East Central, Spokane
East Central
Past
Spokane’s East Central Neighborhood

- One of the **oldest** neighborhoods in Spokane
- One of the city’s **most diverse** neighborhoods
- Home to thousands of **families** and hundreds of **businesses**

Bethel AME Church, Mother’s Day, 1936 (image L98-56.162 courtesy of the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture)
Practices such as ‘redlining’, racially restrictive covenants and steering have had long-lasting economic impacts on the East Central neighborhood.
I-90 Freeway Construction

The East Central neighborhood was devastated by the construction of the I-90 Freeway in the 1950s.

- The East Central neighborhood was cut in half
- 1000+ homes leveled
- Hundreds of businesses closed
- Liberty Park lost 26 of its 28 acres

East Central
Present
Working To Uplift East Central

- City of Spokane
- East Central Neighborhood Council
- East Sprague Business Association
- Fifth Avenue Initiative
The residents, business owners, and other stakeholders in the 5th Avenue/Underhill Park Neighborhood are reestablishing the neighborhood commercial section of 5th Avenue as a vibrant center of their community.

The Project
The neighborhood retail center of 5th Avenue, which serves the Underhill Park section of the East Central Neighborhood, is undergoing a stakeholder-driven revitalization. Separated from the rest of East Central by I-90 and the steep eastern section of the South Hill, the residents of Underhill Park are moving forward to develop a plan to foster the area’s social capital by creating a center for local services, commercial activity, and community gathering.

The Stakeholder Vision

**Short/Medium Term**
- Streetscaping
- Façade improvements
- Fresh Soul restaurant
- Youth tutoring center
- Public Space

**Long Term**
- Infill development with mixed-use buildings within the retail center
- Continued protection of affordable housing
- Continued recognition of neighborhood diversity and needs

Success Criteria
Project implementation driven by resident and stakeholder leadership.

A continued positive relationship between the residents/stakeholders, the City of Spokane, and private partnerships.

The development and implementation of the physical plan.

The establishment of commercial activity both in revitalized structures and through programming repurposed vacant space that engages residents and enhances the current efforts to foster neighborhood identity.

In the long term, a consistently vibrant and safe location that residents of all ages identify with as their neighborhood center.
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East Central

Future
Life Expectancy Project

National Center for Health Statistics and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Senate Bill 5853

A once in a lifetime opportunity to undo the Historical Damage done to our neighborhood
Our Vision - Repair the Damage Done to the East Central Neighborhood

1) Affordable housing (pathways to home ownership)

2) Economic Development
   - Mixed Use - retail, commercial, entertainment, childcare, residential
   - Business incubators, micro-retail, pop-up shops (pathways to business ownership)
   - Non-profit organizations

3) Access to Green spaces

4) Expand Amenities - make East Central a destination place, not just a pass-through neighborhood

Prevent Displacement
The Washington Department of Commerce identifies three main types of displacement:

- **Physical displacement**: Displacement as a result of eviction, acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of property, or the expiration of covenants on rent- or income-restricted housing.

- **Economic displacement**: Displacement due to inability to afford rising rents or costs of homeownership like property taxes.

- **Cultural displacement**: Residents are compelled to move because the people and institutions that make up their cultural community have left the area.

Community-led equitable development.