

City-County of Spokane Historic Preservation Office

# City-County Comprehensive Plan Preservation Elements

## Special points of interest:

- Washington State Economic Impact Study
- Spokane County Comprehensive Plan and Historic Preservation
- City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan and Historic Preservation

In 1981 and 1982, the city and county of Spokane respectively established a landmarks commission with specific duties to recognize, protect, enhance and preserve those buildings, districts, objects, sites and structures which serve as visible reminders of the historical, archaeological, architectural, educational and cultural heritage of the city and county. The City-County of Spokane Historic Landmarks Commission is responsible for the stewardship of historic and architecturally significant properties in the city, unincorporated areas of the county, and upon request, incorporated towns, in order to effect the recognition and preservation of such properties.



## Results of a new statewide study reveal the economic impact of historic preservation.

### Spokane Historic Landmarks Commission 2007

**Candi Coleman**  
Chair  
Real Estate

**William Meyer**  
Vice Chair  
County Representative

**Sarah Keller**  
Anthropologist

**Patti Larkin**  
Historian

**Arlin Migliazzo**  
Historian

**Oradee Nunes**  
County Representative

**Jim Price**  
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**A** new study demonstrates how historic preservation benefits Spokane and the state of Washington by generating millions of dollars in economic activity and thousands of good jobs.

### Study Results

From 2000 to 2004, the rehabilitation of historic buildings in Spokane County annually generated \$34 million in sales of products and services. Annual rehabilitation also supported 400 jobs and added \$13.7 million in wages to the economy. Statewide, rehabilitation of historic structures resulted in annual sales of \$221 million, supporting 2,320 jobs producing \$87 million in labor income.

The findings were in a study released in 2006 by the Department

of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, the state agency tasked with identifying and protecting Washington's cultural heritage.

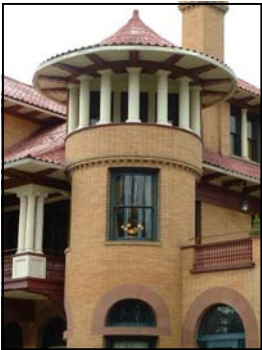
The study focused on two readily documented programs: the Federal Historic Tax Credit, a 20 percent credit for "substantial" rehabilitation of an historic structure; and the Washington Special Valuation Program, which allows owners to deduct rehabilitation costs from an historic building's assessed value once the rehabilitation is complete.



## Findings related to historic rehabilitation activities include:

- Owners spent an average of \$15.4 million a year on rehabilitation in Spokane County, \$83.5 million statewide.
- A significant portion of rehabilitation spending statewide occurred in Spokane County (18%).
- Historic rehabilitation generated a similar number of jobs and wages per \$1 million spent compared to the construction, wood products, and food products industries.

For more information, visit [www.historicspokane.org](http://www.historicspokane.org).



Patsy Clark Mansion in Browne's Addition Historic District

**Historic Preservation**

*Goal: Establish historic preservation as a high priority in the development of future city programs.*

**Discussion:** Historic preservation has traditionally received less funding and fewer resources than any other city department. An increase in funding and an accompanying increase in connecting preservation with city functions of economic development and planning ensures that these policies are enacted. Well-funded historic preservation programs have produced measurable economic development in many communities.

**Historic Preservation Plan**

*Goal: Encourage public understanding and support of Spokane's historic heritage by educating the public of the goals of the Historic Preservation Plan.*

**Discussion:** The plan promotes public understanding and support of the diversity of Spokane's heritage. It continues to be an effective historic and cultural resource management tool as a supporting document to the Comprehensive Plan.

**Representation of Diversity**

*Goal: Encourage awareness and recognition of the many cultures that are an important and integral aspect of Spokane's heritage.*

**Discussion:** Historic preservation must reflect the diversity of Spokane's past. The city must be proactive in including the many cultures and traditions of Spokane's heritage in historic preservation planning and activities.

**Landmarks Commission**

*Goal: Utilize the expertise of the Landmarks Commission in decision making by the City Council, City Plan Commission, City Parks Board, and other city agencies in matters of historic preservation.*

**Discussion:** The City of Spokane and Spokane County established the Landmarks Commission in 1980 to advise them in matters of historic preservation. Their link with other government processes needs to be strengthened. More effort is needed to seek the counsel of the Landmarks Commission before decisions are made.

**Publicly-Owned Historic Structures**

*Goal: Require a critical review of a project prior to the removal or destruction of any publicly-owned building, structure, or site that is listed on, or eligible for the local, state, or national historic register.*

**Discussion:** Spokane County and the City of Spokane are major owners of

local cultural and historic resources. Many of these resources are public buildings or elements of the public infrastructure, such as bridges, roads, and park landscapes. The city and county should demonstrate the importance of historic preservation by critically evaluating any public building or structure before it is demolished.

**Protection of Archaeological and Historic Sites**

*Goal: Ensure that known archaeological and historic sites are identified and protected.*

**Discussion:** Significant archaeological and historic sites must first be identified and designated historic if established criteria are met, and then protected through the city's permit process. Identification and designation distinguishes the properties that meet criteria for historic significance from all other older properties. When new sites are discovered the city will attempt to ensure they are appropriately preserved.

**Legislation Reform**

*Goal: Propose and support legislation at all government levels that encourages historic preservation, including tax reform legislation that makes historic preservation more economically feasible.*

**Discussion:** Historic preservation should be encouraged because it provides economic benefits to government at all levels. Sales tax revenue is generated, local jobs are created, and vacant properties are rehabilitated. This can also result in a long-term increase in property tax revenue. Economic incentives can stimulate the rehabilitation of historic properties, thus increasing government revenue. These should include legislation that offers such incentives for privately-owned historic properties.

**Zoning Provisions and Building Regulations**

*Goal: Utilize the existing and develop new zoning provisions, building regulations, and design standards that are appropriate for historic properties, sites, districts, and neighborhoods.*

**Discussion:** Regulations are tools that can, and should be used to promote preservation and renovation rather than demolition. New provisions could take the form of zoning categories and standards that reinforce certain districts or promote adaptive reuse of existing underutilized buildings. Deviations of parking requirements and reduction of site dimensional standards are other possibilities. The existing "Historic Building Code Relief" and "Special Use

Permit" incentives should be improved and their use encouraged.

**Rehabilitation of Historic Properties**

*Goal: Assist and cooperate with owners of historic and cultural landmarks and sites to identify, recognize, and plan for the use of their property to ensure compatibility with preservation objectives.*

**Discussion:** Assistance with the identification and designation of historic properties, and public recognition for the owners, could serve as an important stimulus and reinforcement for historic preservation. Public agencies can cooperate with owners to provide for the preservation and maintenance of historic and cultural resources. There are too few incentives for the adaptive reuse of older buildings in the downtown and other small commercial districts, resulting in a loss of opportunities and a proliferation of surface parking lots and vacant land. Creative incentives, such as reduced taxes, deviations from development standards, and accelerated permitting could be sponsored and provided by the City of Spokane at little or no direct cost. Public recognition of owners who have undertaken appropriate rehabilitation of historic properties could also serve as an incentive.

**Neighborhoods, Areas, and Historic Districts**

*Goal: Assist neighborhoods and other potential historic districts to identify, recognize, and highlight their social and economic origins and promote the preservation of their historic heritage and cultural resources.*

**Discussion:** Identifying the social and cultural resources of an area is necessary for protection and guides decision-making in resource planning and management, and environmental review. The conservation of neighborhoods of historic character, preservation of historically significance resources, and their inclusion into historic districts are encouraged. Outstanding historic structures should be preserved when neighborhoods are redeveloped and rehabilitated. Where these resources exist, the blending of quality newer developments with the historic landmarks enhances and enriches the neighborhood character.



*"The plan promotes public understanding and support of the diversity of Spokane's heritage. It continues to be an effective historic and cultural resource management tool..."*



Cowley School

## Spokane County Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 11 Cultural Resources



Front door of the Frank & Maude Tuell House, listed on the National & Spokane Registers

In many ways, Spokane's historic and archaeological resources are similar to our rich natural resources. Like wetlands, forests, agricultural lands and other natural resources, historic property are a finite and endangered resource. Also like our natural resources, once an historic or archaeological property is destroyed, it is lost forever. Cultural resources such as historic buildings, monuments of historic events and archaeological sites are statements of Spokane County's identity. People especially value our authentic, homegrown cultural resources that set us apart from other counties.

This element of the Spokane County Comprehensive Plan sets forth policies and a course of action for the preservation and treatment of these historic and archaeological resources. The Plan reflects local attitudes toward historic preservation, establishes preservation as public policy and puts these values into writing.

*The purpose of this plan is to protect and preserve our Cultural Resources, both identified and potential, by establishing public policy that ensures:*

- Management decisions about cultural resources are based on solid information obtained through credible research programs;
- County planners, Preservation Office staff, developers, property owners



and citizens have read access to the information they need to make informed decisions about actions that could affect Spokane County's cultural heritage;

- All available information on cultural resources is fully integrated into planning tools for local and tribal decisions about land use. Decisions concerning land use will include active participation by the wide variety of people whose heritage and traditions are at stake;
- Both financial and technical assistance is available to individual organizations, communities and tribes. Technical and financial assistance programs are administered by the Washington State Historic Preservation Office (the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation) and the City-County of Spokane Historic Preservation Office;
- Cultural resources owned by Spokane County are in good condition; and
- County support for cultural and historic preservation programs becomes increasingly stable and reliable as evidenced by achievement of the goals and policies contained in this chapter.

### Identification and Protection of Resources

*Goal: Identify, maintain, update and protect archaeological and historic sites and structures to guide decision-making in resources planning, environmental review and resource management.*

- Identify and evaluate archaeological and historic sites to determine which should be preservation. Identification and evaluation is a constant, ongoing process.
- Identify those lands which are most likely to contain unrecorded archaeological or historic sites.
- Nominate cultural resources to the local, state and National Historic Registers.
- Maintain the Spokane Co. Register of Historic Places.
- Review of land use actions should be sensitive and give considering to protection of cultural resources.

### Stewardship

*Goal: Provide stewardship of County-owned*

*cultural resources.*

- Maintain Co.-owned cultural resources.
- Identify Co.-owned properties that may be historically significant.
- When economically feasible, the Co. should give preference to historic structures then they wish to purchase, rent or lease property that serves a particular Co. purpose.

### Incentives to Encourage Historic Preservation

*Goal: Devise and implement strategies and incentives that encourage historic preservation.*

- Continue to utilize the Landmarks Commission as the authority and advisor to the County Planning Commission and County Commissioners
- Expand the variety of incentives available to property owners to encourage historic preservation.
- Coordinate preservation of existing affordable housing with the city and county historic preservation program.

### Promotion of Cultural Resources

*Goal: Promote the appreciation of Spokane's diverse heritage, as expressed by its cultural resources.*

- Provide a program of public education concerning the need to preserve cultural resources.
- Promote a wide variety of community involvement in preservation issues.
- Establish and maintain government-to-government relations with Native American tribes for preservation of archaeological sites.
- Spokane Co. shall pursue its cultural resource goals through collaboration with residents, property owners, cultural organizations, public agencies, tribes, and others.
- Develop and promote a program which encourages property owners to donate cultural resources to agencies or organizations that will preserve them.

*“The Plan reflects local attitudes toward historic preservation, establishes preservation as public policy and puts these values into writing.”*

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We're on the web!  
[www.historicspokane.org](http://www.historicspokane.org)



*"Providing protection and development services for significant buildings over 50 years old."*

