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

3 p.m. Tuesday, June 2, 2026
Hybrid in-person and WebEx virtual meeting
Katie Sorensen - Urban Forester

**Committee Members:**

X Kris Neely – Arrived 3:05 p.m.
Tim Kohlhauff – (Absent – Excused)
Guy Gifford – (Absent – Excused)
X Cindy Deffe
X Matt Stewart
Justyce Brant – (Absent – Excused)
Ben Kappen – (Absent – Excused)
Logan Callen – (Absent – Excused)
X Kathryn Alexander
Kelsi Caston – (Absent – Excused)
X Eduardo Castillo

**Parks Staff:**

Katie Sorensen
Angel Spell
Amber Ramirez

**Guests:**

Scott Mills – Cliff Cannon Neighborhood

## MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by committee member Cindy Deffe who opened the meeting with introductions.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from **April 2026 (March 31, 2026)** were approved. Motion to approve the April 2026 minutes by Kathryn Alexander, seconded by Matt Stewart, approved unanimously.

**Discussion Items:**

1. Ceremonies, Appointments, Announcements

- There are two openings on the Urban Forestry Tree Committee. If anyone knows someone who may be interested let Katie know.

**Standing Report Items:**

1. Community Assembly – Kathryn Alexander advised there is concern on the Community Assembly regarding some changes to the comprehensive plan, particularly in land use and the change of title from land use to general, seems to remove land and focus support on growth instead of resilience.

2. Staff Report – Katie Sorensen

   a. Urban Forestry will be presenting to a group of teachers and Pacific Education Institute. The teachers are 7th grade teachers throughout the school district who will be creating the Urban Forestry curriculum to be used district wide and potentially be adopted statewide. UF will be sharing information about our program and grant and will walk them through the street tree exhibit later this week. They are kicking off continuing education for teachers to integrate more Urban Forestry curriculum into the classroom so students within the city can have a good understanding of Urban Forestry, all the benefits trees provide, and so the students can help make a difference where they live.

   b. Katie Sorensen and Amber Ramirez presented at the Sustainability Directors Network. They are an Urban Forestry group that was formed with an IRA grant similar to our grant and they provide continuing education to municipalities across the country. They invited UF to present on our grant project. UF advised them how we were supported and able to scale up when the opportunity arose, how we were able to scale up and provided tips for them to give to other communities for them to be successful when opportunities may arise for them. All are smaller grant recipients with specific projects.

   c. There were 27 trees impacted by the last windstorm. Less than a dozen trees were complete failures. The rest of the trees had significant branches, portions of trees impacted and hanger branches that had to be addressed right away and prioritized to get those hanging and partially failed parts of trees to the ground. The Park Operations team and the Streets crew were able to assist with some items.

   d. Tree planting in the parks is wrapping up with new and replacement trees planted throughout the park system. Urban Forestry is working to clear out overstock from the nursery. A few additional trees have been removed due to pine beetles and UF continues to be proactive and monitor locations for pine beetles.

   e. Arbor Day went well. Lots of tree seedlings were given out, there was a ribbon cutting for the Touch and See trail. The mayor gave the proclamation for Arbor Day and did the ribbon cutting for the Touch and See trail.

**Old Business:**

1. **Heritage Tree Nomination**

   Katie provided a summary review of the Heritage Tree Nomination for a tree at the Cathedral of St John the Evangelist. The committee discussed the nomination and Katie advised if the tree was accepted to be a Heritage Tree it would be recognized on the Historic Preservations website and included on their tree map.

Motion to approve the Heritage Tree Nomination by Kris Neely, seconded by Eduardo Castillo. The motion to approve the Heritage Tree Nomination was approved unanimously.

2. **IRA Grant Update** – Amber Ramirez
   a. Amber Ramirez provided a brief overview of the IRA grant and advised work through the grant will include tree planting, dead tree removals and major needs pruning. Other items include education and outreach, seedling give aways, and planting, maintenance and education and outreach with schools.
   b. Spring 2026 tree planting included a SpoCanopy Volunteer planting of 14 trees in Hillyard, 167 SpoCanopy trees planted, seven trees planted at Spokane Public School properties, and six trees planted through the Downtown Spokane Partnership pilot program. The Lands Council will begin summer health checks soon on trees already planted. A seasonal employee will be doing door-to-door outreach to assist with meeting the goal of planting 250 trees.
   c. There were 1,350 seedlings given away at community centers, libraries and at various community events.
   d. Over 470 dead tree removals have been completed. Over 70 dead, dying or splitting trees (primarily cherry plum) in the Shiloh Hills neighborhood are being removed. UF is encouraging property owners to sign up for free replacement trees. UF is considering adding an additional contractor to assist with removals.
   e. Pruning at 14 parks is complete and pruning is in progress at Hays and Mission Parks. Vetting for pruning in the East Central neighborhood is almost complete and pruning will begin this summer. One pruning project is planned at Lewis and Clark High School to provide clearance in the bus loading area. UF is considering adding one to two additional pruning contractors.
   f. To date, through the grant over 600 trees have been planted, with plants to do additional outreach for tree signups, over 470 dead trees have been removed and over 400 park trees have been pruned. Subaward contracts were also implemented with the Downtown Spokane Partnership, The Lands Council and Pacific Education Institute for education and outreach regarding tree planting and maintenance.

**New Business:**

**1.** Proposed Draft Tree Ordinance – Angel Spell

A private tree ordinance is being worked on in the office of council member Paul Dillion. Urban Forestry is primarily concerned with sections of the proposed ordinance that relate to Urban Forestry and Parks and Recreation. Angel Spell met with council member Paul Dillion and Adam McDaniel, from the mayor's office several times at their request to provide feedback on the proposed draft tree ordinance.

The intention as stated in the proposed draft tree ordinance is to increase and improve tree canopy throughout the city, but it brings in some requirements and regulations over private property trees, where the current program only addresses public property trees and street trees.

Angel share information and concerns about some of the proposed changes. Primary concerns with the proposed draft tree ordinance are that it may not achieve the goal and doesn't add up to a significant number of tree retentions. It may cause people to be reluctant to plant trees or designate heritage trees if they feel it would be over regulated and it would greatly expand the responsibility of the city.

**Other Program and Partnership Ideas**: None

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is 3 p.m. June 30, 2026.

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CITY OF SPOKANE PARKS & RECREATION URBAN FORESTRY

# Heritage Tree Nomination Form

**Nominator Information**

Name: Linda Finney

Address: 13613 S Valley Chapel Rd Valleyford, WA 99036

Phone: (Day) 509 838 4632

(Eve) 509 838 4632

Email Address lindatfinney@gmail.com

**(Property owner must agree to nomination)**

Name: Cathedral of St John the Evangelist

Address: 127 E 12th Ave Spokane, WA 99202

Phone: (Day) 509 838 4277

(Eve)

**Property/Tree Owner Information**

**Designated Neighborhood**: South Hill, Spokane

**Location** (Street Address): 127 E 12th Ave

**Species of Tree** (Common or Botanical Name): English Oak, Quercus Robur

**Single/Collection of trees** (If Collection, How Many Trees): one tree

**Size:** Height (approx.) 40-45 (feet)

**Crown** (approx.) measure distance of total spread from one side to other: 35 (feet)

**Circumference** (distance around trunk at 4.5 feet from ground): 25 (inches)

**Age of Tree** (If Known/Estimate): 50-60 yrs

**Condition (check all that apply and explain any issues on back of page:**

- [x] Healthy recently pruned
- [ ] Diseased
- [ ] Pruning/Structural problems

**List any historical fact About the Tree (Documented/Estimated)**

see attached

**What is most noteworthy about the tree/trees that meets the criteria (check all that apply).**

- [x] Size
- [ ] Public
- [ ] Visibility
- [x] Rare Horticultural Value
- [x] Aesthetic Qualities
- [x] Historical

**Explain why you think the tree/trees should be nominated for heritage distinction - use another piece of paper, if necessary. Please include a photograph (black & white or color) and a simple tree location map.**

see attached

**Submit Nomination Form and Owner's Consent to the Spokane Urban Forestry Program**

Spokane Urban Forestry Program · 808 W Spokane Falls Blvd · Spokane, WA 99201 · 509.363.5495

www.spokaneurbanforestry.org

We believe this beautiful English Oak was planted about 1964-67 at the instigation of Mary Cooper Jewett Gaiser. She was known for "loving wonderful trees" and planted trees at the Cathedral and at her home. This was during the time that the Jewett family and others built the Jewett House. Mary was heavily involved in the Cathedral's Landscape Association for years along with Ruth Farnham.

We believe that the English Oak was planted in honor of Ruth, in recognition of her work in the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane and on the Landscape Association. Several of the Association minutes contain Ruth's reminders that the tree must be cared for and preserved. At one point she foiled an attempt "by someone whose name we won't mention" to cut the tree down.

Ben Stanton of Spokane TreePro has been caring for the trees on the Cathedral campus for the last two years. It was he who pointed out to us how important the tree is and encouraged us to get it listed as a Heritage Tree.



English Oak
Cathedral of St John
127 E 12th
Spokane WA

Tree is located on NW corner of Cathedral campus grounds



CITY OF SPOKANE PARKS & RECREATION
URBAN FORESTRY

# Property Owner Agreement Form

**HISTORIC AND HERITAGE TREE PROGRAM**

In exchange for the City's designation of the subject tree as a Heritage Tree, the Property Owner agrees to protect, maintain and care for the Heritage Tree located on his or her property. Property Owner agrees to abide by conditions set forth in the City of Spokane Code, Section 12.02.916, particularly:

A. "A Heritage Tree or collection of trees is retained by the property owner and does not become the property or responsibility of the City – unless the tree(s) are city owned."

B. "The property owner is responsible for all maintenance and liability issue pertaining to the tree or trees."

C. Prior to removal of a Heritage Tree, a property owner must notify the Urban Forest Tree Committee/Urban Forest Program. The City **strongly encourages** all Heritage Tree property owners to retain these significant tree(s)

D. If a property owner removes a heritage Tree or collection of trees, the plaque or identification marker shall be returned to the Urban Forest Program.

Property Owner understands that sponsorships or assistance for care of the tree may be available from the City's Urban Forestry Program. In addition, if the Property Owner may want any advice, it can be offered at no cost by the City Urban Forestry Program (509.363.5495).

Property Owner as owner of the English oak (species) tree now being considered for this distinction, hereby consent to its being designated a Heritage Tree by the Urban Forestry Committee of Spokane, Washington.

**Tree Location (Address, Tax Lot):** 129 E 12th Ave Spokane, WA 99202

**Signed:** Heather VanSeveren, Dean, St. John's Cathedral **Property Owner**

**Date:** 2/13/2026

**Submitted by Urban Forestry Tree Committee:** _____ (Date)

**Approved by Urban Foresty Progam:** _____ (Date)

**Approved by Director, Parks and Recreation:** _____ (Date)

**Filed with Urban Forestry Program and Website:** _____ (Date)

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# Tree Equity Spokane

## Urban and Community Forestry Grant update

June 2026




City of Spokane URBAN FORESTRY

# IRA Urban and Community Forestry Grant

1+ Billion in Nationwide Investments

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



- Plant 500 trees per year
- Dead tree removals
- Major needs pruning
- Education and outreach
- Seedling giveaways
- Planting, maintenance, education and outreach with schools

City of Spokane URBAN FORESTRY

# Planting- Spring 2026

- SpoCanopy Volunteer planting – Hillyard
  - Met at James Hill Park
  - 14 trees
  - 46 students and 20 community volunteers
  - KXLY morning show media coverage





- 167 SpoCanopy trees planted
- Nevada Heights, North Hill and West Central neighborhoods receiving the most
- 7 trees planted at SPS properties
- DSP pilot program- 6 trees
- Summer health checks beginning soon by the Lands Council

# Seedling Giveaway

1350 given away at community centers & libraries, Tree Hero event, Arbor Day & My Fresh Basket









## Maintenance

- Dead tree removals- over 470
- Additional Shiloh Hills- over 70 (mostly cherry plum)
- Grant removals in response to storm
- RFP additional removal contractor

## Pruning

- 14 parks pruned – Hays and Mission in progress
- East Central neighborhood to begin this Summer
- RFP for one or two additional pruning contractors
- One SPS pruning project for Lewis & Clark HS planned




City of Spokane URBAN FORESTRY

# Progress

Project Timeframe: February 2024 to February 2029

- 600+ trees planted td
- Plans to do additional outreach for tree sign ups
- 470+ dead trees removed
- 400+ park trees pruned
- Subaward contracts with DSP, The Lands Council and Pacific Education Institute for education and outreach about tree planting and maintenance

City of Spokane URBAN FORESTRY

# Thank you!

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aramirez@spokanecity.org



SpokaneParks.org/TreeEquity

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