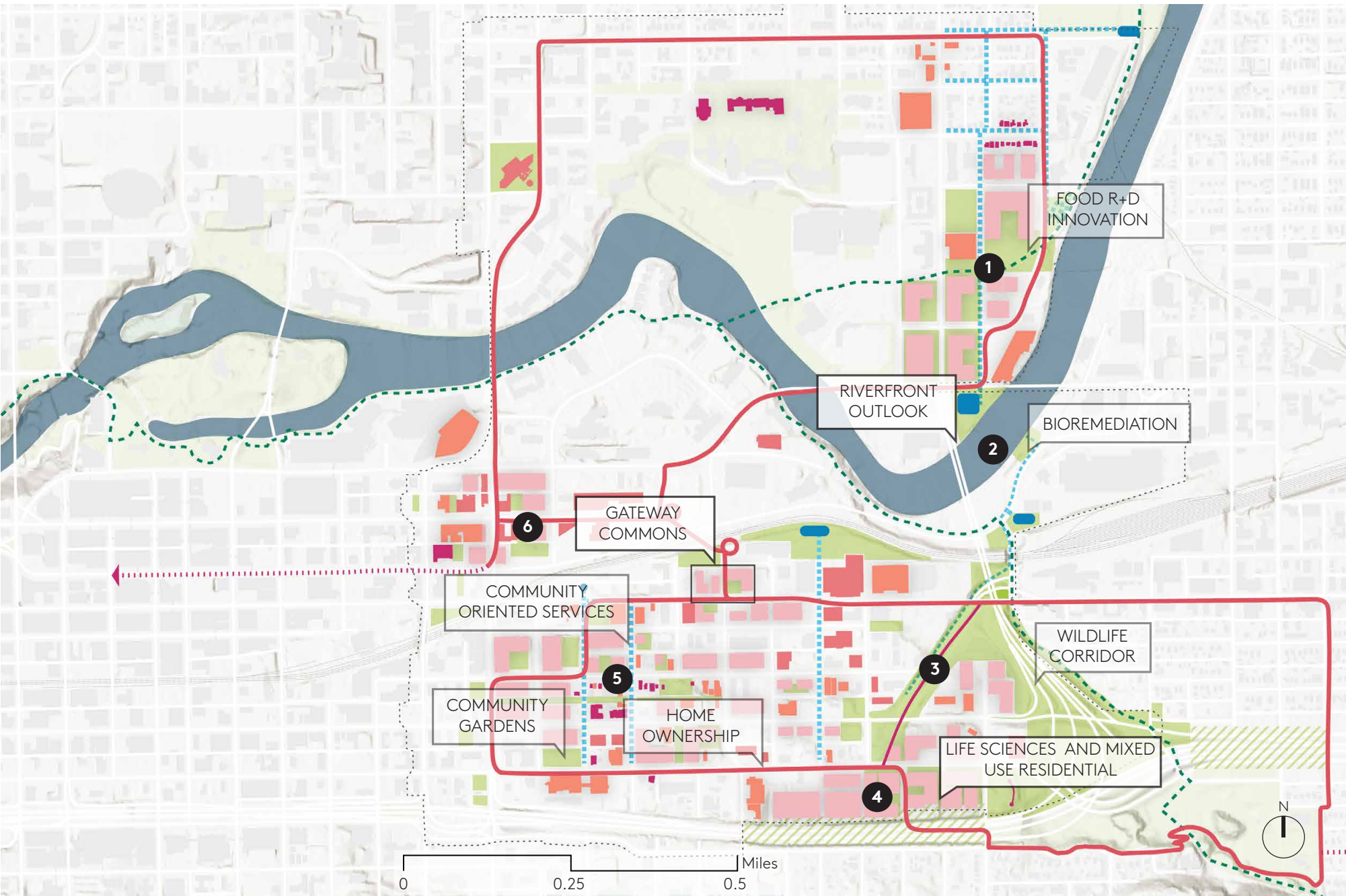
5
MULTI-CULTURAL MAKERS DISTRICT



3
SPRAGUE WAY TRAIL



6
MAIN ARTS AND CULTURE CORRIDOR



LEGEND

- UNIVERSITY DISTRICT REVITALIZATION AREA
- LEGACY LOOP
- GREEN STREETS
- EXISTING TRAILS

- SUPPORTING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE
- PROPOSED OPEN SPACE
- LID PARK OPPORTUNITIES
- HISTORIC STRUCTURE

- LEGACY BUSINESS
- REHAB OR ADAPTIVE REUSE OPPORTUNITIES
- PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

WSU HEALTH SCIENCES SPOKANE

EASTERN WA UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY DISTRICT GATEWAY BRIDGE

CATALYST BUILDING

SHERMAN HEART

BOXCAR

LEGACY LOOP

MAIN AVE ARTS AND CULTURE CORRIDOR

HISTORIC GLOBE HOTEL

CO-OP

COMMUNITY BUILDING

LEGACY LOOP

STREETS: RIVERPOINT BLVD, OLIVE AVE, SPOKANE FALLS BLVD, DIVISION ST, SPRAGUE AVE, 1ST AVE, M.L.K. JR WAY, BNSF RAILROAD

THEME ICONS: Lightbulb, Shopping bag, Fork and knife, Dumbbell, Family, Book, Sun, Musical note

The Legacy Loop and Main Avenue Arts and Culture Corridor reveal Indigenous, Black, immigrant and industrial histories while creating new places for art, learning, gathering, housing and local enterprise.

An aerial photograph of a city street grid. A red dashed line runs diagonally from the top left towards the bottom right, highlighting a specific corridor. The surrounding area shows a mix of green spaces, trees, and urban buildings. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

The Legacy Loop and Main Avenue Arts and Culture Corridor reveal Indigenous, Black, immigrant and industrial histories while creating new places for art, learning, gathering, housing and local enterprise.

CULTURE IN THE PUBLIC REALM

E MAIN AVENUE LOOKING NORTH, BETWEEN DIVISION ST AND PINE ST

REVEAL + LEARN

HISTORIC
GLOBE HOTEL

SPOKANE
ART CENTER

NEW
HOUSING
CHOICES

ART WALK
AND LEGACY
LOOP

OUTDOOR CULTURAL
PERFORMANCE VENUE

A Board power analysis compared who would be most affected with who traditionally holds influence. It identified people experiencing houselessness, service providers and non-profits as high-impact, low-power voices—reshaping the engagement strategy.

FOOD EQUITY, KNOWLEDGE AND OPPORTUNITY

CORNER OF N SUPERIOR ST WEST OF IRON BRIDGE

REVEAL + LEARN

FOOD R+D
INNOVATION HUB

FOOD
PRODUCTION +
DISTRIBUTION

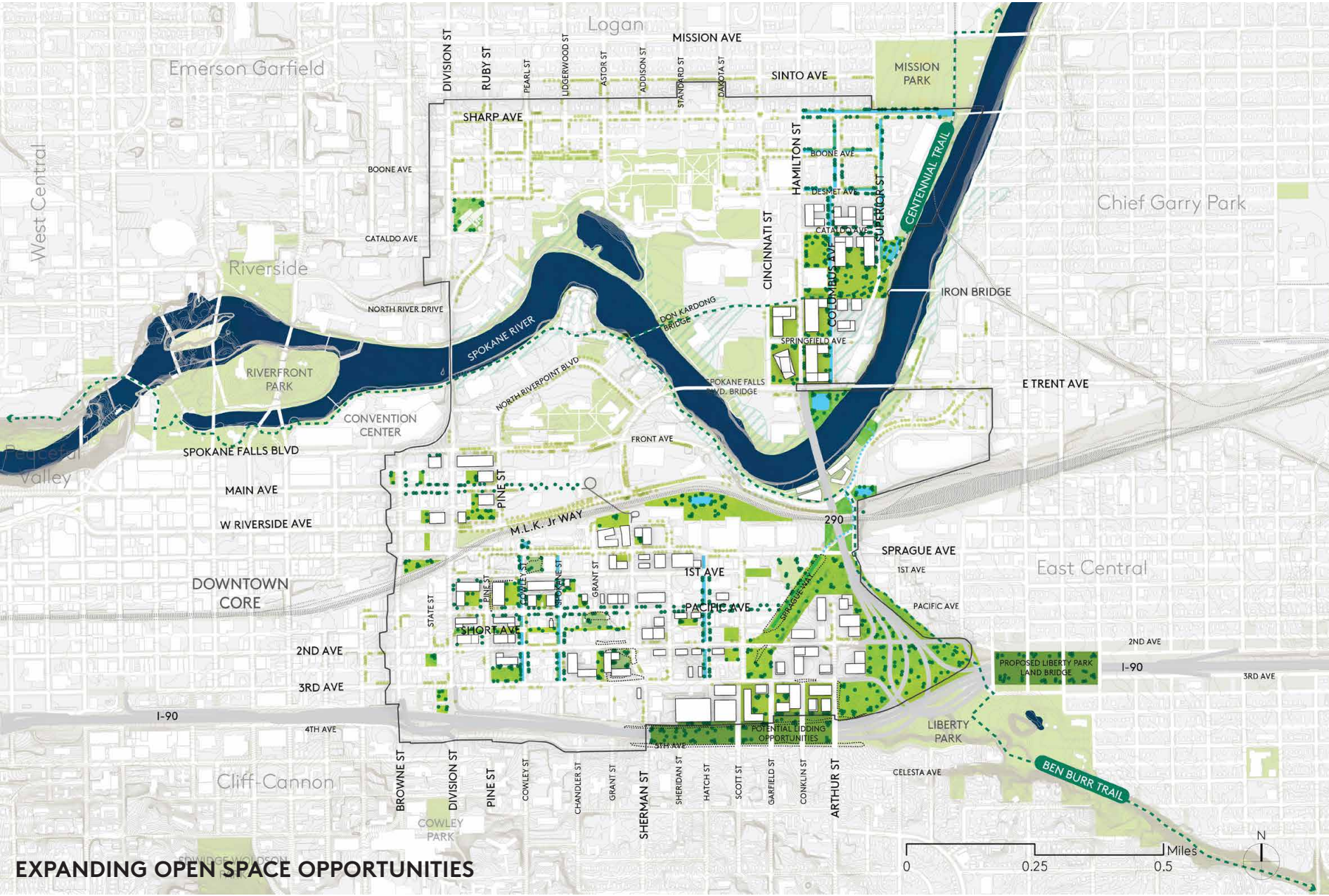
GARDENS

CENTENNIAL TRAIL

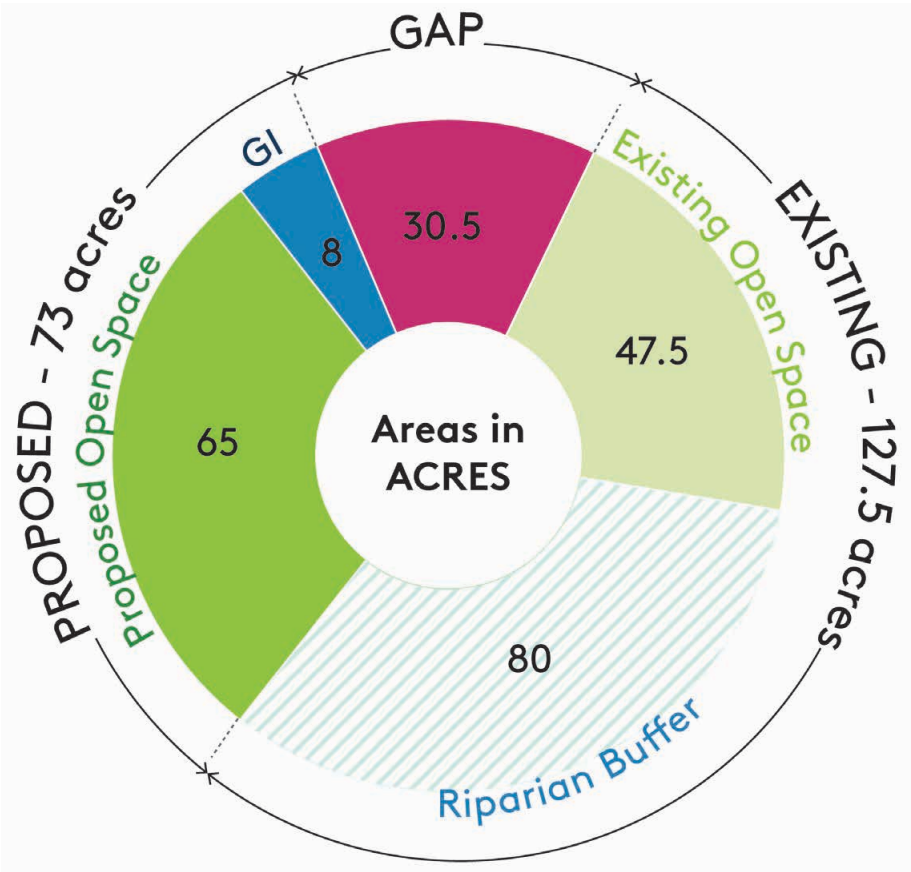
BLUE-GREEN
STORMWATER
INFRASTRUCTURE

The Center for Urban Agriculture Research will advance community-engaged research, food production, business incubation, and workforce development. Through innovative food solutions and sustainable urban agriculture, the hub will strengthen local food systems while creating new economic and employment opportunities.

REWILD: FROM PAVEMENT TO LIVING NETWORK



- LEGEND**
- EXISTING TREES
 - PROPOSED ADDED TREES
 - BLUE-GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
 - PROPOSED OPEN SPACE
 - RIPARIAN BUFFER AREA
 - BASALT OUTCROPPINGS
 - TOPOGRAPHY, 20 FOOT CONTOURS



30% Open Space Goal is 231 acres
(excluding University Campus open space)

To address rising heat and storms, the UD will transform gray infrastructure through nature-based solutions. Expanded tree canopy, restored habitats, bioremediation, and enhanced riparian areas will cool and rewild the district, strengthen ecosystems, and improve air and water quality.

CLIMATE RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

ON NORTH SPRAGUE WAY LOOKING NORTHEAST

REWILD

MULTI-USE PATH
AND PACIFIC AVE
CONNECTION

COULEE
INFRASTRUCTURE

OVERLOOK

PEDESTRIAN
TRAIL AND
PROMENADE

FORMER S SPRAGUE WAY

BASALT SLOPE

FORMER N SPRAGUE WAY

North Sprague Way will feature a 14-foot-wide multi-use path connecting to the City's Pacific Avenue Greenway. By replacing vehicular traffic with active mobility and green space, the redesign promotes public health, enhances climate resilience, and fosters biodiversity.

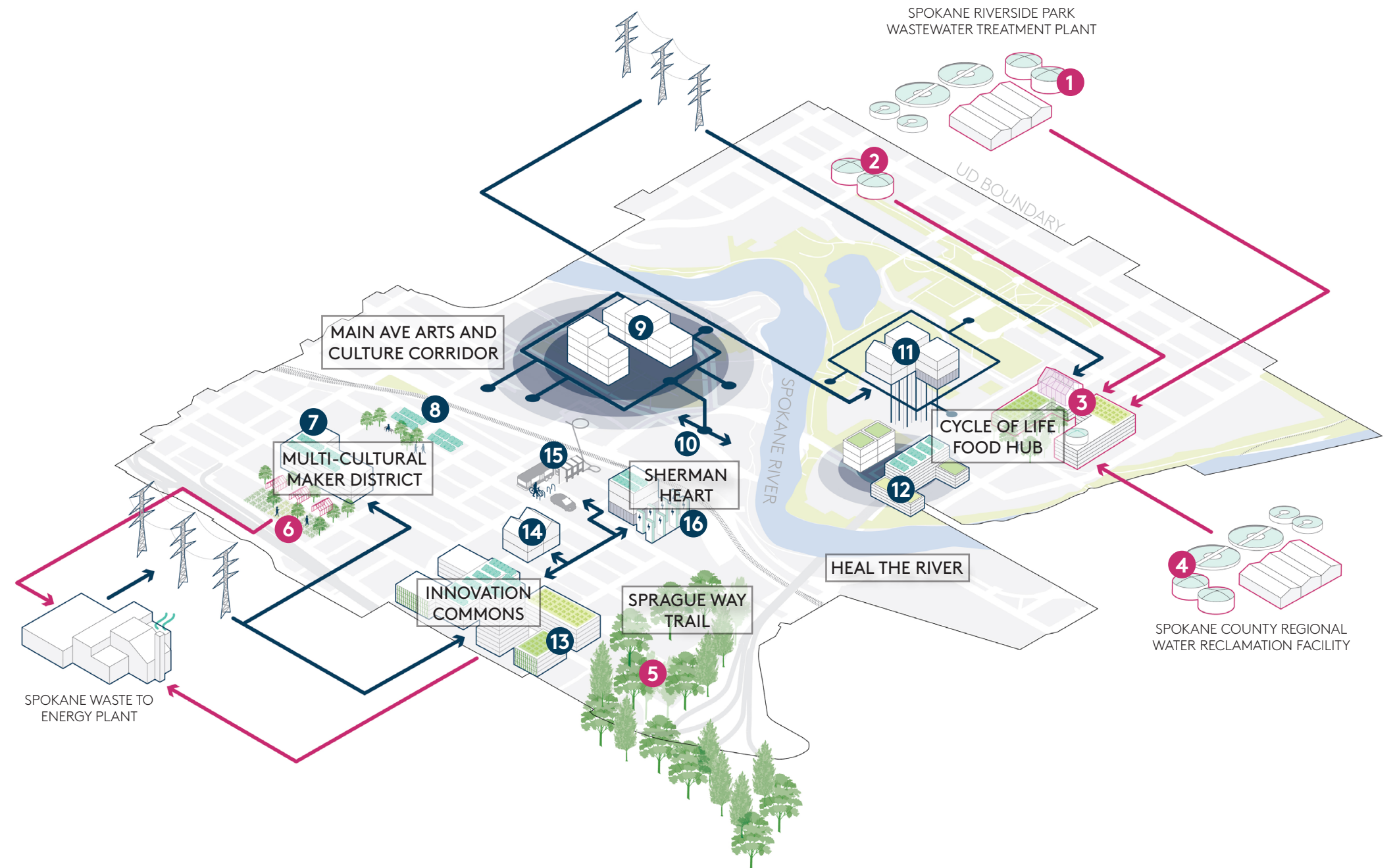
SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE FOR A RESILIENT FUTURE

CIRCULARITY OF FOOD AND WASTE RESOURCES

- 1 BIOSOLIDS FROM ANAEROBIC DIGESTOR TO AGRICULTURAL USES
- 2 ANAEROBIC DIGESTOR EXPANSION
- 3 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS WITH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO ADVANCE TOWN-GOWN SOLUTIONS
- 4 EXPANDED ANAEROBIC DIGESTOR
- 5 SEQUESTRATION THROUGH URBAN FORESTATION
- 6 URBAN FARMING

CONNECTED ENERGY NETWORK

- 7 DISTRICT COLLECTION, SORTING, AND REUSE FACILITIES
- 8 COMMUNITY SOLAR
- 9 DISTRICT THERMAL PROJECT CLUSTERS
- 10 SEWER HEAT RECOVERY
- 11 EXPANDED OPEN AND CLOSED LOOP GEOTHERMAL SYSTEMS
- 12 DISTRICT THERMAL PROJECT CLUSTERS
- 13 HIGH PERFORMANCE SMART BUILDING SYSTEMS
- 14 EXISTING BUILDING RETROFITS, SMART METERING
- 15 MOBILITY HUB, EV EXPANSION
- 16 MICROGRIDS WITH BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS



KEY METRICS:

65

**ACRES NEW
OPEN SPACE**

6

**KEY NODES OF
INVESTMENT**

8

**ACRES NATURE-BASED
INFRASTRUCTURE**

6.5

**MILES LEGACY
LOOP TRAIL**

"This work stands out as a national model for how universities, cities and communities can work together to address ecological and human well-being, climate change, environmental justice and economic opportunity."

— Dr. Greg Gordon, Professor, Gonzaga University

"Spokane's UD is where business and education grow together and the place to live, learn, work and play. This is an urban laboratory creating new knowledge and applied, community-engaged research, resulting in regional prosperity and improved quality of life."

— Juliet Sinisterra, CEO, Spokane UDDA and UDPDA