

Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board - Special Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 18, 2025

City Council Briefing Center

Meeting called to order at 2:00 PM by Brian Henning

Public Comment: Citizens are invited to address the Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board on any topic not on the agenda. 3 Minutes each.

- *None*

Attendance:

- Board Members Present: Brian Henning, Amanda Parrish, Kathryn Alexander, Ryan Arnold, Happy Avery, Kerry Brooks, Claire Cooney, Kevin Fagan, Larry Luton, Bob Lutz, Lea Molina, Kit Parker, Hala Zahalqa
- Board Members Not Present: Elyse Hochstadt
- *Quorum Present:* Yes
- Staff Members Present: Jon Snyder, Emily King, Maren Murphy, Marlene Feist, Tirrell Black, Mark Papich, Raylene Gennett, Nicole White, KayCee Downey, Marcia Davis, Elizabeth Schoedel, Colin Quinn-Hurst, Mayra Marroquin, Kirstin Davis, Tyler Kimbrell, Lorena Croucher, Adam Rhoades, Beryl Frederickson, Colin Naake

Minutes: Minutes from 7/10/2025 approved unanimously.

Briefing Session:

- **Chair Report - Brian Henning**
 - Brian had previously mentioned discussing a recommendation that the Spokane Municipal Code be updated; including moving the provisions regarding extreme heat and wildfire smoke thresholds to the general section to apply to everyone. Council and City staff have already made that update. Brian would like to continue to discuss the resourcing of those recommendations and if that could become part of the City's regular budget rather than being recouped later.
 - Brian encouraged everyone to take the Spokane County Climate Survey. They are also going through their own comprehensive planning process.
 - If members of the board have ideas that would be beneficial to workshop with the Sustainability Action Plan Workgroup, Kevin has been organizing that work.
 - Drafts of the city's first extreme heat and wildfire smoke resilience plans have been circulated to members for review. These are structured as recommendations so that organizations can make the recommendations part of their work. They are looking for feedback on these drafts.
 - Brian also provided an update on the EPA Community Change Grant. The lawsuit has been pushed into federal claims court, which means they will not get the relief requested, only financial damages that have been incurred.
- **Secretary Report - Jon Snyder**
 - Jon discussed that on Monday, City Council will vote on an ordinance to add a Community Assembly liaison to the Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board. They will be a non-voting member. Sometime in the next few months, we will have that new member joining us.
 - Jon also shared that Mayor Brown and the City of Spokane are a part of the Mayor's Climate Coalition. Recently, there was an opportunity to send in a comment letter regarding a ruling of the EPA's Greenhouse Gas for Vehicles Endangerment Rule, which they are now reconsidering. Jon shared a copy of what the City sent to the EPA. See page 3 of the minutes.

- The director of the Washington State Department of Ecology requested a tour of the Waste to Energy Facility this past week. They had a good discussion about the entirety of the City's waste disposal system.
- The City also had a discussion with the new Solid Waste Director of King County. They are looking at an issue of running out of landfill space and are trying to figure out what to do with their waste disposal once that happens.
- In the first week of October, the Public Lands Commissioner is going to be visiting Spokane with his Environmental Justice team. We are working on setting up a meeting with him and the Mayor.

Current Agenda: The current agenda was approved.

Informational, Discussion and/or Action Items:

- Climate Planning – Policy Development
 - Presentation provided by: Maren Murphy and BERK Consulting
 - Questions asked and answered.
 - Discussion ensued.
- Aquifer Protection Area Update
 - Presentation provided by: Marlene Feist and John Porcello
 - Questions asked and answered.
 - Discussion ensued.
- Water Conservation Master Plan
 - Presentation provided by: Marlene Feist
 - Questions asked and answered.
 - Discussion ensued.
- SAP Work Group Update/Water Conservation
 - Presentation provided by: Amanda Parrish and Jon Snyder
 - Questions asked and answered.
 - Discussion ensued.
- State Clean Building Performance Standards
 - Presentation provided by: Jon Snyder
 - Questions asked and answered.
 - Discussion ensued.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:59 PM.

The next regularly scheduled Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board Meeting is on Thursday, October 9, 2025.

[City Letterhead]

September **[XX]**, 2025

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Subject: Proposed Rule, Reconsideration of 2009 Endangerment Finding and Greenhouse Gas Vehicle Standards,” 90 Fed. Reg. 36,288 (Aug. 1, 2025)

Docket No.: EPA–HQ–OAR–2025–0194; FRL–12715–01–OAR

To Whom It May Concern:

The City of Spokane, WA is in strong opposition to the EPA’s proposal to reconsider or rescind the Endangerment Finding for greenhouse gases (GHGs) and to eliminate federal GHG standards for motor vehicles. As a Mayor of the City of Spokane charged with protecting the health, safety, and welfare of our residents, I urge EPA to maintain the Endangerment Finding and the vehicle GHG standards that are critical to lessening the impacts of GHG-induced climate change on our community.

Rising temperatures, more intense periods of drought, and more frequent extreme weather events including wildfires brought on by climate change are straining public infrastructure, emergency management, and increasing costs for local governments. Spokane is not immune from these impacts:

- **Extreme Heat:** Higher summer temperatures and longer heat waves increase emergency room visits for heat-related illness, raise utility bills for cooling, increase the risk of electricity service outages, and put vulnerable populations such as seniors and outdoor workers at particular risk. In 2021, Spokane experienced a heat dome that resulted in the deaths of at least 19 residents.
- **Air Quality:** Hotter summers and increased vehicle emissions worsen smog and particulate pollution, exacerbating asthma and other respiratory conditions, especially in children. Spokane has experienced increases in wildfires locally and regionally contributing to more poor air quality days in the last ten years.
- **Wildfire:** Increasing wildfires in the wildland-urban interface threaten the livelihood and economic stability of our residents. Climate change favors conditions that can exacerbate fire danger and behavior.
- **Water Resources and Drought:** Increasing temperatures and changes to seasonal weather patterns are impacting local and regional snowpack and snowmelt that feed our aquifer, raising the likelihood of water insecurity.
- **Emergency Management and Resilience:** The increasing costs associated with mitigating and responding to emergencies caused and exacerbated by climate change are unsustainable.

Rolling back the Endangerment Finding and vehicle GHG standards would undermine our ability to protect residents from these escalating harms.

Rescinding vehicle GHG standards would eliminate any meaningful regulation of transportation emissions. Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, accounting for 28 percent of total emissions in 2022 according to EPA data.¹ In the City of Spokane, transportation accounts for 41 percent of all GHGs emitted within city boundaries.

Despite the outsized role of the transportation sector in national and local GHG emissions, Section 209 of the Clean Air Act² preempts states and cities like this one from setting their own motor vehicle GHG standards. If EPA withdraws both the Endangerment Finding and the federal vehicle GHG standards, cities like Spokane will be left without any recourse to address this dominant source of emissions and the resulting impacts as described above. EPA repeal of existing GHG standards for new motor vehicles will not empower local governments; it would leave us powerless to regulate transportation-related emissions, despite bearing the costs of their impacts.

The City of Spokane strongly urges EPA to withdraw this proposal and retain the Endangerment Finding and federal vehicle GHG standards in their current form. Protecting the health and welfare of our residents and the stability and resilience of our community requires continued recognition of the dangers posed by GHG emissions and decisive action to mitigate them.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Brown
Mayor
City of Spokane, Washington

¹ U.S. EPA, *Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks* (July 1, 2025), <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/inventory-us-greenhouse-gas-emissions-and-sinks>.

² 42 U.S.C. § 7543.