

Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board - Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 12, 2026

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. 2 Minutes each.

- *None*

Attendance:

- Board Members Present: Brian Henning, Amanda Parrish, Kathryn Alexander, Happy Avery, Kerry Brooks, Claire Cooney, Kevin Fagan, Elyse Hochstadt, Larry Luton, Bob Lutz, Lea Molina, Hala Zahalqa
- Board Members Not Present: Kit Parker, Ryan Arnold
- *Quorum Present:* Yes
- Non-Voting Members Present: Santiago Rodriguez-Anderson
- Non-Voting Members Not Present:
- Staff Members Present: Jon Snyder, Emily King, Maren Murphy, Tirrell Black, Nicole White, Alex Gibilisco, Marlene Feist, Trace Bradburn, Elizabeth Schoedel, KayCee Downey, Logan Callen, Mayra Marroquin, Raylene Gennett, Kirstin Davis, Hollis Staal, Chris Averyt, Sarah Sirott

Minutes: Minutes from 1/8/2026 approved unanimously. Minutes from 1/28/2026 joint meeting with the Plan Commission approved unanimously.

Briefing Session:

- **Chair Report - Brian Henning**
 - Brian shared his excitement for today's meeting and expressed gratitude for all the different people that made this board and the work possible. We have our mayor to thank for empaneling this group and making this work possible and City Council who appointed the board, as well as HB 1181 and the Climate Commitment Act. Brian also thanked the consultants from BERK and Cascadia and City staff for their work, as well as all the members of the board for volunteering their time. The board has looked at 153 policies and narrowed it down to 73 across 11 different sectors, which is very exciting.
- **Secretary Report - Jon Snyder**
 - Jon first mentioned that there is another tour of the Waste to Energy facility at 8am tomorrow morning.
 - Jon also discussed the EPA Endangerment Finding repeal. Mayor Brown is a member of Climate Mayors, a national organization focused on climate action. Climate Mayors sent a letter to the EPA in conjunction with US Conference of Mayors and National League of Cities. The federal government is basically walking away from its responsibility to protect people from the harms of greenhouse gas emissions and all those harms roll down to local governments. This is a very important thing that we are tracking, and we will continue to push for federal government accountability.

Current Agenda: The current agenda was approved.

Hearing Items:

- Climate Policy Recommendations to Send to Plan Commission
 - Presentation provided by: Maren Murphy, BERK
 - Public Testimony:
 - Kirsten Angell
 - Kathlyn Kinney
 - Questions asked and answered.
 - Discussion ensued.

Motion: I [Amanda Parrish] move to recommend to the City of Spokane Plan Commission inclusion of the final climate policies listed in the February 12, 2026 memorandum titled “CRSB Draft Final Climate Policies” in the 2026 periodic update of the City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan. Seconded by Kathryn Alexander.

Motion passes 12 to 0 to 0.

Motion: I [Kerry Brooks] move to adopt the entirety of the document (CRSB Recommendation No.: 2026-001) with an additional amendment to add point three to further recommend to the Plan Commission to modify or supplement NE 11.4 to include the considerations in the public comment received from Spokane Urban Nature (SUN) as attached (attached as page 3 in the minutes). Seconded by Elyse Hochstadt.

Motion passes 12 to 0 to 0.

Informational, Discussion and/or Action Items:

- 5-year SAP Progress: Initial Review
 - Presentation provided by: Jon Snyder & Nicole White
 - Questions asked and answered.
 - Discussion ensued.

- Commerce Participatory Budgeting Grant
 - Presentation provided by: Alex Gibilisco
 - Questions asked and answered.
 - Discussion ensued.

- US Conference of Mayor’s Grant
 - Presentation provided by: Nicole White
 - Questions asked and answered.
 - Discussion ensued.

- New Recyclables
 - Presentation provided by: Marlene Feist & Trace Bradburn
 - Questions asked and answered.
 - Discussion ensued.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:24 PM.

The next regularly scheduled Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board Meeting is on Thursday, March 12, 2026.

Kirsten Angell, here to represent myself, as well as Spokane Urban Nature (SUN). My goal today is to be helpful. I am deeply grateful for the work of this Board.

Language for identifying and protecting interconnected natural areas and systems is in this document, thankfully. But, if our city doesn't have data about these areas and systems, collected and accessible, or a rubric for the assessment of ecological values, which goes above and beyond habitat connectivity to include human health and flood mitigation, waste water filtration, etc., it will be much more difficult to protect the ecological services and cultural riches we currently enjoy or could potentially establish.

If we have suggested language that creates a database for identifying our urban canopy, as the language states in NE 11.4, which calls for a "Forest Inventory Database," why wouldn't we also prioritize the gathering of data highlighting our city's existing and potential habitat connectivity? We need to be careful with places that are undervalued simply because we have no rubric, yet, to define and highlight their value (ecological + cultural value = resilience). This additional database and evaluation criteria would get us one step closer to our city's capacity to "identify" these areas of significant ecological and cultural value.

So, suggested new language in the Ecosystem section of Climate Resilience Policy could read:

"Create and maintain an inventory of existing and potential natural lands and fish and wildlife habitat, evaluated for their ecological and climate resilience values, using Best Available Science. A Natural Area and Habitat Connectivity Network database in the city's Geographic Information System would disseminate the information for decision makers and the public in a usable, interactive format."

This suggestion is highly compatible with other language used in the updated climate resilience policies. For example, in the Land Use section updates, Policy 2-4 specifically states, "Protect, restore, acquire and maintain urban forests, critical areas, shorelines and open spaces as interconnected natural systems that provide flood protection, heat reduction and carbon sequestration benefits." You will also find compatibility in the suggested policy updates for Health and Wellness and in existing chapters, NE 13 and NE 7, Connectivity and Natural Land Form.

To conclude, we encourage you to go a step further and create language that supports a clear pathway for collecting and evaluating important habitat and connectivity data so that the other goals and policies towards building climate resilience in our community will be more likely to be implemented. Without data, and a solid evaluation rubric, changes to policy are much more difficult to support. As a guiding document, this language addresses climate resilience and would be an important addition to our CP.