Spokane, the second largest city in Washington, was named for the Spokane tribes of Native Americans who first inhabited the area. Spokane means "Children of the Sun."

**Spokane's Neighborhoods**

Downtown Spokane spans both sides of the Spokane River. Jutting into the river at the city’s center and the site of Expo '74 World’s Fair, the 100 acre Riverfront Park with its IMAX Theatre, gondola skyride over the falls, an historic 1909 Looff Carrousel, ice skating rink, mini-golf, and amusement rides is at the center of entertainment in Spokane. Nearby, the Spokane Arena hosts a variety of sporting events, including the Spokane Chiefs Ice Hockey Team and Spokane Shock Arena Football Team. Also located in this area, the INB Performing Arts Center offers an assortment of entertainment events. In addition, the downtown is the site of the Spokane Civic Theatre, Mobius, a children’s museum and science center, and the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, which focuses on American Indian, regional history and visual art.

As a residential area, the downtown has lofts, condominiums, and apartments located in historic and new buildings. These and other residential styles can be found in Spokane’s neighborhoods. For example, one of Spokane’s oldest neighborhoods, the West Central, has predominantly lower priced craftsman-style, two-story structures. The North Hill neighborhood includes homes built in the early 1900s as well as more contemporary homes and low-rise apartment buildings built throughout the 50s, 60s and 70s within its boundaries. East Central, the first area to be developed outside of the downtown because of its flat land, has more than 600 historic homes, 1300 business, and 4 large parks. The Manito-Cannon neighborhood, located on Spokane's southwest side, has houses dating from the late 1910s to the late 1950's, with housing styles ranging from classic bungalows and Tudor revivals to small cottages and ranchers. This neighborhood is home to Manito Park, with its Japanese Formal Gardens, Rose Garden, Duncan Garden, Lilac Garden, Perennial Garden, Duck Pond, and conservatory.

**Parks and Recreation**

Riverside State Park is a 10,000-acre camping park along the Spokane and Little Spokane rivers. Riverside State Park features the 37mile Centennial Trail which culminates in downtown Spokane, 600 acres and 25 miles of trails for equestrians, and 600 acres for off-road vehicles. Riverside State Park also offers canoeing, kayaking, and rafting.

Spokane has many other small and large parks located throughout the city including the Finch Arboretum which has an extensive botanical and tree garden with more than 2,000 labeled ornamental trees, shrubs and flowers.

**Education**

Spokane Public Schools serves more than 30,000 students. The district has 6 high schools, 6 middle schools, and 34 elementary schools. The district offers gifted programs, technical and vocational training, and an online high school. In addition, there are many private Montessori and religious-based private schools in Spokane.

Spokane has branches of two state universities (Eastern Washington University-Spokane and Washington State University Spokane), two private universities (Whitworth University and Gonzaga University) and two community colleges. In addition, a consortium of the universities established the Intercollegiate College of Nursing (ICN). There are also several technical and trade schools, with one providing health care education.

**Health Care**

Spokane has over 1,480 acute care hospital beds located in six hospital facilities, including a VA hospital and a Shriners Hospital for Children. In addition, inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services are provided through a collaborative effort of the major hospitals in the community.

**Spokane City Stats**

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<tr>
<td>City .................. 198,081</td>
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<td>Metropolitan Statistical Area .................. 447,392</td>
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<td>Per capita personal income, Spokane (2006): .................. $30,266</td>
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Photo courtesy City of Spokane Regional CVB/Alan Bisson