

In May of this year, the Spokane University District launched a comprehensive District Conceptual Plan project with Mithun as the lead designer through a community groundwork forum with over 50 community partners in attendance.

Mithun is a multi-disciplinary design firm headquartered in Seattle that received the 2023 AIA Architecture Firm Award, the highest honor bestowed by the American Institute of Architects.

As a historically red-lined district, the design process is utilizing the Just Communities protocol (formerly Eco-District certification) centered on nature-based infrastructure that supports urban development through a climate solutions and equity lens.

Through renderings and illustrations, Mithun's integrated team of urban designers, landscape architects, and architects will help reimagine the UD's 770 acres to reflect the vision outlined in the community-informed U Vision 2044 Strategic Priority Plan: A thriving and sustainable hub of innovation, environmental health, and community activity.

The District Conceptual Plan will inform future land acquisition, public infrastructure design, shoreline restoration and access, brownfield mitigation, and innovations in energy and waste management.

Additional team members participating in the design process include Biomimicry 3.8, the world's leading bio-inspired consultants applying nature-informed, ecologically-generous systems to the built environment to enhance the health and well-being of the communities they serve; and Baumgartner Urban Systems Strategy (BUSS), a leader in urban decarbonization and solutions that bridge built and natural systems for sustainable, resilient, and equitable outcomes for campuses, communities, and cities.

Implementing a regenerative urban development framework that supports the biodiversity of all of life is critical at this point in history. Urban environments rely on healthy ecosystem services to thrive, such as clean air, clean water, and temperature regulation. Because 56% of the world's



population now live in urban environments, urban design and development must contribute to the health, well-being, and sustainability of the ecosystems they impact. We are excited to be leading this initiative for both Spokane and the region, and to be a pioneer around “urbanism done right.”

Following are the next steps in the District Conceptual Plan process:

- July 31: Conceptual Diagram Presentation to City Staff
- August 13: Conceptual Diagram Presentation to UD Development Committee
- September 6: First Friday Art Walk – Public Open House, Community Building Lobby
- October 2: Final Presentation to UD Board
- November: Innovative Urbanism Presentation – Mithun
- December: Gallery Exhibit at Spokane Art School

Juliet Sinisterra, CEO



Mithun staff lead a break-out session during the June Groundwork Forum at the Catalyst Building.

Board Focus



Spokane County Commissioner, Amber Waldref, has deep experience in the non-profit sector, advocating for cleanup of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, building partnerships at The Lands Council to support clean water and healthy forests, and developing the capacity of The ZoNE initiative at Northeast Community Center to remove barriers to economic opportunity for all children and families.

During her eight years as a Spokane City Councilmember, Amber led efforts to clean up the Spokane River, improve streets and utilities, and support small business growth and public safety through targeted investment in the East Sprague District, the Hamilton Street Corridor, and in Downtown Spokane. Amber has a long history of volunteer and community service. She served on the Governor’s 2020 Census Counts Committee and currently serves on the Washington State University Spokane Advisory Council and the Holy Names Music Center Board.

Noteworthy Community Events



Pottery with Liz Bishop
August 3

Spokane Art School students will



Tobe Harve “Recent Work 2024” and Louise Kodis
August 2 Opening

learn how to throw on the potter's wheel while learning about the different stages of working with clay including how to glaze.



Who Tells Your Story? Framing Climate Change by Women and Indigenous Peoples

September 4

Gonzaga University Institute for Climate, Water and the Environment present speaker Bi Zhao on discussions and stories from the United Nations.



SEPTEMBER 22, 2024 | SPOKANE, WA

The Boulevard Race

September 22

Don't miss Saranac Art Projects August exhibit.



UD District Conceptual Plan Open House

September 6

Come see the preliminary concepts from Mithun for the U Vision 2044 during First Friday and provide feedback.



2024 State of the County Address

September 26

Greater Spokane Inc. and Canopy Credit Union present. What top issues will shape our community in the coming year? What innovations are underway to connect our community and stay competitive?

Help fight cancer by running and walking in downtown Spokane and the Spokane University District.

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