



**City of Spokane  
Citizen Advisory Committee to the  
Urban Forestry Tree Committee**

3 p.m. Tuesday, February 4, 2025  
Hybrid in-person and WebEx virtual meeting  
Katie Kosanke - Urban Forester

**Committee Members:**

- X Kris Neely – Chair
- X Tim Kohlhauff
- X Beth LaBar
  - Guy Gifford – (Absent - Excused)
  - Cindy Deffe – (Absent - Excused)
- X Joe Zubaly – (Joined 3:08 p.m.)
- X Matt Stewart – (Joined 3:08 p.m.)
- X Justyce Brant
  - Ben Kappen - (Absent - Excused)
- X Paul Lower
- X Logan Callen – (Left 4:05 p.m.)
- X Kathryn Alexander (Joined 3:25 p.m.)

**Parks Staff:**

Katie Kosanke  
Angel Spell (Joined 3:09 p.m. / Left 3:56 p.m.)  
Karin Cook

**Guests:**

Robert Boles  
Kris Hansen  
Scott Mills

**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by committee chair Kris Neely who opened the meeting with introductions.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from [December 2024](#) were approved. Motion by Tim Kohlhauff, seconded by Justyce Brant, approved unanimously.

**Discussion Items:**

1. Ceremonies, Appointments, Announcements -

- Reappointment – Guy Gifford. Justyce Brant motioned to reappoint Guy Gifford for another term on the UFCAC. Joe Zubaly seconded the motion. A vote was taken to reappoint Guy Gifford for another term and passed unanimously.
- Reappointment – Tim Kohlhauff. Logan Callen motioned to reappoint Tim Kohlhauff for another term on the UFCAC. Beth LaBar seconded the motion. A vote was taken to reappoint Tim Kohlhauff for another term and passed unanimously.
- Reappointment – Cindy Deffe. Paul Lower motioned to reappoint Cindy Deffe for another term on the UFCAC. Tim Kohlhauff seconded the motion. A vote was taken to reappoint Cindy Deffe for another term and passed unanimously.

## Public Comments: None

### Standing Report Items:

1. Community Assembly – No report.
2. **Staff Report** - Katie Kosanke

Katie provided a staff report presentation update advising many projects and planning for spring are underway.

- Planning is in process for the Arbor Day Celebration, which is a free fun community event held each spring at Finch Arboretum.
- On -Track Academy (OTA) is holding their 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Tree Hero Community Event in April. They have been helping educate the public about the benefits of trees, getting teachers and students involved, and assisting with volunteer plantings in areas UF is focusing on increasing the number of trees being planted. OTA received a grant through Vita Coco to build a school yard forest classroom and Urban Forestry staff will be collaborating with students and staff at the school on designing, creating and building it. UF will mostly provide guidance with tree expertise. The model for this school yard forest could then be replicated at other schools.
- Restoration Planting continues at Down River Golf Course with the third round of planting taking place Spring 2025.
- Miscellaneous plantings will take place this spring.
- The partnership between UF and the library continues and will include seedling distributions and providing trees for the Shadle plant swap.
- Parks Planning is creating a concept design for the Nature Based Playground in the area of the historic willow at Finch Arboretum. Community Engagement will continue so there are opportunities for feedback on what the community would like the concept design for the Nature Based Playground area to include. Photos of people with the Willow Tree (since it was a popular location for such) are still being collected for a picture mosaic that will likely hang in the lobby of the Woodland Center. Recently, a painting of the Willow was donated by artist Melissa McConnell. The painting may be displayed and/or used for fundraising. Fundraising opportunities are being considered such as a Willow walk or fun run to contribute to playground project as funding has yet to be identified.
- Urban Forestry had a consult with a Washington Department of Natural Resources Entomologist at the end of January. UF and other parks staff toured Audubon Park, Manito Park, and Downriver Golf Course to confirm findings of bark beetles and learn more about opportunities to assist in preventing tree loss from beetles. Once signs and symptoms of beetles show up, typically the beetles have already emerged, and it is too late to reduce the insect population by destroying infested wood. Additional tools to assist with preventing pine beetle infestations are being worked on, such as pheromones that would repel Western Pine beetles. The Western Pine beetle pheromones are under USDA review and not on the market yet or labelled for use at this time. Neighborhood Councils will be notified of trees being removed in parks in their neighborhoods. Creating a brochure for citizens regarding how to care for their trees, general care of trees, etc. was briefly discussed and a subcommittee will be formed to work on that item.

- The tree crew is busy with day-to-day tasks and dead tree removals. UF is working on a training program for seasonal workers and operations staff so they can assist with minor pruning tasks. A yearly chainsaw training was held for Park Operation and Public Works employees who often assist with storm clean up.
- A pest readiness workshop will take place on March 6<sup>th</sup> in the Woodland Center at the Finch Arboretum. There is no cost to attend the workshop and registration is open now.
- UF staff will attend the Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board on February 13<sup>th</sup> to provide an update on the UF IRA/USDA/USFS grant project.
- Katie advised UF will be transferring some responsibility of plan review tasks back to Development Services/Planning Department in the near future. UF will continue to be involved with some tasks and will be available for consults, reports, typical tree permits and inspections at CO.

### **Old Business:**

1. IRA USDA USFS Grant Update – The IRA USDA USFS Grant is currently on hold and UF is seeking clarity from the grant administrator. The contractors were advised to stop work until clarity is received and they are instructed to resume work. Removals are being prioritized within the federal boundary with approximately four hundred dead trees street side. Three tree services are under contract to perform removals and over 120 trees have already been removed through the project. Prior to the grant work being paused, education and outreach continued which included tree signups, receiving commitment to care for trees from property owners, attending neighborhood council meetings to advise the work proposed for each neighborhood, and sending notifications to abutting property owners to inform them about proposed removals. Three contractors are under contract for tree planting services, and 178 trees were planted this past fall. Pruning contracts have not been finalized, however, the bid process is complete. The pruning contracts will be presented at one of the upcoming committee meetings for review and then will be forwarded for Park Board approval. The Tree Equity website is up and running and UF has a brochure that provides additional information on the grant project.
2. Downtown Specific Tree Program – A subcommittee will be formed to discuss ideas, challenges and priorities regarding trees in the downtown core. Ideas previously discussed include an educational program, providing tree care information to abutting property owners, partnering with the Downtown Spokane Partnership for possible watering assistance, a tree monitoring program to identify trees that need water (before they decline) and educating property owners about tree watering. Signs and symptoms as well as color and characteristics of a tree are used to read trees and soil moisture meters can be used to determine moisture level. Lidar Technology, which is a tool currently being used by utility companies, was briefly discussed. Performing an inventory and condition rating to establish a baseline rating for downtown trees before any projects are started was discussed. UF has an (outdated) inventory of public trees which collects extensive data on the trees such as species, condition ratings, etc.

**New Business:** None

**Other Program and Partnership Ideas:** None

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:21 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is 3 p.m. March 4, 2025.

# Urban Forestry



## Staff Report Updates

February 4, 2025

# Arbor Day Planning



## Saturday, April 26th

- Educational Booth, crafts, free swag, & more
- Compost Fair w/ Master Composters and Recyclers
- Corbin Art Center Crafts
- Arbor Day Proclamation
- Tree City USA Award
- Invite to Mayor
  - Council, Park Board Members
- Tree Fun Run – fundraiser idea!



# Tree Hero Event at On-Track (5<sup>th</sup> Annual)

- April 19<sup>th</sup>
- Community Event
- Tree planting
- Tree seedling distribution (plus assistance with others)
- Establishment of School Yard Forest Classroom
  - Received Growing Roots Grant Grant through Vita Coco

“Collaboratively (with students at the helm) design, create and build a School Yard Forest that will serve as a “place-based” learning space for students at OTA, Shaw and Regal elementary. We are calling it “Meet Me at the Trees”. We envision the forest serving multiple opportunities—science learning at all or any levels, continued Outdoor Experience discovery, as well as space to be in nature. Any combination of interdisciplinary learning will occur (art! Writing! History! Since Time Immemorial!” –Lisa Mattson, OTA

# Downriver Tree Planting



## Restoration Planting - continued

Ben Nelson, Course Superintendent

Steve Nittolo, Urban Forester

Third round of re-planting efforts, likely some volunteer plantings.

**Date: TBD Spring 2025**





# Other Misc Plantings for spring

March, April, May

New and replacement trees in parks system

- Audubon
- Comstock
- Loma Vista
- Another round at Comstock (pending)
- DSP free trees program (on-going)
- Replacement Seedlings at Manito (pending, volunteer project)
- Spokane Ponderosa seedling plantings likely
- MANY MORE park locations TBD
- Increase in planting street trees through IRA USDA /USFS Grant



# Library Partnership Seedling Giveaways

- Seedling Distributions planned
  - Through grant program
- Trees to Shadle Plant Swap planned
- Further Details TBD



# Finch Willow, update

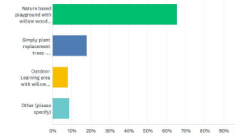
*What should we do with the willow tree?*



- Public Survey
- Mosaic
- SCC Growing 100 seedlings
- Fall Fest craft project
- Press release
- Donations
- Concept / Parks Planning Establishing Timeline
- Identify Funding
- SCD Urban Wood Program
- Outpouring of Support

## NEXT STEPS FOR THE WILLOW TREE

We received over 1,000 responses to our survey asking you what we should do after our 78 year old willow tree succumbed to gravity and old age.



65% of respondents said we should create a nature based playground using willow wood components, and plant replacement tree(s) from cutting of original tree in or around this area. Keep an eye out for concepts of this playground in the future.

### Help us make a willow tree mosaic!

Share your photos and memories of Finch Arboretum's iconic willow tree for a chance to be included in a photo mosaic for future display at the arboretum. Scan this QR code to participate!



### Donate!

Donate to the Spokane Parks Foundation to help us in funding a new nature based playground incorporating components of the willow tree. Scan this QR code to donate!



*Willow artwork created & donated by: Melissa McConnell*

# WA DNR Entomologist Consult

- Audubon, Downriver GC, Manito
- Confirm findings
- Confirm we're doing all that we can / BMPs
- Identify any opportunities to do more / improved management to prevent tree loss
- Solidify Management Plans
- Employee Training



# Tree Crew

- Misc removals of dead trees
  - Audubon (18 approx.)
  - Comstock (15+)
  - (complete) Downriver Drive + Downriver Disc Golf + new launch area near Downriver and TH Meenach
  - Riverfront Park (6)
- Day to day reactive work
- (complete) Pruning training for seasonals + Operations for minor tasks
- (complete) Chainsaw training for Ops + Public Works employees
- Limited / no pruning yet




# Invasive Species Council, WA DNR Workshop

## Finch Arboretum, March 6th

- Overview Program
- Pest challenges in park landscapes
- Maintenance practices
- Grant work, using our inventory
- Tree Permit Process - allowance of (especially young) ash removal/replacement proactively (if requested)
- Removal of Fraxinus on approved street tree list
- Inventory – public Fraxinus population known (park and street trees)
- Invasive Species playbook

**Spokane Urban Forest  
Pest Readiness Workshop**  
Learn about pests of concern  
and tools to increase  
preparedness


-No cost-




**March 6, 2025**  
8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

**Woodland Center at Finch  
Arboretum, Spokane, WA**

**Register now: [bit.ly/SpokaneUFP](https://bit.ly/SpokaneUFP)**

 **NATIONAL  
RESOURCES**

This workshop is  
funded by the USDA  
Forest Service Urban  
and Community  
Forestry Program.

 **Washington Invasive  
Species Council**

# Climate Resilience & Sustainability Board

- February 13 at 2pm
- IRA USDA/USFS Grant Overview
- Progress Update
- Opportunity for input and questions
- Discussions regarding future opportunities



**Mission Statement/Purpose:** The purpose of the Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board is to provide advice and recommendations to the Mayor, City Council, and community on the actions necessary to achieve the community's sustainability and climate goals consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, Sustainability Action Plan, environmental stewardship policies of the City as adopted by the City Council, and within the requirements and parameters set forth in state law.



*Questions?*

