

WHERE POLICY MEETS PLACE



**POWERING A STRONGER
DOWNTOWN SPOKANE**
downtown spokane partnership
Policy Platform

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ADVOCATING FOR DOWNTOWN SPOKANE

The Downtown Spokane Partnership (DSP) works to strengthen Spokane's urban core through smart policy, targeted investment, and collaborative leadership. The DSP Policy Platform sets the direction for action, defining the priorities that will guide advocacy efforts to grow jobs, attract investment, improve safety and cleanliness, and create a vibrant environment where people want to live, work, and visit. Aligned with the City of Spokane's most recent Downtown Plan Update, the DSP Policy Platform outlines the core principles and strategic priorities that guide the advocacy efforts of the DSP Board of Directors, staff, and members to advance policies that position downtown Spokane to thrive as the region's hub for economic and cultural vitality at the local, regional, state, and federal levels.



THE DSP POLICY PLATFORM IS CENTERED AROUND FIVE KEY AREAS



Cultivating commercial activity



Improving public safety and deterring crime



Building and expanding housing options



Getting people the help they need



Enhancing a vibrant experience

CULTIVATE ECONOMIC VITALITY

With increasing office vacancy rates Downtown, incentivizing investment and job opportunities is critically important to stabilizing economic vitality while new and adjacent areas of future growth will be important catalysts to strengthen Downtown as a powerful economic driver for the region.

policy principles: The DSP advocates for policies that foster a diverse mix of commercial tenants, industries and job creation, including:

- Incentives for ground-floor retail occupancy and turnkey workspace readiness programs.
- Recruitment and retention of employers to occupy commercial spaces.
- Supportive infrastructure for entrepreneurs and startups.
- Stronger connections to integrate students and underserved communities into the workforce.
- Public-private partnerships and investment to reinvigorate blighted properties, preserve historic façades, and support growing industries.

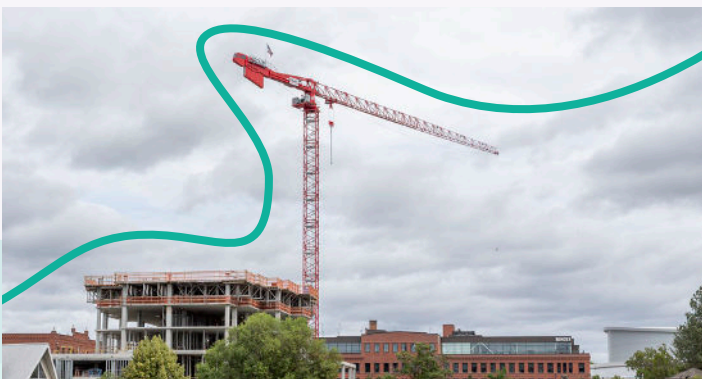
- Enhanced access and mobility options that support economic activity.
- Integrate nexus evaluations in any new or increased fee proposal and require data reporting in policymaking, including vacant-to-occupied rate, foot traffic, jobs created, property values, area median income, sales tax generation, etc.

IMPROVE SAFETY DOWNTOWN

Reducing crime and improving public safety and cleanliness through strategic funding and enforcement of adopted laws—with a focus on reducing recidivism—supports a welcoming Downtown.

policy principles: The DSP advocates for policies that enhance public safety, deter aggressive behavior, establish consequences for crime and focus on chronic offenders and the outsized impact they have Downtown, including:

- Consistent proactive enforcement of laws and regulations that address threats to personal safety and property, including the sale and use of illegal drugs in public, vandalism, theft, illegal camping, misuse/obstruction of public property, and panhandling.
- Allocating resources to increase SPD foot, bike and emphasis patrols, as well as technology investments and facilities that deter crime.
- Deterring nuisance or aggressive behavior at locations with captive audiences, including hospitality amenities, financial services, and transit facilities and stops.
- Maintaining criminal penalties for drug possession and use—including the potential for felony conviction—while opposing further drug legalization initiatives.
- Incarcerating chronic re-offenders breaking the law that are unwilling to participate in treatment-focused diversion programs, with support for the removal of convictions for successful completion of programs.



- Improving jail and emergency room release procedures to prevent overnight discharge without connections to community support systems, including transportation.
- Promote efficiency, resource alignment and cooperation among courts.
- Ensure transparency in the development of shelters, social service and public facilities through public notification processes, including public postings and neighborhood notifications, and good neighbor agreements that require 24/7 management and staffing.



BUILD AND EXPAND HOUSING

Expanding practical economic incentives and programs to support new housing options Downtown will result in greater housing capacity of all types and income levels and build a healthier urban neighborhood to support Spokane and its residents.

policy principles: The DSP advocates for policies that spur infill and high-density residential projects, including:

- Reducing the cost of housing construction and infrastructure improvements.
- Streamlining development review processes to reduce permitting delays with AI integration.
- Incentivizing new residential growth through conversion of commercial spaces, development on surface parking lots and underdeveloped land, as well as opportunity sites identified in the Downtown Plan Update.
- Prioritizing new market rate housing to reach targets identified in the 2025 Downtown Housing Study.
- Exploring student housing opportunities and partnerships with local higher education institutions.
- Limiting legislative efforts and regulations that would delay or harm the ability to build and expand housing Downtown.

PRIORITIZE GETTING PEOPLE THE HELP THEY NEED

Downtown is a hub for public safety and emergency response systems with a super-concentration of social services for Eastern Washington. Accessing shelter and housing options with wraparound services is critical to prevent hazardous urban camping on public rights-of-ways and conditions where criminals prey upon the most vulnerable in our community.

policy principles: The DSP advocates for policies that focus on helping those in most need with distribution across the region, including:

- Coordinated regional approaches to addressing public health and safety challenges.
- Collaboration among local jurisdictions, healthcare providers, and emergency services with requirements to demonstrate improved outcomes and resource efficiency.
- Utilization of HMIS by all systems with regular and transparent reporting.

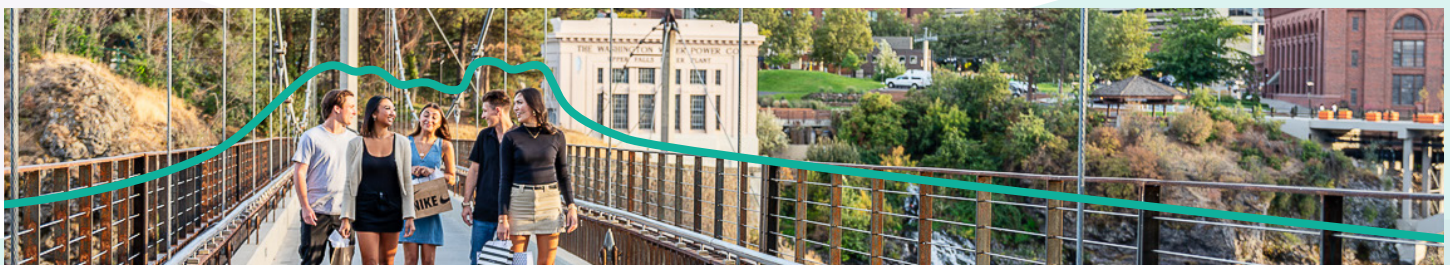
- Enhanced conservatorship and involuntary custody utilizing Ricky's Law, Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) and similar policies for those who do not have the capacity to care for themselves and/or pose a significant risk to themselves and others.
- Adequate facilities, capacity and resources for emergency stabilization of individuals experiencing mental illness and/or need for detox services, involuntary custody and supervised diversion options.
- Avoid further over-concentration of emergency and transitional shelters, low-barrier housing, and new stand-alone public restrooms Downtown.
- Prioritization of harm prevention strategies that focus on treatment connections that avoid community impacts.

ENHANCE A VIBRANT DESTINATION

Focusing support on efforts to improve, beautify and revitalize streetscape, entryways and the public realm, supports a vibrant destination to work, live and visit.

policy principles: The DSP advocates for policies that enhance and maintain public spaces, repair and maintain critical infrastructure, and grows vibrancy through activity, including:

- Promoting welcoming public spaces through cleaning, maintenance, and sanitation.
- Investment in beautification of pedestrian areas with improved street tree canopy, lighting standards, and prioritization of repairs to hazardous sidewalks.
- Planning, design and development standards that incorporate and incentivize crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).
- Proactive enforcement with special abatement emphasis in hot-spot areas on public and privately owned property.
- Leveraging capital investments in façade improvements, regional destination projects and civic amenities located Downtown.
- Growing cultural and entertainment events and programming.



MEMBER PARTNERS

The Downtown Spokane Partnership serves as Spokane's premier central city advocate. Established in 1995 to ensure Spokane's urban core remains a healthy regional center of business, retail trade, government, education, transportation, and living, DSP membership is open to any and all individuals, partnerships, firms, corporations and businesses interested in the welfare and development of downtown Spokane. Member organizations elect to pay annual dues to fund the strategic agenda and position DSP as the downtown advocacy group.



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