

THE SPOKANE RIVER CENTENNIAL TRAIL

BY
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SUMMARY

As early as 1971, some local residents dreamed of a bicycle trail along the Spokane River. But a trail idea only materialized when a group of Spokane Valley citizens rallied around their shared vision. In 1984, the Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce formed a Parks and Recreation Committee to explore recreational possibilities along the river. When the committee members realized their common interest in a trail paralleling the river, they created a volunteer group to endorse and further the idea.

In 1986, this group proposed a 10.5-mile recreational trail in the valley, naming it a Centennial Trail to coincide with Washington State's 100th birthday in 1989. Growing in its vision, the newly named Centennial Trail Steering Committee nurtured the trail idea on a much grander scale. The ultimate dream was a multi-purpose recreational trail connecting the confluence of the Spokane and Little Spokane Rivers with the shores of Lake Coeur d'Alene, spanning a distance of over 60 miles.

To help coordinate the interests of the State, County and City with the public concerning the Trail, the Centennial Trail Steering Committee was incorporated into a nonprofit volunteer group. The Steering Committee's initial goal was to secure land for the Trail and to generate private and government funding and support for construction.

With this task nearly complete, the Centennial Trail Steering Committee has evolved into Friends of the Centennial Trail, a permanent, nonprofit group to ensure its continued operation and maintenance.

The Spokane River Centennial Trail is a 12-foot wide, 39-mile paved path beginning at the Washington/Idaho border where it connects with the 21-mile Idaho Centennial Trail. Washington's Trail escorts the Spokane River through downtown Spokane, and ends at the Spokane House Interpretive Center in Riverside State Park. As a multi-purpose recreational facility, the Trail preserves open space, encourages non-motorized transportation, educates the public in cultural, historical and ecological heritage, and enhances wildlife habitat.

Construction of the Washington portion of the Trail has been planned in two phases. Phase I runs east from Riverfront Park in downtown Spokane through a variety of urban, suburban, and rural landscapes to the Idaho border. It connects downtown with

Gonzaga University, the Washington Water Power complex, Spokane Community College, and the Hewlett-Packard plant. This phase includes Mission Park, Upriver Dam, Boulder Beach, Plante's Ferry County Park, Walk-in-the-Wild Zoo, and Sullivan County Park.

Phase I is nearly complete except for Plante's Ferry Park footbridge and an incomplete section near Barker Road. Also, a four-mile stretch from Harvard Road east of the Washington/Idaho Port-of-Entry is expected to be complete by fall, 1991.

Phase II runs west from Riverfront Park, downstream through a mix of urban, rural, and forested settings. This half of the Trail connects downtown Spokane with the Intercollegiate Center for Nursing, Spokane Falls Community College, Mukowaga University, and the Spokane Interpretive Center. This phase includes the Bowl and Pitcher geological feature and Nine Mile Dam in Riverside State Park. Phase II is still under construction, with completion expected in the fall of 1991.

Seasonally, the Centennial Trail offers the opportunity for various uses, including cycling, running, walking, rollerblading, cross-country skiing, and horseback riding in specific areas. The Trail presents a means of non-motorized transportation for those who prefer to walk or bicycle and provides easy access for picnickers, canoeists, kayakers and birders. All sections are accessible to the physically challenged.

The Center for Northwest Anthropology at Washington State University conducted the archaeological investigation of the Centennial Trail route. The results of the study depict the Spokane River as a means of transportation, a source of food, and a place of gathering for past civilizations. Preliminary work has begun on the development of an interpretation system along the Trail, which will tell the story revealed through the study of the botany, geology, and history of settlement along the Spokane River.

The total estimated cost of the Trail is \$13.3 million. The United States Congress approved a total of \$7.2 million for construction of the Trail and anticipates an equivalent match of funds locally. To date, over \$6 million have been contributed to the Trail project through labor and/or cash donations. Many fundraising events and Trail corridor cleanups have been sponsored by a number of local businesses, service clubs and special interest groups.

The Miracle Mile Program enables individual and nonprofit contributors to buy a foot of the trail. Through this tax-deductible donation, participants receive a certificate and a cast bronze medallion with the inscription of their choice installed along the Trail. The Miracle Mile begins at the northwest corner of the Opera House in Riverfront Park, and runs east along the Trail one mile to the southeast corner of the Gonzaga University campus.

The Adopt-A-Mile program involves community groups that sponsor a mile segment of the Trail over a three-year period to provide litter patrol and to purchase amenities such as benches and information posts.

Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission will direct overall management of the Trail with maintenance and law enforcement being divided into three jurisdictions to be shared with the City of Spokane and Spokane County. A cooperative agreement between the three government agencies sets forth the standards of management, maintenance, and law enforcement of the Trail facility.

PREFACE

In 1878, James Glover established the town site of Spokane Falls on the south bank of the river in present day downtown Spokane (Fahey 1988: 20,21). A few years later, local citizens sought to preserve the area's natural beauty, which was becoming dominated by railroad lines and hydroelectric dams.

In 1907, Aubrey L. White was the first president of the Spokane Parks Board. He dreamed of a community in which parks were located within 15 minutes of every home. This dream was expressed in the 1908 Olmsted Brothers Plan, which proposed to reserve land along the Spokane River for parks and recreation (Fahey 1988: 36,37).

In his account of the history of the Spokane River, John Fahey wrote:

If the Olmsted design had been carried out, parks and parkways would follow the river along its entire length within the city.
(Fahey 1988: 38)

For many years commercial growth squelched the elaborate plan, but during Expo 74, the Spokane River once again became the center attraction of the city. Interest in the river and its banks began to return. The exposition site was preserved as Riverfront Park. Today, the park and the river remain Spokane's outstanding natural features.

Soon, the Spokane River Centennial Trail will be complete. The Centennial Trail extends the focus on the river and pays homage to the Olmsted Brothers Plan. The Trail will be an uninterrupted escort to the Spokane River from its source at Lake Coeur d'Alene through rural, urban and wilderness settings to historic Spokane House at Nine Mile.

The Centennial Trail represents community commitment to preserve the area's rich cultural, historical and natural resources, and it enhances the quality of life sought by citizens of the Inland Northwest. The following is a chronological history recording the grassroots success in fulfilling Spokane's dream of reserving the Spokane River corridor for public recreation. The Spokane River Centennial Trail promises to provide the means to enjoy one of Spokane's greatest assets, the Spokane River. Supporters of the

Centennial Trail believe it will be a lasting legacy to community achievement and progress, and stand as a monument honoring the past while providing for the future.

CHAPTER ONE: 1986: FIRST STEPS

THE COMMITTEE OF SIX

Since 1971, Spokane County Parks Director Sam Angove dreamed of a bike trail in the Spokane Valley along the Spokane River. His dream gathered support in 1984 when a group of citizens recognized the valley's lack of recreational opportunities. As part of the Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce, the groups formed a Parks and Recreation Committee to explore recreational possibilities along the river.

The committee members shared a common vision of a recreational trail paralleling the river. They formed the Committee of Six to endorse the idea. In March 1986, through the Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce, the group publicly proposed a Centennial Trail to coincide with Washington State's 100th birthday in 1989 (Camden & Bonino 1986: A3:6).

The Committee of Six included: Sam Angove; Denny Ashlock, President of Ashco Insurance; Dean Moorehouse, Public Affairs Director of KXLY-TV; Joe Custer, President of Vera Water and Power; Norma Ventris, owner of Ventris Candy; and Phyllis Campbell, Vice President of U. S. Bank.

With a recreational trail along the river, the Committee of Six hoped to improve the quality of life for the community. They worked together toward a common set of goals, which was to secure land for a trail, generate private funding for a master plan, and develop sources of Federal, State, and citizen funding.

Norma Ventris called the Trail idea "the backbone of a new recreation system," (Spokesman Review 1986: A14:1). Sam Angove proclaimed, "it would be a tremendous asset to the Spokane area," (Bonino 1986: A1:5).

The initial idea was for a 10.5-mile bike trail, built in stages and linking the Spokane Valley with the Washington/Idaho border. But the committee members soon realized that much more was possible.

FIRST STEPS

The committee's most immediate concern was to facilitate a major land exchange, which would provide the Centennial Trail with over 10 scenic miles of riverfront property. The land, running between Millwood in the Valley and the state line, was owned by Inland Empire Paper Company (IEP), a subsidiary of Cowles Publishing Company. Hoping to secure their involvement in this landmark community event, the Committee of Six negotiated with Bill and Jim Cowles and IEP's president, Clyde Anderson. In order for the Trail to adjoin the river, the land acquisition was crucial, and by placing the land into State Parks ownership, the committee could explore Federal and State funding options.

Procuring local involvement was one of the first steps in planning the Centennial Trail. In April 1986, a citizens' petition urged the Spokane County Commissioners to support the bike trail, which also would boast an equestrian trail and picnic areas (Sher 1986: A3:2). County Commissioners endorsed the idea, but much more persuasion in many other spheres of influence was needed.

Public awareness of the Trail was a high priority for the Committee of Six, and local funding was vital. In October 1986, Sam Angove and Dean Moorehouse exhibited, for the first time, a Centennial Trail promotional videotape. Previously, the Trail had been only hearsay to the public, but Dean Moorehouse said correctly that the tape provided local citizens' groups with tangible, concrete exposure to the vision of the committee, making the Centennial Trail idea available and lending it immediate legitimacy.

The video was presented to groups throughout the community in hopes of eliciting support for the Trail. Among the first to view the tape were the West Valley Kiwanis Club, the Valley Optimist Club, the Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club, and the Bloomsday Road Runners Club. In February 1987, Sam Angove and Dean Moorehouse presented the Centennial Trail tape to community members of Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls, Idaho. This marked the first interest in continuing the Trail into Idaho to commemorate its centennial in 1990. Interest in the Trail idea grew, but actual involvement and construction demanded even greater effort.

CHAPTER TWO: 1987: PLANNING

THE MASTER PLAN

On May 15, 1987, the internationally recognized architectural team, Jones & Jones, was selected to develop a master plan for the Centennial Trail. Steve Durrant, Project Manager for the Seattle based design company, informed the Committee of Six that a master plan, including concept and design of routes, trailheads, and estimated construction costs, could be executed for about \$20,000.

The comprehensive master plan was already on the drawing table when Steve Durrant received a call from Denny Ashlock. They discussed expanding the study area of the Trail route to include not only the state line to the Spokane Valley, but also a continued route through the Valley to downtown Spokane and beyond. In a letter to Denny Ashlock on May 20, Steve Durrant considered the expanded area:

I have enclosed a new draft of our contract for planning and design services for the Greater Spokane Centennial Trail... Studying and planning for this additional area will improve the functional utility of the Centennial Trail plans, but I am concerned that the scope could be significantly larger than we discussed in our interview. The link to Riverfront Park is another four and one half miles, through a much more urban environment... We are operating at this point on your verbal notice to proceed with the work defined in the draft contract dated 15 May 1987, under the assumption that the Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce does have the intention to execute a contract for special services on or before 1 June 1987.

On May 27, 1987, Grant R. Jones, Senior Principal of Jones & Jones, signed a revised agreement. The proposed study area of this contract included a route following the river from the Idaho border to Riverfront Park.

The revised contract was for a project entitled The Greater Spokane Centennial Trail Phase I, Master Plan. The goal of the Jones & Jones Master Plan was to produce a comprehensive study determining such needs as suitable trail routes, land acquisition, design standards required for a topnotch trail, continued maintenance, and total estimates of construction costs. For trail planning and design recommendations, Jones & Jones had to coordinate with the Washington State Department of Transportation, the Spokane County Highway Department, the Spokane County Parks Department, and, for preparing land acquisition recommendations, consult the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission. Work on this monumental task began in May with Steve Durrant's five-day inventory and fact-finding visit.

The scope of this community project continued to increase. A special section of the Master Plan contract alluded to great expansion of the Trail. Extra services could include a Phase II plan, in which the Trail would escort the river through downtown Spokane, past the peaceful woods of Riverside State Park, to Nine Mile.

On July 21, 1987, those extra services mentioned in the May contract were proposed to the Committee of Six. The Master Plan study and design was extended from downtown to historic Spokane House at Nine Mile, 16 more miles downstream, making the total Trail length 39 miles. Expectations and planning had increased to a point where a trail of this magnitude would not be possible without extensive community support and outside funding.

Also in July 1987, the Spokane City Council approved the Centennial Trail idea and allotted the Committee of Six \$8,000 for the Jones & Jones study (Bonino 1987: A6:1). The County also contributed \$8,000 to complete the Master Plan, while the Committee of Six raised \$9,000 more.

In September 1987, the study was nearly finished. In a progress report dated September 3, Jones & Jones summarized the statistics to date. Grand total cost of Trail construction was an estimated \$7.2 million. This included design, administration, construction, taxes, contingencies, and inflation. Total length of the Trail from Lake Coeur d'Alene to the Spokane House would be 68 miles.

In a letter to the Committee of Six dated September 16, 1987, Steve Durrant expressed enthusiasm for the monumental Centennial Trail:

...This is an exciting and significant project that deserves national attention not only because of the historic story to be told of the exploration and settlement of the Northwest, but also the recreation value of a 60-plus mile river corridor running through a metropolitan area, and the environmental qualities that can be protected under public stewardship.

The grand Master Plan was complete and summarized the concept, proposed alignment, development standards, implementation strategy, and projected construction costs for the Spokane River Centennial Trail from the Washington/Idaho state line to Spokane House.

The plan outlined a number of priorities to examine so that dedication of the Trail could take place during Washington State's centennial in 1989. One of the steps the Committee of Six considered was development and mobilization of community support.

"The most significant factor in making the trail a reality will continue to be community participation." (Jones & Jones 1987: 1).

In the Master Plan, Chief of State Parks Site Planning and Acquisition, Richard Fankhauser, wrote "...we applaud the efforts of the citizens of the Spokane area and encourage and support them in the fulfillment of their dream." (Jones & Jones 1987: 6).

The Master Plan reflected the Trail dream:

For over a decade there has been interest in developing a safe, continuous recreational trail along the Spokane River, a landscape rich in history, cultural heritage, and natural drama. The area's natural beauty, historic chronicle, and the trail's recreational opportunities will contribute to the regional quality of life and serve as an attraction for visitors nationwide. The Spokane River is a greenway passing through and connecting the communities of the Inland Northwest. This oasis, the clear water, trees, fish, and wildlife is a significant element of the quality of life so valued here. Establishing public ownership of the river open

spaces will preserve these resources for the enjoyment of generations to come. (Jones & Jones 1987: 1)

Idaho Governor Cecil Andrus was quoted in the Master Plan saying:

In our lifetime Spokane and Coeur d'Alene will be one City, fully developed. If we don't provide for open space and recreation on the river now, it won't happen.

(Jones & Jones 1987: 3).

In the Master Plan, the Centennial Trail was described as a community project in which:

A significant contribution of time and talent has been dedicated by a wide range of individuals and companies interested in seeing the Spokane area quality of life improved through the additional recreational opportunities, the conservation of open space resources, and the economic activity generated by trail recreationists. (Jones & Jones 1987: 2)

Denny Ashlock summed up the vision of the Trail in a public position statement saying:

Not since Expo '74 has the Greater Spokane community had a project that would provide such a major improvement to the quality of life. The Centennial Trail will return to the people miles of the river bank that can be used for a multitude of recreational activities.

THE CENTENNIAL TRAIL STEERING COMMITTEE

In September 1987, the members of the Committee of Six questioned their purpose and pondered the future. With many interested parties involved in developing the Centennial Trail, the committee decided to expand and help coordinate them. The Centennial Trail Steering Committee was formed to act as an advisory panel concerning

Trail development, to consolidate the ideas and concerns of interested parties, and to raise local funds for building the Trail.

The Steering Committee elected Don Kardong of the Association of Road Racing Athletes and Joe Custer as co-chairpersons. Also on the roster were Phyllis Campbell, Denny Ashlock, Norma Ventris, Dean Moorehouse, Sam Angove, Tom Garrett of Washington Trust Bank, Tom Hartman and Bob Dellwo, both attorneys.

The Centennial Trail by design became a four-way project involving State, County and City with the committee of citizens as liaison. All major decisions concerning development of the Trail were made in conjunction with the four equal entities. They worked together to reach a common, positive endorsement making the process of building the Trail a great cooperative effort.

On November 3, 1987, the Steering Committee unveiled the Jones & Jones Master Plan. Excited by the progress in planning the Trail, Joe Custer said, "We feel that this is the most exciting thing that's happened in Spokane since Expo '74." (Sher 1987: A6:6).

In a letter to the committee dated November 6, 1987, Congressman Thomas D. Foley sent his congratulations:

For the development of this exciting concept of a continuous recreational trail along the river. I am delighted in the way this project is bringing citizens together from both the great States of Washington and Idaho. I am encouraged at the broad-based, bipartisan support that has developed on all levels of the Government, Federal, State, County and local.

Washington State Governor Booth Gardner also was pleased with the progress. In a press release on November 6, 1987, he wrote:

A great deal of work has gone into this project already, and I am convinced that the coalition

of civic, government and private groups and individuals will be successful in finishing the job.

THE LAND EXCHANGE

On October 16, 1987, the Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission and Inland Empire Paper Company (IEP) agreed in concept to the land exchange on both sides of the river, which was vital in constructing the Trail. Without the IEP land, the Trail was doomed and unfundable by Federal money.

In the complex land exchange, State Parks would trade 3,655 acres of its timberland outside of the recommended park boundary of Mt. Spokane for 655 acres of IEP land, which were inside the Mt. Spokane State Park boundaries, and 373 acres along both sides of the river. State Parks would receive about nine miles of land on the banks of the river from just east of Argonne Road to the state line. Of the nine miles, 213 acres were needed for actual construction of the Trail.

In public meetings and hearings, opinions about the exchange varied. Although IEP would receive more acreage than State Parks since the timberland had a lower value than the properties along the river, both properties had equal appraised values of about \$3 million. Those opposed to the trade maintained that the values were based upon outdated appraisals. But supporters of the trade agreed that State Parks would receive a fair exchange.

With the land trade imminent, the dream of the Trail was alive. Don Kardong said the Trail will “benefit the community for many more years than all of us will be alive” (Bond 1988: B1:5).

FUNDING

Also one of the first concerns facing the Steering Committee was the challenge of funding construction of the Centennial Trail. The Committee worked in a concerted effort with Federal, State, and local representatives to identify ways to fund construction. The committee’s goal was to have a funding package set by fall, 1988. Among numerous hopes and ideas, Denny Ashlock suggested that a bond issue might be needed. This

would dedicate a small portion of the local sales tax toward construction of the Trail. Some of the many other possible funding sources included:

1. a. Federal/State
 - Land and Water Conservation Fund through the State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation
 - House Interior Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1989
 - National Park Service funds if the Trail wins designation as a National Historic or Scenic Trail
- b. Local
 - Private sources
 - i. “Buy a Brick” of the Trail
 - ii. Corporate Sponsors

The Committee learned that the National Trails System Act did not offer funding for construction of the Trail under any trail designation. But on January 4, 1988, in an optimistic letter to Denny Ashlock, Congressman Foley offered help in applying for Federal funds. He wrote:

I am continuing to explore all possible funding sources for this project. Moreover, I commend you and the Committee for all your efforts to obtain funds from the State and local governments as well as the private sector. As we work together in bringing the Centennial Trail to fruition, please rest assured that I stand ready to assist in any way I can.

While the Steering Committee’s goal was to have a funding package secured by fall, 1988, there was another major concern. In order to show potential backers the legitimacy of the Trail idea, the land exchange with IEP had to be finalized.

CHAPTER 3: 1988: ACTIONS

FEDERAL FUNDING

The beginning of 1988 marked great progress toward the vision of the Centennial Trail becoming reality. On January 28, the land exchange between IEP and State Parks was unanimously approved by State Parks. This acquisition provided public ownership of 98% of the land needed for the Trail between downtown Spokane and the state line (Rosenwald 1988: 3:3).

Because of anticipated rising costs of design and engineering, and money spent on necessary additional land acquisitions, the total estimated cost of the Trail was now \$13.3 million. But as a result of Congressman Foley's hard work and persuasive powers, federal funding was offered. On June 8, 1988, Congressman Foley announced that the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee was approving \$3.6 million to begin construction on Washington's Trail and \$1.35 million for Idaho as part of the Appropriations bill of fiscal year 1989. But the bill must pass the full Appropriations Committee, the full House and Senate, and then be signed by President Reagan.

Congressman Foley, Norm Dicks (D-WA), and Larry Craig (R-ID) were also vital in securing the federal funds. They pushed the Trail idea through the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee and full Committee in order to place the requested \$4.9 million in support on the bill. During the summer, as part of the House/Senate Conference Committee, Congressman Dicks and Idaho Senator Jim McClure worked to have the Trail funds approved by the House and Senate. The Appropriations bill, carrying funds for the Trail, passed and was signed by President Reagan.

\$7.2 million in federal funds were disbursed over two years to be used for construction of the Washington portion of the Trail and \$2.4 million for 20 miles in Idaho (Conroy 1988: A3:6). Federal money was awarded on condition that the community raises a matching amount. Local contributions in Washington must be \$6.1 million, of which \$3 million was still needed after the land trade. This amount was to be provided by State, local, and private sources.

In a press release dated June 8, 1988, Congressman Foley congratulated “the broad-based, bipartisan support for the Centennial Trail project within the Spokane community.” In the same letter he stated:

As a grass roots movement, this project allows us to celebrate our shared pride in this beautiful, diverse region, rich in historical significance and recreational possibilities.

The United States Forest Service to the Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission, which managed, accounted, and spent the money, released the federal funds. The four entities of City, County, State, and volunteer made decisions concerning use of the federal funds and were coordinated by State Parks.

Most of the \$3 million in local matching funds would come from donations and in-kind services for various amenities such as benches and trailheads. Local contributions provided citizens a chance to be part of the Trail vision and to take pride in making it come true. Those involved with the Trail believed that years from now Spokane will be known for its outstanding Centennial Trail, which will stand as a lasting legacy of community enterprise and solidarity.

Of course there were conditions and requirements to be met before federal funds were released. Proposals and contracts had to be drawn and signed, and environmental impacts on the proposed Trail route studied.

PROPOSALS AND CONTRACTS

State Parks began the selection process for a company to design the Centennial Trail. The dream of the Trail inspired local architects and engineers who hoped to secure the design contract. In April 1988, architect Chris Green and over 20 members of the Spokane chapter of the American Institute of Architects, along with members of the Association of Landscape Architects, volunteered their elaborate plans and ideas for the

Trail. Some designs included bridges and boardwalks, boat launches and picnic areas, and even observation towers (Sher 1988: A1:1).

In a newspaper interview in June 1988, Joe Custer stressed the need for engineering to begin before federal funding is released. He said it is “important in promoting the project to Congress by showing local contribution to match the federal appropriations” (Sher and Oliveria 1988: A4:1).

On November 3, 1988, the office of Robert Perron Landscape Architects and Planners was awarded the contract for designing the Washington portion of the Spokane River Centennial Trail. The firm, with offices in Spokane and Portland, designed Spokane’s Riverfront Park, Portland’s Riverplace on the Willamette, and Seattle’s Pike Place Hillclimb. Len Zickler, manager of Perron’s Spokane office, became the Centennial Trail Project Director and supervised a selected team of engineers and architects planning Phase I of the Trail. The design team scheduled public meetings for early 1989 to gain citizen input and to describe the route selection, design, and construction. On February 20, 1989, selection of the design team was publicly announced and surveying and layout of the Trail began.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

With the introduction of a new Centennial Trail promotional video by Dean Moorehouse and KXLY-TV, presentations and trade shows quickly multiplied stimulating local fundraising and involvement. Throughout 1988, Dean Moorehouse and Sam Angove officially presented the tape to over 70 local service clubs, groups, and trade shows, and there were numerous individual showings. The Centennial Trail Speaker’s Bureau, a subcommittee of the Steering Committee, used the tape for high visibility in promoting the Trail.

In 1987, the Spokane Valley Rotary Club had been one of the first groups to see the original tape. In June 1988, the club raised \$5,000 through a golf tournament held at Liberty Lake Golf Course. Hewlett-Packard (HP) and Recreational Equipment Incorporated (REI) were among many other local backers excited by the video and the Trail project.

In July, HP donated \$5,000. REI hosted a brush clearing along the Trail route between Sullivan and Barker. On October 22 about 250 people volunteered for the cleanup. 200 HP employees also helped to clear a two-mile portion of the Trail route near Harvard Road. Logan Neighborhood residents began their enthusiastic brush clearing in June. Using Community Development funds donated by Logan Neighborhood, much of the Trail from Riverfront Park to Gonzaga was already in place. Joe Custer had hoped for such a groundswell of grass roots support for the project, and local enthusiasm for the Trail seemed to be growing quickly.

In July 1988, the Centennial Trail Trailbuilder membership program was offered in the Spokesman-Review newspaper. This program recognized individual and nonprofit youth organization contributors as well as area business and corporation pledge supporters. Donors would have their names displayed on amenities on the Trail. Money raised from the program would be used for construction expenses.

With groundbreaking the big topic of the day, citizens were motivated by visions of a sleek path snaking beside the swift river current and extending out of sight. At a Centennial Ball held in the Davenport Hotel, the Junior League of Spokane raised \$15,000 to purchase a children's play sculpture to be placed next to the Trail. A memorial fund for Gary Silver was started to benefit the Trail.

Gary, an exceptional athlete and outdoor recreationist, died in an accident in the Himalayas. By September 1988, \$7,500 was raised through the Gary Silver Memorial Fund (Landers 1988: C8:6). The Trail enjoyed more public exposure during the holiday season when Cox Cable Television aired the Centennial Trail tape.

Tidyman's Grocery and Pepsi (Alpac Beverages) launched a fundraising campaign to raise approximately \$15,000 for the Trail. Tidyman's donated the money raised by Centennial Trail t-shirts sold in the store, and Pepsi gave the Trail a percentage of their product profits sold in the store.

THE MIRACLE MILE

Early in 1988, the Centennial Trail Steering Committee considered new ideas for fundraising. Committee members searched for a way to directly involve the community

in the construction of the Trail and to provide lasting recognition of its supporters. Phyllis Campbell, a member of the Steering Committee, suggested modeling a Buy-a-Brick campaign after Seattle's Pike Street idea. Purchasers would receive a certificate for their bricks, which would be placed in the middle of the Trail separating runners and walkers from cyclists. Another option was to sell a foot of the Trail. Plaques to recognize contributors would line the Trail route, giving a sense of ownership to those who donated.

Progress was swift. To publicize and market the Trail, the Steering Committee hired Dan Petek of the Boulevard Consulting Group (BCG). In April 1988, BCP proposed an imaginative program called the Miracle Mile. The idea entailed each of foot of asphalt of a one-mile stretch of the Trail to be embedded with a medallion bearing the name of the sponsor along with the Centennial Trail logo. For \$100, individuals and nonprofit youth groups could purchase a foot of the mile, which would run from Riverfront Park to the Gonzaga/Logan Neighborhood.

The Trail Committee excitedly accepted the plan. Don Kardong said the Miracle Mile would be a lasting acknowledgement of those people who first supported the Trail. He called it a "chance to plant your name in history" (Hansen 1988: B7:2).

The Centennial Trail Steering Committee drew names for the order of placement for the first 100 medallions. Ernie and Elvie Heritage of Spokane were the first chosen. Through ice cream sales and newspaper recycling, students of Skyview and Trentwood Elementary Schools raised \$100 to have their school's names inscribed on medallions. Sale of the Mile was brisk. By November 1988, over 200 feet were sold. The Trail Committee hoped that Miracle Mile sales would eventually generate \$500,000 for Trail construction.

CHAPTER FOUR: 1989-1990: GROUNDBREAKING

At 11:00 a.m. on May 5, 1989, over 100 people were gathered at the west end of the Kardong Bridge to witness the Spokane River Centennial Trail official groundbreaking. Congressman Foley, Joe Custer, and Don Kardong were present to conduct the ceremony. Supporters of the Trail recognized this ceremony as marking the most ambitious project in Spokane since Expo '74. For them, the Trail will be an enduring symbol of community involvement in working for a better quality of life.

THE AT&T PROPOSAL

With the federal funding dedicated, citizens of the Inland Northwest fully realized that their perseverance and hard work would soon manifest into a tangible, worthy addition to the community.

A substantial boost toward meeting construction costs now came from a surprising source. In February, March, and April, the Centennial Trail Steering Committee and State Parks discussed a tentative offer made by AT&T Communications Company. The proposal stated that if AT&T were allowed to lay a fiber optic communications cable under the Trail, the company would carry out all the rough grading of the Trail. AT&T would pay the \$535,000 cost of clearing, grubbing, and rough grading. In a memorandum to the Steering Committee dated April 27, 1989, Len Zickler of Perron Design team called the proposal a 'tremendous opportunity.'

In June 1989, AT&T, State, City, and County officials agreed in principle to the proposal. The AT&T contribution in labor qualified as an in-kind donation toward matching federal funds. In October, AT&T awarded a bid to a contractor who then began to clear, grub, grade and prepare a sub-base for paving an 18-mile stretch of the Trail.

Fiber optics are hair-thin optical fibers, which transmit encoded messages as pulses of light. The light messages connect computers, transmit television signals, and carry telephone conversations. Single fibers are fixed in ribbons, then housed in cables less than one-half inch in diameter. The cables are placed in conduit and implanted three

feet or more underground. One cable placed under the Centennial Trail could transmit over one million simultaneous telephone conversations (source; AT&T).

By mid-December, with most of the clearing complete, conduit laying began. By January 1990, conduit laying under Phase I of the Trail was nearly complete.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY

Before receiving federal funding and beginning construction, an environmental assessment study of the proposed Centennial Trail route was required. The study had to include an archaeological study to assess the historical significance of the affected area. For an estimated \$25,000, the Washington State University archaeological team, headed by Dr. Randall Schalk, proposed to “identify and record cultural resources within, and in close proximity to, the proposed Trail route” (Schalk and Wyss 1989: 134).

On April 3, 1989, a two-person team began to examine a 22-mile, 50-foot wide corridor of the Trail route. No subsurface survey was carried out, and excavation, data recovery and removal were not included in the estimated cost. The field team worked until April 21 using shovel turnovers of 10 to 20 centimeters deep to examine the study area, which lies between Riverfront Park and the state line.

In August 1989, the archaeological findings by the WSI team were presented in a report along with an environmental and cultural history of the Inland Northwest. Although 34 cultural resource sites and five isolated artifacts were found, Eastern Washington University anthropology professor John Ross explained why study of the area proved difficult and was without dramatic discovery. In the report he wrote:

Unfortunately, the area of the proposed Centennial Trail has sustained intense agriculture for many years as well as soil displacement with railroads and other activities... [The result is that] very little of the original ground surface exists. (Schalk and Wyss 1989: 66,98)

Of the 34 sites found, 10 prehistoric and five historic were recommended for testing.

Other discoveries recorded in the report included prehistoric and historic root gathering and fishing sites, fire-related sites with fire-cracked rock circles and burned bone fragments. There was structural evidence of farmsteads dating before 1900 and glass and china fragments from the early 1900s. A Canadian penny dated 1916 was discovered.

Also of ethnographic and historic interest, sacred and mythological sites were found. At the area now known as Minnehaha Rocks, elderly Spokane Indians recalled two sacred sites among the rocks “where a young man would go to seek fishing power during his vision quest.” These mythological sites contain unusual rock formations, which were explained as the result of a great fight between Coyote, friend of the Indians, and a “giant people-eater” and his “horrible pet grizzly bear” (Schalk and Wyss 1989: 84, 157).

Along with archaeological findings and recommendations for further study of the Trail route, the WSU report discussed the geographic, environmental, and human history of the Northwest. In the report, Dr. Alston Thoms spoke of “roads” or long trails, which are referred to in the Lewis and Clark journals of 1805. Thoms said these references could be describing long trails through the Spokane River valley and one along the river near the mouth of Latah Creek. He wrote:

If this interpretation has merit, then the Lewis and Clark journals contain the first reference to a pre-contact road that certainly crossed and may have paralleled the Centennial Trail somewhere between the mouth of Latah Creek and Myrtle Point.

(Schalk and Wyss 1989: 22)

Fur traders and Euro-American settlers later used these same trails and numerous others.

In November 1989, at a Centennial Trail Steering Committee meeting, Dr. Thoms spoke of the Spokane River’s importance in tying the region together historically. He said the Centennial Trail project has presented a great opportunity to study and document the human heritage of the area.

Because WSU's archaeological team has to excavate and recover data found along the Trail route in Phase I and had to complete further testing of the Phase II route, payments to WSU for the archaeological study were expected to reach \$475,000.

PROGRESS

For the Centennial Trail, the years 1989 and 1990 were full of measures and steps toward making the dream come true. The objective of keeping the Trail close to the river made decision-making easier. Supporters of the Trail maintained that for citizens of the region to enjoy the Trail and the river, the river corridor must be preserved.

Permits were requested and quickly granted. In January 1989, State Parks worked on securing shoreline permits. The County and City approved these permits and also floodplain permits. A few land easements were finalized, and a land purchase near Upriver Drive was settled.

The design team, headed by the office of Robert Perron, hoped to have final plans for the Trail prepared soon so that a request for bids on construction could go out in April. Mapping of the Trail route was complete in February.

Also at this time, an exciting loop in the Trail was considered. East of the Kardong Bridge an offshoot of the Trail would skirt Gonzaga University's campus to MONAC, The Museum of Native American Cultures. Another major task was constructing a pedestrian bridge over Hamilton Street. By May 8, 1989, 3,000 feet of the Trail was ready to be paved.

FUNDRAISING

Costs of the constructing the Centennial Trail rose unexpectedly. The Hamilton Street overpass was estimated to cost \$145,000. But because the bridge has to span a proposed seven lanes of traffic, a new estimate for the overpass increased to \$450,000. A Bridge at Plante's Ferry Park added approximately \$1 million to overall costs, and the archaeological study had grown more thorough and costly.

After a feasibility study of local funding for the Trail, it was uncertain if the Centennial Trail Steering Committee could raise the \$3 million locally needed to match

the \$7.2 million in federal funds. Don Kardong said \$150,000 in donations had been secured, and he expected an additional \$75,000 in contributions and state grants. To help finance Trail construction, a bond issue remained a possible solution. A bond issue must receive 60% voter approval and would increase property taxes for a set period of time.

The community continued to support and contribute to the grand scheme of the Trail. In April 1989, East Valley High School students helped clear a path for the Trail. It was May when Garfield Elementary Principal Phil Snowdon allowed youngsters at the school to shave his beard to raise funds for the Trail. The Spokane Downtown Rotary Club donated \$10,000.

On September 18, 1989, in Riverfront Park, President George Bush and Speaker of the House Thomas S. Foley unveiled a plaque and planted a tree to acknowledge Spokane's environmental awareness. The President urged "a more careful stewardship of the world... [and a] renewed spirit of conservation... [in this] land of rich resources and resourceful people" (Morlin and Camden 1989: A1:2).

The President and Mrs. Barbara Bush each were presented with a Miracle Mile medallion to be set in the Trail behind the Opera House. In September, with 225 people helping, REI carried out its yearly contribution by cleaning up the Trail route near the Riverpoint office plaza.

September 29, 1989 was another milestone day in Trail history. Speaker Foley announced that the House/Senate Conference Committee had given final approval to grant a second \$3.6 million to the Spokane River Centennial Trail for Phase II of the construction. The request for funds was then on the Interior Appropriations Bill of fiscal year 1990. In a press release dated September 29, 1989, Speaker Foley said:

I want to commend the Centennial Trail Committee and the residents, business owners, and community leaders of Spokane for their hard work on this project. The successful fundraising effort at the local level and the strong grassroots support for the Trail impressed the House and Senate Conferences and ensured their willingness to support funding for this project.

In October, President Bush signed the bill. This assured completion of the final segment of the Trail from downtown Spokane along the river to the Spokane House.

CHAPTER FIVE: 1990-1991: CONSTRUCTION

CONSTRUCTION

In January 1990, Len Zickler (head of the design team) reported that Phase I of the Centennial Trail was on schedule except for the Barker Road area. To continue the Trail route uninterrupted along the river, land near Barker Road needed to be purchased. The installation of AT&T conduit was complete except for the Barker Road area. AT&T was forced to bypass this section because the owner refused to sell the two acres necessary for the Trail.

The next step in Trail construction was to prepare construction documents. Paving was expected to begin in the summer, and easements and quitclaims kept progress on schedule. News from Idaho set February 19, 1990 as the date for a groundbreaking ceremony for its section of the Centennial Trail.

Phase II routing awaited approval by State Parks, City and County. Early in March, there was concern about the Aubrey L. White Parkway, a scenic drive through Riverside State Park. At public meetings it was suggested that rather than pave another corridor through Riverside State Park, the Parkway should be used. In May, 10 miles of the Parkway were closed to motor traffic from the Bowl and Pitcher to Seven Mile. The road already was suited for the Trail, so only minor paving repairs, signage, viewpoints and parking areas were needed.

Early in 1990, Washington Water Power (WWP) began working with Len Zickler and the design team on a possible route of Phase II of the Trail from Riverfront Park below City Hall, over the proposed WWP Monroe Street Power Station and through Glover Park in Peaceful Valley.

Also part of Phase II, the Meenach Bridge, at the bottom of Fort George Wright Drive, was hoped to be widened to accommodate the Trail.

In a construction update in May, Julia McHugh, Technical Coordinator of the Trail, reported that construction of Mirabeau Bridge and the stairway at Sullivan was progressing with paving to begin in a few weeks. Paving between Farr Road and Harvard Road began in June with a proposed footbridge across the river at Plante's Ferry Park.

The contract to build the Hamilton Street overpass was signed in September, and construction began on the section of the Trail from Hamilton to Boulder Beach.

Late in the summer, Taylor Engineers and Jones & Jones teamed up as the new design team for Phase II. By Labor Day 1990, 1,437 Miracle Mile feet had been sold. Soon, medallions would be in place from the Opera House to the Division Street Bridge.

In October, once again REI provided a valuable service by removing litter from the Trail corridor. This year's section was in the Sullivan Park area. Also in October, Joe Custer enthusiastically announced that an anonymous party might fund the proposed loop route to MONAC.

It was early January 1991 when Joe Custer announced receipt of a \$75,000 anonymous donation to the Trail for the development of the MONAC loop. This sort of community support and direct involvement is the foundation on which the Trail idea was built and is a clear indication of the strong, grassroots bond of the Inland Northwest.

In the Centennial Trail Steering Committee minutes dated February 14, 1991, the Idaho Centennial Trail Committee is reported as having sent exciting news: paving of the Idaho portion of the Trail was complete from the Washington/Idaho border to Post Falls. By August 1991, a second section of Idaho's Trail was paved. The Trail was in place from North Idaho College to the east side of Coeur d'Alene.

In August 1991, Julia McHugh updated reports of construction progress on Phase I of the Trail. The Plante's Ferry Park footbridge would be complete by the projected December 1 deadline. Paving from Harvard Road east to the state line would be complete by September.

As of August 1991, no resolution had yet been reached concerning the land needed for the Trail near Barker Road. State Parks was assessing its options. Trail supporters were optimistic and hoped for a quick solution.

THE ADOPT-A-MILE PROGRAM

With construction of the Centennial Trail progressing, thoughts had turned to the future and ways to ensure the Trail's continued beauty and usefulness. In August 1990, Dean Moorehouse presented the proposed Adopt-A-Mile Program. It was designed to assist in keeping the Trail clean and to provide amenities such as benches, mile-markers and informational signs along the route. Any organized group or entity could purchase a mile of the Trail for a set amount determined by costs of amenities and signs. Groups wishing to donate more money may pay for construction of picnic areas, viewpoints, overlooks and drinking fountains. The renewable adoption period is three years.

A plaque printed with the name of the contributing group will be affixed to the milepost marking its adopted portion of the Trail. Groups would also receive a framed certificate acknowledging their support. In return, groups are responsible for at least three litter cleanups per year. Adopting a mile offers "a unique opportunity for groups such as service clubs, schools, businesses, and employee groups to take ownership in the Centennial Trail" (Centennial Trail Steering Committee press release, September 21, 1991).

Over a three-year period, it was hoped the program would generate over \$57,000 for amenities and lend considerable community involvement and pride in the Trail. In October, the campaign goal for amenities, including the Adopt-A-Mile program, was set at \$200,000 for Phase I and Phase II.

The Adopt-A-Mile program was a success. By February 1991, all but two of the 22 miles of Phase I were adopted. Among the contributors were Valley Hospital and Medical Center, Kaiser Aluminum's Trentwood Works, Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club, and Hewlett-Packard.

THE FRIENDS OF THE CENTENNIAL TRAIL

The initial goal of the Centennial Trail Steering Committee was to secure land for the Trail, and to generate funding. In 1991, with these tasks nearly complete, the committee evolved into Friends of the Centennial Trail, a permanent, nonprofit group to ensure continued operation and maintenance of the Trail.

Robbi Castleberry, President of the Friends of the Centennial Trail, described the groups as a community organization that combines both public agencies and private individuals for the continued enrichment of the Centennial Trail. Represented in the group are local citizens, City and County Parks Departments and State Parks.

In August 1991, Executive Director of the Friends of the Centennial Trail Barbara Marney, said approximately 1,900 Miracle Mile medallions had been sold.

As a subcommittee to the Friends of the Centennial Trail, the Special Projects Committee worked to facilitate final construction of the Trail. Construction progress was on schedule, and the future of the Centennial Trail appeared assured.

CHAPTER SIX: THE FUTURE

PHASE II

Centennial Trail Steering Committee co-chair Joe Custer and committee member Dean Moorehouse reflected the community pride in this dream come true. Joe said he would like to be remembered as “one of many” local citizens who changed the dream to reality. But, he said, “The Trail itself will remain a legacy for the community.” Dean felt privileged because, “there are few people to be in a position to influence such a worthwhile community project.”

Dean said of the Trail:

For me, this project represents a powerful symbol.
for it reflects all of the values that we must embrace
as we prepare for the future. It will serve as a powerful
statement to our youth that we care deeply about our
special resources, and that we have the vision and
courage to protect them for future generations.

On August 16, 1991, Julia McHugh, Technical Coordinator of the Centennial Trail, reported that Phase II of the Trail was currently under construction and on schedule. The Trail was currently being paved from the Aubrey L. White Parkway in Riverside State Park east to Meenach Bridge behind Spokane Falls Community College. The deadline for completion of paving Phase II was August 28, 1991.

In 1990, Phase II had a proposed route on the south bank of the river from Riverfront Park over the new Washington Water Power Monroe Street Power Station. In August 1991, details were being worked out so the Trail could be routed under the Monroe Street Bridge on the north bank of the river through Metropolitan Mortgage land. In the meantime, the Trail route followed existing bicycle routes on the streets just north of the river and down Bloomsday’s Doomsday Hill.

FIRST RUNS

The first ever Centennial Trail run was held on June 15, 1991. It followed the Centennial Trail from Riverfront Park in Spokane to City Park in Coeur d'Alene, a distance of 40.6 miles.

On July 13 and 14, sponsored by REI, the Spokane Bicycle Club held the first Spokane River Centennial Trail Bicycle Tour. Margret Watson, board member of the Friends of the Centennial Trail, helped organize the ride. She said that to set an example for Trail user groups that the Spokane Bicycle Club donated part of every entry fee to the Friends of the Centennial Trail.

Another bicycle tour, the Spokane/Coeur d'Alene 1st Annual Tour Des Lacs, partially followed the Trail on September 28 and 29. The 12th Annual Autumn Century Ride on September 15 donated \$2.00 of each entry fee toward the Centennial Trail.

THE FUTURE

In the summer of 1991, Julia McHugh was appointed Project Manager of Phase II of the Centennial Trail. Phase II entailed planning completion of gaps in the Trail, the Islands project design, trailheads, and user maps. The Islands project was a plan to develop the Islands trailhead, which is west of Plante's Ferry Park. It was funded under a separate budget allotted by Governor Booth Gardner. Options for development included:

- An historic interpretation site
- A wildlife enhancement project
- A boat launch
- Restrooms and a parking area

The dream of the Trail was nearly realized. Already, there were crowds of outdoor enthusiasts enjoying the smooth path. Aubrey L. White would have been overjoyed to see the expansive Centennial Trail. In 1907 he envisioned a park within 15 minutes walk of every home. By 1991, the Centennial Trail was a fluid, uninterrupted pathway linking numerous parks for all to enjoy.

In 1908, the Olmsted Brothers dreamed of reserving land along the Spokane River within the city for parks and recreation. Citizens could now fully enjoy many miles of the Spokane River's bountiful banks.

Centennial Trail Steering Committee co-chair Joe Custer and committee member Dean Moorehouse reflect the community pride in this dream come true. Joe Custer said he would like to be remembered as "one of many" local citizens who changed the dream to reality. But he said, "The Trail itself will remain a legacy for the community" (Custer 1991). Dean felt privileged because "there were few people to be in a position to influence such a worthwhile community project" (Moorehouse 1991). Dean Moorehouse beautifully summed up the importance and meaning of the Trail:

For me, this project represents a powerful symbol, for it reflects all of the values that we must embrace as we prepare for the future. It will promote unity and stimulate cooperation across neighborhood and government boundaries. It will serve as a powerful statement to our youth that we care deeply about our special resources, and that we have the vision and courage to protect them for future generations.
(Moorehouse 1988)

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