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# 12.1 INTRODUCTION

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This chapter of the City of Spokane’s Comprehensive Plan summarizes the Spokane Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan. The complete Spokane Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan, is available on the internet at [www.spokanecity.org/parks](http://www.spokanecity.org/parks). The Spokane Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan is an update to Spokane’s 1989 Park and Open Spaces Plan.



The opportunity for relaxation, recreation, and the enjoyment of natural features and landscaping provided by parks and open spaces has long been recognized as important. In the past, the citizens of Spokane have encouraged and supported the development of a park system superior to that of most other cities. Today, changing recreational pursuits and changes to the demographic characteristics of our population make the provision of parks and open spaces even more challenging and important.

For the future, different work schedules, income levels, and lifestyles will have a profound impact on the way that parks and open space are provided. Because of reduced public budgets, many more recreational facilities and programs traditionally provided by public agencies are now being offered by private organizations. Scarce land has resulted in recreational facilities being located over and under freeways, on top of buildings, and in underground locations. Additionally, recreation planners are taking a much broader look at the way recreational opportunities are provided. Open spaces and park facilities are being integrated with other types of land uses rather than being provided as an isolated set of spaces or experiences.

This plan is intended to guide the public and private decisions that relate to the scope, quality, and location of leisure opportunities that meet the needs of the city’s residents and visitors. It is not intended to be a blueprint for the acquisition and development of specific parks and recreation land or facilities. The Spokane Park Board, composed of eleven members appointed by the mayor, meets monthly and provides policy direction to the Spokane Parks and Recreation Department.

## 12.2 GMA GOAL AND REQUIREMENTS AND COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES

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### GMA Open Space and Recreation Planning Goal (RCW 36.70A.020)

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) encourages the retention of open space and the development of parks and recreational opportunities. The following is the GMA Open Space and Recreation goal (Goal 9):

“~~Encourage the retention of~~Retain open space, ~~enhance and development of~~ recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreational facilities.”

### Countywide Planning Policies

Within Urban Growth Areas (UGAs), the GMA requires open space corridors to be identified and authorizes their purchase for use as greenbelts, parks, or wildlife habitat. Although the GMA does not expressly require Countywide Planning Policies (CWPPs) on parks and open space, the Steering Committee of Elected Officials chose to include it as a Countywide Planning Policy topic and address it in other CWPP topics. ~~Policy~~They topics include: Urban Growth Areas (UGAs), Promotion of Contiguous and Orderly Development, Parks and Open Space, and Fiscal Impacts.

~~CWPP 1.15 Jurisdictions should work together to develop and implement regionally consistent, incentive-based programs to protect open space within UGAs.~~

~~CWPP 3.4 Each jurisdiction shall include policies in its comprehensive plan to provide open space corridors within the expanding urban landscape.~~

~~CWPP 3.18 Each jurisdiction in its comprehensive plan should provide policies that support the compatible incorporation of utilities, greenbelts, and open space within common corridors.~~

~~CWPP 4.1 Spokane County and each jurisdiction shall establish by interlocal agreement, policies, standards, and regulations to plan for and acquire parks and open space that fall outside a municipality's corporate boundary and within its UGA.~~

~~CWPP 4.2 Each jurisdiction shall establish open space corridors as greenbelt buffers between and among developments to maintain and enhance quality of life.~~

~~CWPP 4.3 All jurisdictions shall cooperate to identify and protect regional open space lands, natural areas, and corridors of environmental, recreational, and aesthetic significance to form a functionally and physically connected system, which balances passive and active recreational uses. All jurisdictions shall identify implementation, management, and preservation and conservation strategies, through regulatory and non-regulatory techniques and to protect identified lands and corridors, to sustain their open space benefits and functions. Impact fees, if used, shall be established during the implementation process in order to accomplish park and recreation developments. Implementation and management strategies should include collaboration and coordination with land trusts and other land preservation organizations.~~

~~CWPP 4.4 Each jurisdiction shall require the development of parks and open space as a means to balance the impacts associated with higher density development.~~

~~CWPP 4.5 Each jurisdiction should encourage cooperation between utility providers and users for the purpose of including compatible passive recreational and open space uses with existing utilities or when siting new utilities.~~

~~CWPP 4.6 Each jurisdiction shall make appropriate provisions for parks and recreation areas.~~

~~CWPP 9.3 Areas outside a municipality's corporate boundary and within its Urban Growth Area (UGA) shall be jointly planned with funding structures to ensure adequate land for parks, open space, and greenbelts prior to urban development.~~

~~CWPP 9.7 Each jurisdiction shall make adequate financial provisions to maintain parks and recreation areas.~~

For the text of these policies, consult the CWPPs document, Countywide Planning Policies for Spokane County, adopted December 22, 1994.

## 12.3 VISION AND VALUES

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Spokane Horizons volunteers identified important themes in relation to Spokane's current and future growth. A series of visions and values was crafted for each element of the Comprehensive Plan that describes specific performance objectives. From the Visions and Values document, adopted in 1996 by the City Council, the Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies were generated.

### **Vision**

"Spokane will acquire, operate, enhance, and protect a diverse system of parks, boulevards, parkways, urban forest, golf courses, and recreational, cultural, historical, and open space areas for the enjoyment and enrichment of all."

### **Values**

"The things that are important to Spokane's future include:

- ◆ Providing and maintaining parks to serve all neighborhoods.
- ◆ Maintaining open spaces, golf courses, and trails.
- ◆ Being close to the outdoors, recreation, and nature.
- ◆ Providing recreation facilities and programs.
- ◆ Maintaining linkages between parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces."

## 12.4 GOALS AND POLICIES

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Goals and policies provide specificity for planning and decision-making. Overall, they indicate desired directions, accomplishments, or aims in relation to the growth and development of Spokane.



### PRS 1 PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION

**Goal:** Assure the preservation and conservation of unique, fragile, and scenic natural resources, and especially non-renewable resources.

#### Policies



#### PRS 1.1 Open Space System

*Provide an open space system within the urban growth boundary that connects with regional open space and maintains habitat for wildlife corridors.*

**Discussion:** The city should work with other open space planners and providers to create a regional open space and green belt system. This may include coordination with local utilities for joint use of utility corridors for passive recreational uses.

#### PRS 1.2 River Corridors

*Protect river and stream corridors as crucial natural resources that need to be preserved for the health and enjoyment of the community.*

#### PRS 1.3 Funding for Open Space and Shoreline Land Acquisition

*Purchase open space and shoreline land when they become available using funding sources available.*

**Discussion:** The city shall attempt to access funding from local (annual park budget, city general fund, gifts, Conservation Futures funds, local improvement districts, bonds, dedications, and impact fees), state (IAC grants), and federal sources (Community Development Funds). A more equitable distribution of conservation futures funding between the city and the county should be pursued. The Parks and recreation department should develop an evaluative process to identify parcels of land for potential purchase.

#### PRS 1.4 Property Owners and Developers

*Work cooperatively with property owners and developers to preserve open space areas within or between developments, especially those that provide visual or physical linkages to the open space network.*

**Discussion:** This should be a consideration during the approval process for subdivisions, planned contracts, and shoreline permits. The city should explore the use of regionally consistent incentives to protect open space. Incentives may include bonus densities, transfer of development rights, and tax abatement or deferment.

#### PRS 1.5 Green Space Buffers

*Preserve and/or establish areas of green space buffer to provide separation between conflicting land uses.*

#### PRS 1.6 Funding to Acquire Critical Lands

*Maintain a contingency fund (Park Cumulative Reserve Fund) dedicated to the acquisition of critical area lands, which would be lost if not immediately purchased.*

## PRS 2 PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

**Goal:** Provide a park system that is an integral and vital part of the open space system and that takes advantage of the opportunities for passive and active recreation that a comprehensive open space system provides.



### Policies

#### **PRS 2.1 Amenities Within Each Neighborhood**

*Provide open space and park amenities within each neighborhood that are appropriate to the natural and human environment of the neighborhood, as determined by the neighborhood and the Spokane Park Board.*

**Discussion:** Amenities such as center plazas, playground equipment, restrooms, shelters, backstops, trails, trees, and plant materials.

#### **PRS 2.2 Proximity to Open Space**

*Provide open space in each city neighborhood.*

**Discussion:** To maintain the viability and health of the city, residents should have equitable proximity to open space.

#### **PRS 2.3 Urban Open Space Amenities**

*Continue to develop urban open space amenities that enhance the local economy.*

**Discussion:** Urban open space amenities include trails, interpretive areas, plant materials, public squares, view points and interpretive signage, and provide benefits to both residents and visitors.

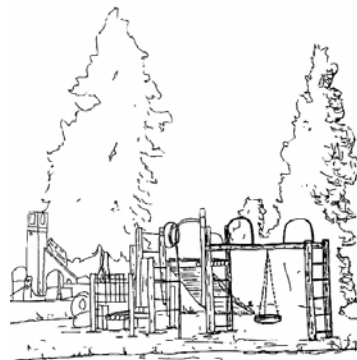
#### **PRS 2.4 Park Funding**

*Consider all potential funding sources to maintain the adopted level of service for parks.*

**Discussion:** Potential funding sources include: impact fees, Park budget, General Fund, gifts, dedications, LIDs, bonds, Community Development funds, Conservation Futures funds, and grants.

#### **PRS 2.5 Capital Improvement Program**

*Prepare and update annually a six-year capital improvement program for implementation of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan.*



#### **PRS 2.6 Cultural and Historic Parks**

*Preserve and showcase the cultural and historic character of the parks and the park system.*

**Discussion:** Many of Spokane's parks have great cultural and historic character that should be identified, preserved, and showcased during park development.



## PRS 3 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

**Goal:** Work with other agencies to provide a convenient and pleasant open space-related network for pedestrian and bicyclist circulation throughout the City of Spokane.

### Policies

#### PRS 3.1 Trails and Linkages

*Provide trails and linkages to parks that make minimal use of streets, especially arterial streets, in order to maximize the recreation experience and safety of all users.*

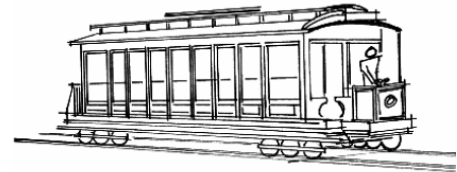
#### PRS 3.2 Trail Corridor Development

*Include landscaping, revegetation, and reforestation in trail corridor development where appropriate and desirable to provide a pleasant trail experience, and visual separation from private adjacent uses.*

#### PRS 3.3 People Movement Through Riverfront Park

*Develop a pedestrian-friendly, attractive mode of moving people through Riverfront Park using the Howard Street Corridor from North Central High School to Lewis and Clark High School.*

**Discussion:** The Spokane Park Board, the Downtown Spokane Partnership, and various partners along the route have begun informal discussions of a yet-to-be defined “people mover.” The people mover should have stops to service new and existing facilities and activities.



## PRS 4 PARK PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

**Goal:** Recognize and upgrade Spokane’s existing park resources by continuing the park preventative maintenance program.

### Policies

#### PRS 4.1 Maintenance Management Program

*Implement a maintenance management program that will project maintenance, facility, and replacement costs.*

**Discussion:** The current Park Operations budget is part of the Park Fund budget within the City of Spokane’s two-year budget. The maintenance management program should include six-year projections of maintenance and capital needs in addition to facility and equipment replacement costs. Typical elements include playground equipment, community buildings, pavilions, shelters, restrooms, park furniture, irrigation systems, turf/tree/shrub areas, wading pools, spray pools, swimming pools, and sports facilities.

#### PRS 4.2 Park Traffic Patterns

*Improve park traffic patterns for motorists, bicyclists, equestrians, and pedestrians.*

#### PRS 4.3 Park Sign Plan

*Implement and maintain a park sign plan throughout the City of Spokane that standardizes all park signs, including entrance, direction, and rules signs.*

**Discussion:** This policy does not affect historic signs.

## □ PRS 5 RECREATION PROGRAM

**Goal:** Assure an indoor and outdoor recreation program, which provides well-rounded recreational opportunities for citizens of all ages.

### Policies

#### **PRS 5.1 Recreation Opportunities**

*Provide and improve recreational opportunities that are easily accessible to all citizens of Spokane.*

**Discussion:** Continue to support community-oriented special interest programs that are responsive to expressed demands, and that foster community support, and improve the health of the community.

#### **PRS 5.2 Private Partnerships**

*Create public-private partnerships and develop incentives for a community-oriented sports and special interest program, which is responsive to expressed demands and fosters participant support of all ages and abilities.*

**Discussion:** A potential partnership could include a sixteen-court indoor sports complex that is developed through public-private partnerships with Hoopfest and the Greater Spokane Sports Association.

#### **PRS 5.3 Special Programs**

*Support special population participants in Spokane Parks and Recreation Department programs.*

#### **PRS 5.4 Community Information System**

*Promote parks and recreation programs, services, and facilities through an effective community information system, including the media, mail, telephone, and on the internet.*

#### **PRS 5.5 Indoor Recreational Facilities and Programs**

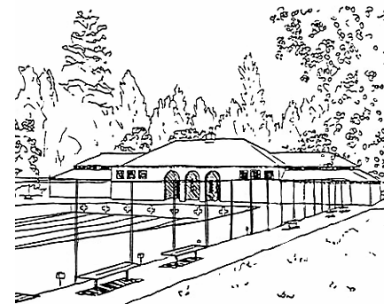
*Provide facilities and programs that afford the public the opportunity to participate in a broad range of indoor recreational activities, such as fine arts, historical appreciation, performing arts, arts and crafts, fitness, swimming, and indoor athletics.*

**Discussion:** This includes one or more additional indoor swimming pools, which are conveniently located and provide swimming for all age groups and abilities.

#### **PRS 5.6 Outdoor Recreational Facilities**

*Provide facilities and programs that allow the public the opportunity to participate in a broad range of outdoor recreational activities.*

**Discussion:** Having an abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities enhances the quality of life for existing residents as well as a draw for those who are considering moving to Spokane.



#### **PRS 5.7 City Golf Courses**

*Continue to provide for and maintain the public golf courses in Spokane.*

#### **PRS 5.8 Recreation for Youth**

*Provide a diversity of recreation opportunities, in a safe, healthy manner that meet the interests of the community's youth.*

**Discussion:** Support recreation and leisure alternatives for young people by involving youth in parks and open space planning and decision-making.

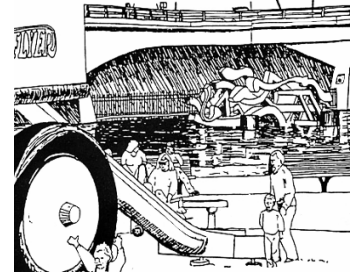
## □ PRS 6 AGENCY COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

**Goal:** Encourage and pursue a climate of cooperation between government agencies, non-profit organizations, and private business in providing open space, parks facilities, and recreational services that are beneficial for the public.

### Policies

#### **PRS 6.1 Duplication of Recreational Opportunities**

*Facilitate cooperation and communication among government agencies, non-profit organizations, school districts, and private businesses to avoid duplication in providing recreational opportunities within the community.*



#### **PRS 6.2 Cooperative Planning and Use of Recreational Facilities**

*Conduct cooperative planning and use of recreational facilities with public and private groups in the community.*

#### **PRS 6.3 Joint Park and Open Space Planning**

*Ensure that parks, open space, and greenbelts are planned and funded in coordination with Spokane County prior to allowing urban development within the city's UGA, yet outside city limits.*

## □ PRS 7 PARKS SERVICE QUALITY

**Goal:** Provide a parks and recreation system that is enjoyable, efficient, financially responsible, and a source of civic pride.

### Policies

#### **PRS 7.1 Quality of Service**

*Provide high quality of service to the community in all parks and recreation programs, services, and facilities.*

#### **PRS 7.2 Modern Management Practices**

*Employ state-of-the-art techniques in the park and recreation profession by providing staff training, laborsaving equipment, automatic systems, durable materials, effective facility design, and responsive leisure services.*

#### **PRS 7.3 Standards and Policies**

*Maintain open communication and collaborative planning processes that help define service levels based on good management practices while providing quality service to the public.*

**Discussion:** Open communication with all citizens is important to the Spokane Park Board. Open monthly committee and board meetings are held for this purpose. Service levels are defined through this process that may also include neighborhood, community, and special interest group meetings.

#### **PRS 7.4 Volunteers**

*Encourage and recruit volunteers to serve on advisory boards for program and facility design, leadership in program offering, and community service labor.*

**PRS 7.5 Evaluations**

*Conduct continuous monitoring of the Spokane Parks and Recreation Department services, facilities, and programs through staff, participant, and public evaluations.*

**PRS 7.6 Strategic Plan**

*Develop a strategic plan to ensure elements of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan are implemented.*

**Discussion:** The Strategic Plan should include the top priority projects and dedicated funding sources of the Spokane Park Board in a six-year action plan format.

**PRS 7.7 Public Participation**

*Ensure that decisions regarding the city’s park and open space system encourage the full participation of Spokane’s citizenry.*

**Discussion:** The citizens of Spokane are passionate about their park system. When changes or additions are proposed for the park system, citizens should be given every opportunity to comment and participate. This policy is intended to apply to all councils, boards, commissions, and committees.

