



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

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

Committee Members:

- X Kris Neely – Chair
- X Tim Kohlhauff
Beth LaBar – (Absent – Excused)
- X Guy Gifford
Cindy Deffe – (Absent - Excused)
- X Joe Zubaly
Matt Stewart – (Absent - Excused)
- X Justyce Brant
Ben Kappen - (Absent - Excused)
- X Paul Lower
- X Logan Callen
Kathryn Alexander – (Absent – Excused)

Parks Staff:

Katie Kosanke
Karin Cook

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 **February 2025** were approved. Motion by Guy Gifford, seconded by Justyce Brant, approved unanimously.

Discussion Items:

1. Ceremonies, Appointments, Announcements - None

Public Comments: None

Standing Report Items:

1. Community Assembly – No report.
2. Staff Report - Katie Kosanke provided a staff report update.
 - a. Urban Forestry will be hiring several seasonal staff for the tree crew.

- b. Work continues on dead tree removals and addressing beetle issues in numerous park locations. Tree removals at Audubon Park and Manito Park have been completed and removals will be done next at Comstock Park and Riverfront Park. There were 18 removals at Audubon. Another round of planting will be done at Audubon as well as restoration work. The Park Operations crew has been assisting with some of the work and will assist with some of the planting and restoration work at Audubon. Neighbors in the Audubon Park area have also shown interest in helping with planting and restoration work.
- c. UF consulted with DNR Entomologist, Dana Brennan last month and confirmed UF is doing all they can to mitigate beetle issues and confirmed several green trees UF thought were infected with beetles did need to be removed due to active beetle infestations. There has been a major uptick of beetles over the years mainly due to drought and mild winters that don't knock down the population of beetles which allows them to put out a third generation and as trees mature their defense mechanisms aren't as vigorous. There has also been nearby construction and other disturbances that can have an effect. The entomologist indicated we are on the upward curve, and it will drop down at some point. She also suggested thinking about mixing in a variety of other species and looking at other tools on the horizon that are being developed that may be of assistance in the future. UF will continue consulting with the entomologist and is also working on public education and possibly a community workshop as many citizens are interested in the topic.
- d. Fuels reduction work Nick Jeffries has planned for this year is currently being reviewed. He has many projects planned, and the work will be ready to proceed once review is completed.
- e. The annual work plan for UF is being worked on and Katie will likely present the work plan at the next meeting.
- f. Arbor Day Celebration planning is in process. It is a fun and engaging community event that will be held on Saturday April 26th at Finch Arboretum.
- g. UF is presenting at the Invasive Species Workshop on March 6th at Finch Arboretum.
- h. A street tree pruning and thinning project is being done on a center median island on Wieber Drive in the Indian Trail area with the work being completed by a tree service contractor.
- i. UF will be transitioning to planting soon and is gearing up for spring planting with a tree order expected to be delivered soon.
- j. UF is completing training for development services staff who will be taking back plan review duties. UF will be available for consult and will still be involved with CO and tree permits.
- k. Spokane Ponderosa is planning for select seedling plantings projects this spring. They will provide the seedlings and professional tree planting contractors for planting. Some seedlings may be planted at Champion Park and a small area at Polly Judd Park as well as at the golf courses. Steve, an Urban Forestry staff member is working with golf staff on various tree maintenance tasks and is planning for additional tree plantings at the golf courses.

Additional discussion took place regarding Fuels Reduction work. It was suggested to look at the whole ecosystem not just the fire aspect and if possible, for work not to take place in wet conditions to minimize ruts and the impact to the soil profile. Having brochures or information to provide to citizens to make them aware of work being done was also discussed. Kris Neely also indicated he could share information on where work is taking place at the Community Assembly meetings.

Old Business:

1. IRA/USDA/USFS Urban and Community Grant Update – Katie Kosanke

Katie Kosanke presented an IRA/USDA/USFS Urban and Community Grant update.

- a. The City of Spokane Urban Forestry was awarded a \$6 million dollar grant for increasing tree planting, increasing canopy cover and benefits trees provide, tree maintenance, and educational outreach programs. Requirements of the grant include all work is to be done within a federal boundary which is outlined on a federal boundary map and that work is done on city properties, including parks, public right-of-way, and schools.
- b. Removals have been prioritized for year one with 25% of the removals completed. Work is currently paused however once work resumes it is anticipated to have the other 75% of removals completed within six months. Pruning will take place in years two through five and planting will be done throughout the five-year period.
- c. The program is currently on pause due to the grant being federally funded and Urban Forestry is waiting for clarification before work can resume. No other costs for the program will be incurred until clarity is received. UF has been in communication weekly with the grant administrator and is waiting for clarification.
- d. Many items have been completed for the project including education and outreach items, hiring an Urban Forester to oversee the project, and establishing contracts for planting, removals, and pruning and a pass-through sub-award for education and outreach with The Lands Council. The education and outreach pass-through sub-award and planting and removal contracts have already been finalized. The pruning contracts were presented to the committee at the UFTC meeting for consideration to move the contracts forward to the Park Board for approval, contingent on funding and receiving clarity. Planning is also in process for seedling programs for spring and tree planting.
- e. Citizens are encouraged to volunteer for tree planting opportunities in the spring and to continue to help build the list of tree planting locations.
- f. Back up plans are being looked at and a long-term sustainable urban forestry program is being considered for long term success of the program. In 2011 a stormwater tree fee was proposed, which would have provided funding for some assistance with street trees, but the proposal didn't pass. Other cities provide a level of support and assistance with street trees and UF is looking into what those cities programs look like and if it might be something that could be done in the City of Spokane.

Additional discussion took place regarding funding for projects and if adjustments would be made to the timeline for projects.

New Business:

1. Arbor Day 2025 Programming and Volunteer Opportunities

Arbor Day planning is underway and will be held on April 26th. There will be many educational booths and fun activities. The committee is invited to attend and volunteer opportunities are available if committee members are interested in volunteering. A tree fun run is being considered as a fundraiser for Finch Arboretum in the future and UF will be meeting with the Recreation Department to discuss the idea further. The compost fair will now only take place in the spring. Ideas regarding what could replace the compost fair in the fall are being considered such as a compost or mulch give away. On-Track Academy's Tree Hero Event will be on April 19th and include a seedling give away. This will be their 5th year holding the event. UF was invited to have an Arbor Day/Arboretum booth at My Fresh Basket right before the Arbor Day event. UF will provide information on the Arbor Day Celebration and invite people to the event and provide information on the Willow Nature Playground. The new Touch and See trail is being completed and a ribbon cutting may take place at the Arbor Day Celebration or may be held as a separate event. A beautiful painting of the Willow tree was donated by Melissa McConnell and is hanging in the lobby of the Woodland Center.

Other Program and Partnership Ideas: None

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is 3 p.m. April 1, 2025.

Tree Equity Spokane

IRA/USDA/USFS Urban and Community Grant *Update*

Urban Forestry Committees March 4, 2025



IRA Urban and Community Forestry Grant

1+ Billion in Nationwide Investments

Spokane Urban Forestry Award Amount-
\$6,000,000

- ❖ Tree Maintenance, Tree Planting, Education & Outreach
 - ❖ Opportunity to send help, not Notices
 - ❖ Grant Requirement
 - ▶ All work performed in disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution and underinvestment, as shown in boundary
 - ❖ Within the boundaries of the City of Spokane on City properties
 - ▶ Public right-of-way, parks & schools
- Timeline: Project Launch February 2024 - 2029
Year 1: Dead tree removals prioritized
Years 2-5: Pruning emphasized
Years 1-5: Planting new trees (continuous)



Tree Equity Spokane

CEJST boundary

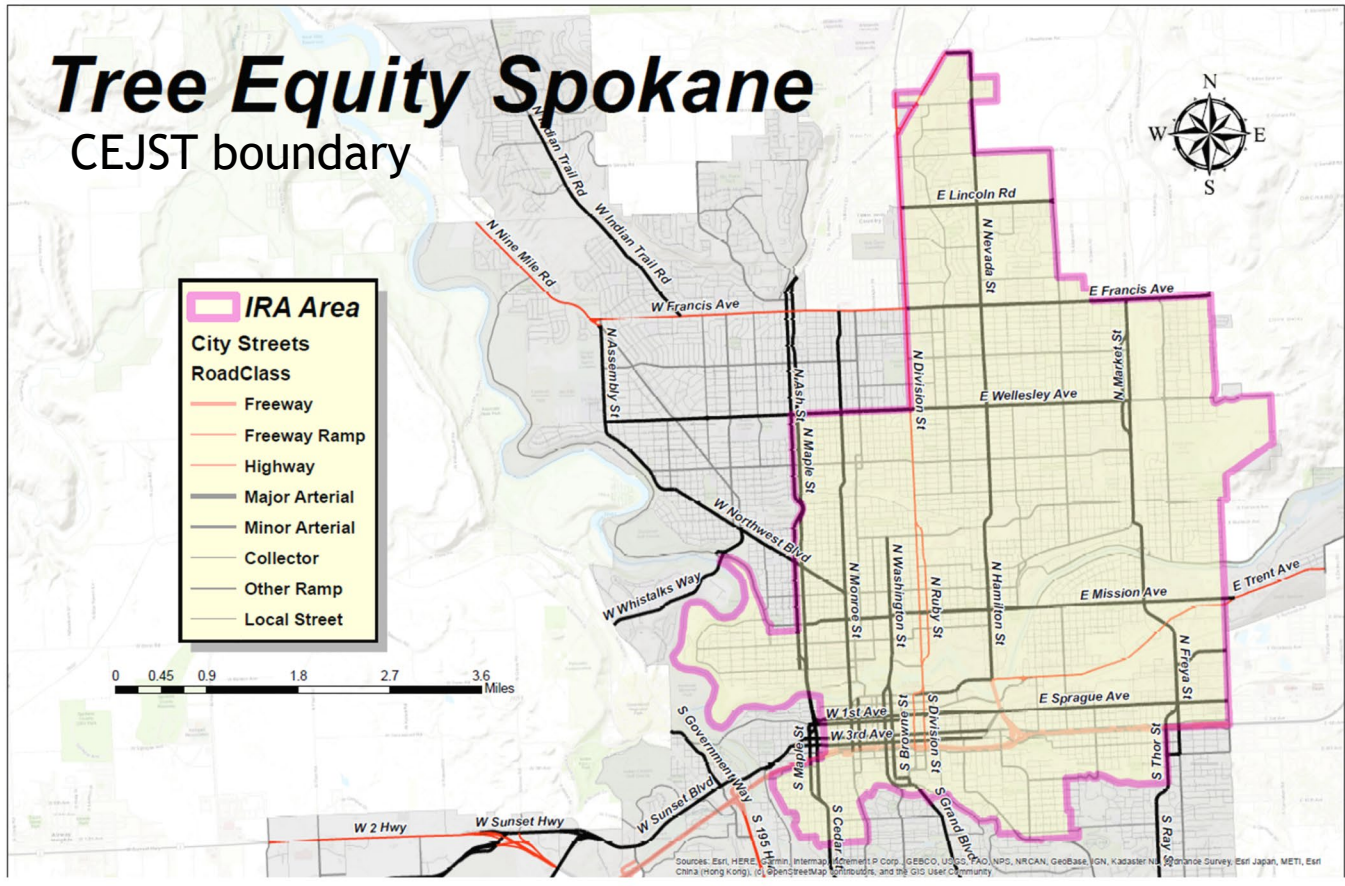


IRA Area

City Streets

RoadClass

- Freeway
- Freeway Ramp
- Highway
- Major Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Collector
- Other Ramp
- Local Street



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, United States Geological Survey, NOAA, NPS, NRCAN, GeBCo, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Swisstopo, Mapbox, and the GIS User Community

Progress Update Summary - **Program PAUSED**

Education and Outreach:

- ❖ Website SpokaneParks.org/TreeEquity with project information - complete
- ❖ 5 neighborhood council meetings attended, sharing info about project
- ❖ Neighborhood Notifications
- ❖ Removal letters complete - work expected to be completed within 6 months
- ❖ Informational brochures, vehicle magnets
- ❖ Seedling programs planning in progress

Foundational Items:

- ❖ Hired Urban Forester to oversee the project
- ❖ Established contract for pass-through sub-award for education and outreach with TLC
- ❖ Bid processes - request for bids, pre-bid meetings
 - ❖ 3 planting contracts in place (locked in unit pricing) Fall 24' planting complete (147 trees)
 - ❖ 3 Removal contracts in place (locked in unit pricing)
 - ❖ 4 Pruning contracts still moving forward (UFTC then to Park Board)
- ❖ Work in Progress - Removals (Approx 100/400 complete)
 - ❖ Complete: East Central, & Hillyard
 - ❖ In progress (now paused): Chief Garry, Logan, Shiloh Hills, Nevada Heights, Bemiss & Riverside
 - ❖ Not started: Lincoln Heights, Minnehaha, Cliff-Cannon, West Central, Emerson-Garfield, Whitman, North Hill & Rockwood



Opportunities for citizen engagement:

- ❖ Volunteer tree planters
- ❖ Education and outreach to assist in finding planting locations - where abutting property owners want trees and commit to providing care.
- ❖ Backup plan should be considered - we are prepared to bring ideas for solutions
 - ❖ Impacts to citizens, hired tree services, urban forester hired, increased risk / public safety concerns

Plan for a long-term sustainable urban forestry program

Trees that are cared for provide important environmental, social, economic and human health benefits for longer, are safer street side and are more resilient after storm events.

- ❖ Continued conversations and public engagement regarding sustainability and possible further investments for the long-term success
- ❖ Seek consistent funding source (outside of Parks should be considered)
- ❖ Continued grants for planting (smaller scale) likely will remain possible through various funding sources

History

- ❖ In 2011 a stormwater tree fee was proposed which would have provided funding for some assistance of street trees (an in-house street tree crew plus funding for contract items). It did not pass by just 1 vote.
- ❖ Extensive support through the City's Comprehensive Plan, Sustainability Action Plan local studies
- ❖ Other cities that provide support/assistance: Boise, Post Falls, Helena, Snoqualmie, Eugene

Thank you!

Katie Kosanke
Spokane Urban Forestry
509-363-5496
kkosanke@spokanecity.org



SpokaneParks.org/TreeEquity

