

July 28, 2026

Mayor Lisa Brown
City Hall, 818 W Spokane Falls Blvd.
Spokane, WA 99201

Dear Mayor,

As property owners, business tenants, residents and users that own and operate businesses, venues and produce events along Spokane Falls Boulevard, from Division to Lincoln, we were disappointed that the City has launched a new public survey and intends to advance significant changes to Spokane Falls Boulevard despite the consistent and unified concerns raised by the adjacent property owners and operators most directly affected by this project.

Over the past year, we participated in multiple public meetings, submitted written comments, and met individually with City staff and consultants. Throughout that process, we shared thoughtful, experience-based feedback about how Spokane Falls Boulevard functions and why preserving reliable access is essential to the businesses, venues, hotels, residents, and regional destinations that depend on it. Unfortunately, our concerns have not been meaningfully reflected in the concepts now being advanced.

This is particularly frustrating because we were assured our feedback would help shape the project. Instead, after raising significant operational concerns, we were met with dismissive responses, including being told, "change is hard," and a promised follow-up discussion with staff never occurred. The current proposal gives the appearance that the outcome was predetermined rather than informed by stakeholder input.

Spokane Falls Boulevard is not simply another downtown street. It is one of the region's most important access corridors, serving the Spokane Convention Center, First Interstate Center for the Arts, Riverfront Park, River Park Square, downtown hotels, restaurants, businesses, and major annual events. These destinations are not occasional users of the corridor, they are economic drivers that work every day to attract visitors, conventions, performances, sporting events, and community gatherings that generate substantial economic activity and tax revenue for the city.

Recent project materials suggest the city should not design infrastructure around periodic event traffic. That framing fundamentally misunderstands how this corridor functions. Spokane Falls Boulevard functions as more than just a transportation corridor, it is both an event venue and the primary access artery for Riverfront Park and many of Spokane's largest community events. Existing congestion during concerts, conventions, festivals, and major downtown events already create challenges for visitors and customers trying to access nearby businesses. The proposed design options further reduce roadway capacity and we're concerned how this will exacerbate congestion and make it more difficult to safely and efficiently access downtown's premier destinations.

Transportation infrastructure that serves major regional event destinations like that along Spokane Falls Boulevard should be designed for peak operational demand – not just average daily traffic – because those peak periods are precisely when downtown's economic activity, tax generation, and community

benefit are at their highest. Accessibility ensures that downtown businesses, cultural institutions, and visitor destinations can succeed. The ability for visitors to conveniently access downtown is central to Spokane's economic vitality.

As the owners, operators, and institutions that invest along this corridor, we ask that as our city leaders you genuinely consider the expertise of those who experience Spokane Falls Boulevard every day. Our collective goal is to support a downtown that is active. Before any preferred alternative is advanced to redesign Spokane Falls Boulevard, we respectfully request an opportunity to meet with you to discuss how the street functions in practice, the operational realities of managing large visitor volumes, and why maintaining efficient access is essential to the continued success of downtown Spokane. We believe a better solution is possible, but only if the concerns of the adjacent property owners are meaningfully incorporated into the decision-making process.

We urge you to ensure this project reflects not only planning objectives, but also the practical realities of the businesses, venues, and institutions that help make downtown Spokane a regional destination. Their voices deserve to be heard before irreversible decisions are made.

Sincerely,

Betsy Cowles, Cowles Company
Bryn West, River Park Square
Nicholas Knapton, Knapton Development
Susan Horton, Wheatland Bank
Shannon Ahern, Liberty Building
Larry Stone, The Stone Group
Melissa Green, Davenport Hotels
August Richardson, Double Tree Hotel City Center
Meredith Rainville, Best Western Plus City Center

Stephanie Curran, Spokane Public Facilities District
Karen Hudson, Mobius Discovery Center
Tim O'Doherty, O'Doherty's Irish Grille
Andrew Campagna, Mizuna
Kevin Cox, Purgatory Whiskey Bar & Agave
Wendy Goshey, Nordstrom
Riley Stockton, Hoopfest
Monika Hawkinson, Spokane Lilac Festival
Gordon Hester, Kiemle Hagood

CC: Spokane City Council
Spokane Transportation Commissioners
Jon Snyder, Director of Transportation & Sustainability
Marlene Fiest, Director of Public Works
Spokane Regional Transportation Council
Downtown Spokane Partnership
Visit Spokane
Spokane Sports