



## AGENDA REPORT

### City Council Meeting

**TODAY'S DATE:** March 25, 2026

**MEETING DATE:** April 1, 2026

**TO:** MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Erik Bush PLA, Project Manager, City Forester

**SUBJECT:** Downtown Revitalization Phase 3 – Basis of Design

#### BACKGROUND:

On December 5, 2012, City Council adopted the Downtown Streets Plan and Design Guide, envisioning Downtown Sandpoint as the “Hub of the Inland Northwest”—a vibrant and welcoming destination for dining, entertainment, shopping, art, and recreation, fostering a strong sense of community throughout the year. The effort to revitalize Downtown Sandpoint began in the early 2000s, with significant contributions from business owners, property owners, community members, consultants, and City representatives working collaboratively to plan, design, secure funding, and implement improvements.

On May 5, 2021, City Council adopted the Multimodal Transportation Plan (MTMP), which refined the concept for completing the third/final phase of the SURA-funded Downtown Revitalization Project. This phase involves a full reconstruction of First Avenue from Church Street to at least Lake Street, as well as short-term improvements identified in the MTMP at Bridge Street and First Avenue.

On November 15, 2023, City Council adopted an additional report recommending improvements to First Avenue to support new development. These improvements include specialty paving, planting beds, street trees, street furnishings, wayfinding, and signage. A new intersection configuration at Bridge Street and First Avenue is also planned to improve pedestrian safety and improve traffic flow. South of Bridge Street, the plan incorporates expanded sidewalks to accommodate a multi-use pathway and angled parking. The Report also envisions a traffic circle at First and Superior, under a phase 4 improvement.

Phases 1 and 2, completed between 2018 and 2021, improved Cedar Street (from Fifth Avenue to First Avenue) and First Avenue (from Cedar Street to Church Street). These improvements, funded by the Sandpoint Urban Renewal Agency (SURA), provided upgraded pedestrian sidewalks, reconstructed roadway, improved stormwater management, improved lighting, tree planting, and enhanced public spaces.

The Professional Services agreement for the design of the Downtown Revitalization Phase 3 project (Resolution 25-048) was executed on December 3, 2025. This phase will align with the Downtown Streets Plan and Design Guide, the Multimodal Transportation Master Plan, and the Comprehensive Plan. The key objectives of this revitalization effort are to enhance downtown connectivity, improve multimodal infrastructure, and support economic growth.

Phase 3 will extend the improvements along First Avenue from Church Street to approximately Lake Street, including portions of Bridge Street. The project scope includes:

- Road reconstruction
- Wider sidewalks to improve pedestrian accessibility.

- Street furniture and landscaping to enhance public spaces and aesthetics.
- Parking upgrades to improve downtown functionality and access.
- Bioretention cells for stormwater treatment before discharge into Sand Creek.
- Incorporation of public art installations to enhance Sandpoint's cultural identity.

On February 18, 2026, the project team presented initial concepts to City Council for discussion. On March 2, 2026, the Technical Advisory Group (TAG), an ad hoc group established for this project, convened for its first meeting. The project was subsequently presented to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission. A public open house was held on March 24, 2026 to gather community input.

## **DESCRIPTION:**

Welch Comer prepared conceptual roadway sections and intersection improvement concepts, which were presented at the February 18 City Council meeting. These concepts illustrate how limited corridor space can be allocated to reflect community priorities and balance the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, gathering spaces, trees, stormwater infrastructure, and café space.

The concepts were subsequently presented at the first Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting on March 2. Feedback from TAG informed refinements to the concepts, which were then presented to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee on March 12 for confirmation prior to being shared with the public at the open house on March 24.

Feedback from the TAG meeting is included in Attachment 2. Public input and conceptual drawings are available on the [Downtown Phase 3 Project webpage](#). At the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting, an informal (no committee action) poll was conducted to understand member preferences for allocating space among users. There was general agreement that the east side of First Avenue is the preferred location for a bicycle facility. While a dedicated facility is desired, given space constraints, the committee generally supported a well-designed multi-use path (on the east side) as the preferred approach.

The purpose of presenting these design alternatives was to gather input on preferred space allocation within the Phase 3 project area, including the Bridge Street and First Avenue intersection, for vehicles and parking, bicyclists, pedestrians, commerce, safety, and streetscape elements.

Based on this input, Welch Comer's Basis of Design Memo (Attachment 1) provides a recommended direction to advance the project to 30% design.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend approving Basis of Design memo for the phase 3 project and proceeding to 30% design.

**WILL THERE BE ANY FINANCIAL IMPACT? YES HAS THIS ITEM BEEN BUDGETED? YES;  
within FY26 budget.**

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Basis of Design Memo
2. Technical Advisory Group Meeting Minutes March 2, 2026
3. Link to the [Project Page](#).

## **ACTION:**

Recommend approving Basis of Design memo for the phase 3 project and proceeding to 30% design.