



Spokane Park Board Development & Volunteer and Citizen Advisory Committees

12:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 9, 2026

In-person: Finch Arboretum Ponderosa Room, 3404 W. Woodland Blvd, Spokane, WA 99224

Webex virtual meeting: Call-in: 408-418-9388; Access code: **2499 871 8597**

Fianna Dickson – Marketing and Communications Manager

Committee Members:

DVCAC:

[Vacant] – Chair

Laura Ackerman / Jeff Lambert (Alternate) – Friends of the Bluff

Jennifer Ogden / Cole Taylor (Alternate) – Friends of Riverfront Park

Paul Lindholdt – Friends of Palisades

Kathryn Kolquist – Friends of Manito Park

Delaney Carr – Friends of Coeur d’Alene Park

Sandy Wicht – Community Assembly

DVC:

Lee Williams – Chair / Park Board

Bob Anderson – Park Board

Lindsey Shaw – Park Board

[Vacant] – DVCAC Representative

The Park Board Development and Volunteer / Citizen Advisory Committee meeting will be held in person in the Finch Arboretum Ponderosa Room, and virtually via Webex at 12:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 9, 2026. Committee members, staff, and presenters have the option to participate virtually via Webex during all meetings.

The public may listen to the meeting by calling 408-418-9388 and entering access code: **2499 871 8597** when prompted.

Written public comment may be submitted via email or mail. Comments must be received no later than 8:00 a.m. September 9 by email to: spokaneparks@spokanecity.org or mail to: Spokane Park Board, 5th floor City Hall, 808 West Spokane Falls Blvd., Spokane, Washington 99201. Submitted public comments will be presented to meeting attendees prior to the meeting.

Agenda

1. **Call to Order** – Lee Williams
2. **Public Comment** – Lee Williams
3. **DVCAC Action Items**
(Role of DVCAC Chair – explanation)
 - A. Election of DVCAC Chair
4. **DVCAC Standing Reports**
 - A. Member news
5. **DVCAC Discussion Items**
 - A. 311 requests process – Heather Sweet
6. **Unfinished Business**
 - A. Further define safety in Parks – group discussion
 - B. Information on how Parks and SPD share information – Report from Elizabeth Goldsmith
 - C. Addressing issues to Parks Director – tabled until Fianna returns
 - D. Report on Riverfront Park hiring a security consultant – tabled until Jonathan Moog can be consulted about how to share
 - E. Park event permits – notification – Fianna needs clarification
7. **DVC Action Items**
 - A. None
8. **DVC Standing Reports**
 - A. Park Board President update – Bob Anderson
9. **DVC Discussion Items**
 - A. [Adopt-A-Park / Parks Friends Toolkit](#) – Lee Williams
10. **Adjournment** – Lee Williams

Agenda is subject to change.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information: The City of Spokane is committed to providing equal access to its facilities, programs and services for persons with disabilities. Individuals requesting reasonable accommodations or further information may call, write, or email Human Resources at 509.625.6373, 808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd, Spokane, WA, 99201; or ddecorde@spokanecity.org. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may contact Human Resources through the Washington Relay Service at 7-1-1. Please contact us forty-eight (48) hours before the meeting date.



Chair of the Development and Volunteer Citizen Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Development and Volunteer Citizen Advisory Committee (DVCAC) serves as a community volunteer helping support the needs of Park Friends and Adopt a Park groups, and sits on the Park Board's Development and Volunteer Committee (DVC) as a non-Park Board representative.

Main Duties

- **Run Meetings:** Help set agendas for the DVCAC portion of the meetings, and lead committee meetings.
- **Support Volunteer Groups:** Help Park Friends and Adopt a Park volunteer groups share ideas; welcome and assist people who are interested in forming a group to begin that process with Parks & Recreation staff.
- **Build Coordination:** Help identify ways for volunteer groups to work together to share best practices, learned experiences, and support. Increase coordination between groups, and help build relationships between volunteers and with staff.
- **Report to the DVC:** Share DVCAC updates and information with the DVC. Support the DVC's work of developing annual priority capital and programming project lists.
- **Time Commitment:** 2 to 4 hours per month, or more if desired

Skills Needed

- Effective communication and facilitation, helping ensure all voices are heard
- Friendly, approachable, and able to bring different groups together
- Organized, able to run a clear meeting with time constraints
- Strong interest in local parks and community work



Park Friends Toolkit Text

*Work in progress
Updated: July 2025*

Items in red are open questions for our CAC.

Message from the Director

Thank you for your interest in joining or creating an Adopt a Park or Park Friends group. Adopt a Park and Park Friends groups make Spokane Park even better! The City of Spokane has nearly 100 park properties that provide healthy recreation opportunities, quiet green space, community-building, equitable access, and improve our quality of life. Adopt a Park and Park Friends group volunteers add resources where budgets are limited, and enhance the vitality and quality of a park they steward. We are grateful for our community that embraces their parks, and hope we can work together in the future!

This toolkit is meant to serve as a guide for starting and fostering an Adopt a Park or Park Friends group. We hope the information here is helpful, and if you have questions not addressed here, please reach out to us by calling 311 (outside of the city, dial (509) 755-2489) or email Parks@SpokaneCity.org. Thank you! – Garrett Jones, Director, City of Spokane Parks & Recreation

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Overview

What is a an Adopt a Park or Park Friends group?

Adopt a Park and Park Friends groups are coordinated groups of volunteers who support and advocate for a specific park or group of parks. They serve as ambassadors, community advocates, and stewards of their chosen park. The group's affiliation with City of Spokane Park & Recreation is formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding, and members work in close coordination with a Parks & Recreation staff liaison.

How do I get involved?

We've created a phased approach to stair-step into the level of involvement that most interests you. It starts by volunteering – even just once – in our parks or with our recreation programs.

Volunteer with us!

- Pick up at the Park (litter removal, graffiti clean up)
- Pull weeds, tend to flower beds, plant flowers
- Plant or water new trees
- Assist with a Recreation program or Riverfront Park special event
- Engage once, infrequently, or routinely!
- See a variety of opportunities at [SpokaneParks.org/volunteer](https://spokaneparks.org/volunteer). Don't see something of interest? Email us and we'd love to create something together!

Adopt a Park

- Love volunteering at your neighborhood park? Consider forming a group to Adopt the Park!
- Adopting a Park means your group is committed to routine volunteer efforts to help care for your neighborhood park for at least one year
- It could be hosting monthly/ quarterly clean ups, tending to flowers and trees, trail maintenance, locking/unlocking gates, or similar
- Your group can be large or small; we ask that most members have some volunteer parks experience, and sign a basic group agreement annually

Form a Park Friends group

- Has your Adopt a Park group grown in interest, and you'd like to do more? Maybe you'd like to form a Park Friends group!
- Park Friends groups fundraise for park improvements, host events to activate the park, help set the vision for the park's future, and continue with their routine caretaking help
- We ask that Park Friends groups have at least one year of Adopt a Park experience, and work with us to form an agreement outlining the ways we'll work together to enhance your neighborhood park

Forming an Adopt a Park group

- 1. Meet and Greet:** Fill out the application (<https://my.spokanecity.org/parksrec/get-involved>) and let's talk! The application helps us learn preliminary information about your interest and goals. Then, we'd love to connect with you to talk through ways we can work together to support the park's health and activity. We'd love to hear what your goals might be, and ways you'd like to engage the neighborhood or community. We are focused on solutions-based partnerships.
- 2. Talk with your fellow park-goers and Neighborhood Council:** Do you have some people who might be interested in joining your effort? It will be important to connect and find a few additional core members who can help launch your Adopt a Park group and support initial planning. Approaching your [Neighborhood Council](#) with your idea will also be a valuable place to gather their feedback and possible members.

3. **Entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Spokane Parks & Recreation:** We have a template MOU we will share, and we will work with you to make any edits and finalize the MOU.
4. **Staff Liaison:** Your Park Friends group will be assigned an official staff liaison who will serve as your primary point of contact for all coordination.
5. **DVC/CAC involvement and networking with other Adopt a Park and Park Friends groups:** Adopt a Park and Park Friends groups are supported by the Development and Volunteer Committee (DVC) of the all-volunteer Park Board, and the affiliated Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) of the DVC. Adopt a Park and Park Friends groups network with one another to share resources and ideas. There are six seats on the CAC for Adopt a Park or Park Friends representatives, and terms are 2 years; positions are recommended by the DVC, and appointments are confirmed by the Director of Parks & Recreation. Even if your Adopt a Park or Park Friends group doesn't have an official seat on the CAC at the moment, it's a wonderful group to connect with to share ideas and find support. You can read more about the DVC and CAC at www.SpokaneParks.org/board.

Moving from an Adopt a Park group to a Park Friends group

Some groups will be very happy to remain at the Adopt a Park level, and we are grateful for the ongoing commitment and support provided to our parks.

Other groups may want to take on additional scope. The primary distinguishing factors in the transition are a desire to fundraise for park improvements, and help set the vision for the park's future. Park Friends groups are required to have two things Adopt a Park groups are not: general liability insurance, and either a 501c3 status or 501c3 fiscal sponsor.

1. **Application:** After at least one year of operating as an Adopt a Park group, you may wish to add additional scope to your group's work by moving toward the Park Friends category. If your group is interested, please fill out the application at <https://my.spokanecity.org/parksrec/get-involved>.
2. **Enter into a new MOU:** The Park Friends MOU is more involved than the Adopt a Park MOU, and using some templates we have on file, we'll work together to craft the right fit. You'll still have a staff liaison as your point of contact.
3. **Create a mission statement:** This will be an important and concise way to express the meaning of your Park Friends group. Consider your group's purpose, business, values, goals, and actions. If you're looking for examples, here are a couple from existing Park Friends groups:

The Friends of Manito: The Friends of Manito is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that supports Spokane's Manito Park. We were founded in 1990 to conduct fundraising, volunteer, and educational activities – to support the responsible preservation and improvement of the park in cooperation with the City of Spokane and its surrounding community.

Friends of Palisades: In 2002, Friends of Palisades was formed as a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion, preservation, and maintenance of the park. We work to (1) educate the public about the park through various programs and events, (2) present park issues to the City, and (3) increase the

size of the park whenever possible. We bring together park volunteers and supporters for work party events, social activities, and to address any safety concerns.

Friends of the Bluff: As Friends of the Bluff, we are stewards of Spokane's High Drive Bluff Park. Through volunteer efforts, community partnerships, and education, we conserve the area in a natural, sustainable state for multiple users who respect the resource, each other, and wildlife.

And here's our **Spokane Parks & Recreation** mission statement: The City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Division acquires, operates, enhances, and protects a diverse system of parks, boulevards, parkways, Urban Forest, golf courses, recreational, cultural, historical and open space areas for the enjoyment and enrichment of all.

4. **Determine fiscal sponsorship:** One of the first decisions you'll have to make in moving towards the Park Friends model is if you'd like to form your own 501(c)(3) (information at the [WA Secretary of State website on Non-Profits](#) website), or work with one of our local 501(c)(3) as your fiscal agent/sponsor. If it's the latter, you'll need a separate MOU between your Park Friends group and the 501(c)(3) serving as your fiscal agent/sponsor.
5. **Group structure:** There are a few things to consider about your group structure. Whatever you decide, it is important to memorialize it in writing.
 - a. **Leadership roles:** Your group will be asked to formalize leadership roles and to write bylaws; we can share a sample to get you started. We recommend having a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary; your group can determine how elections take place, and outline term limits.
 - b. **Committees:** You may also want to form committees that align with your goals, like park clean up, programming, or fundraising.

The First Year: Growing an Adopt a Park group

Holding a Park Cleanup

A park clean-up day can be a great kick-off for your new group. They are fairly easy to organize, and easy for the community to participate in, but they can yield big rewards and help gain new supporters.

Before the event:

- First, do a walk-thru of the park to determine needs and high-priority areas
- Reach out to your Parks staff liaison to let them know what you'd like to do. They can help coordinate some supplies and a trash pick-up.
- Determine the date and timeframe in coordination with your Park liaison, to ensure there aren't conflicts with other events in the park that day and to ensure needed resources are available. You'll need a no-cost park reservation, and your Park liaison can connect you to the right place for it.
- Notify potential volunteers; your neighborhood council and attend a neighborhood council meeting to discuss your project, recruit potential volunteers and build your park friends membership; send social media messages out; utilize free community calendar event listings; and ask to hang posters in local community centers/businesses and the park (your liaison can guide you on how/what to avoid when posting signs in the park, i.e. no stakes in the ground or nails in trees). Also ask your Parks liaison to help spread the word via Parks & Recreation channels.
- Send a reminder email the day before the event to potential volunteers

The day of the event

- Have a welcome station where people can be greeted and sign in. Please have volunteers sign in, and use the Volunteer Waiver form your staff liaison provides.
- Once everyone has arrived, overview the project and assign work groups. Let them know the safety protocols, and what to do when they're done with their tasks. Provide information about how to handle drug paraphernalia or other potentially hazardous material.
- Distribute vests, pick up tools, and garbage bags.
- Take some great pictures to post on your social media channels or website. This is a great way to recruit new members!
- Discuss how to engage others in the park by giving information on your task and inviting them to join next time.
- Once the work is completed or the time has ended, ensure equipment borrowed is returned.
- Thank volunteers for their hard work, and invite them to join you for future projects.

After the event

- Send a thank you email to your volunteers, and let them know how much was accomplished – the number of trash bags filled, for example. Link to your social media channels and invite them to follow you or learn more on your website. The more people feel appreciated and that their time had value, the more likely they are to participate again.
- Work with your liaison on any follow-up needed by Parks staff after your event, such as pile pickup.
- Send your Volunteer Sign-In Sheet and Volunteer Waivers to your Parks staff liaison or volunteer coordinator.

Additional events to consider:

- Block party
- Movie night
- Concert
- Educational series about nature, gardening tips, the history of the area, etc.
- Future Adopt a Park or Park Friends meetings in the park to keep members connected
- Arts and craft fair (start small and work up to larger fairs once the event is established)
- Sponsor a Trunk-or-Treat around the park
- **What else?**

Permitting your event:

A permit will be required for your event (they are often no-cost, but some activities do trigger a fee). Please work with your Park staff liaison and the Park Reservations team. The permit will also review rules around event insurance, alcohol, large-scale food service, etc.

If your event requires event insurance, and you do not have any, you might consider reaching out to the Spokane Parks Foundation to see if they can provide options to support your event in this way.

<https://spokaneparksfoundation.org/contact/>

Here are some City of Spokane Parks & Recreation helpful contacts and links for events:

Website for reservation information

<https://my.spokanecity.org/parksrec/reservations/>

Direct link to the online reservation request form

<https://spokanecity.wufoo.com/forms/se49jyg0g41g5o/>

Email address for reserving a park space

parkopsreservations@spokanecity.org

Phone number

Dial 311 or [509.363.5455](tel:509.363.5455)

The First Year: Growing a Park Friends group

Some of this information may also be helpful for Adopt a Park groups

In the first year, as you transition to fundraising and vision-setting projects, it will be important to keep your newly-forming group focused on creating and building a shared vision, setting attainable goals, and working together to accomplish small projects! This will build momentum and community support.

Here are a few strategies and ideas we've found helpful for growing your Adopt a Park group.

Building your membership & engaging your neighborhood

- Create an email address. Creating a Friends of ___ Park@gmail.com or similar will create consistency and allow multiple people to monitor/respond to the inquiries.
- Create a website; explore other Friends Group websites and inquire about how the site was created and how it is updated
- Create social media pages; start with only two admins for the page to better control content. This is a good role for volunteers with experience in admin roles on other pages.
- Add a google phone number to your social media and other materials. Keep updating messages to reflect new happenings.
- Like, share, and comment on related neighborhood social media pages
- Connect with your [neighborhood council](#) by getting on the agenda and presenting your ideas at a meeting.
- Place banners or signs around the park inviting people to learn more about and join your group (just make sure to check in with your staff liaison about how to post signs – we have rules around stakes in the ground and no nails in trees).
- Ask to hang posters in your local business shop windows.
- Work with your staff liaison to ask how Parks can promote your new group or event. We can often post on our social media channels, issue a press release, etc.
- Keep a list of volunteers and their contact information, so you can reach out to them with new opportunities.
- Keep in communication with your liaison for updates on other groups who have expressed interest in the park (e.g. pickleball, basketball, etc.)

How to build partnerships:

- Start with local businesses, schools, religious institutions, community centers, etc.
- Maybe the grocery store donates candy for your Halloween event in the park, or kids from the high

school do a park clean-up to as part of a class project.

- Learn about your partners' interests and priorities, and find ways that your Park Friends group might align for mutual benefit.
- Build relationships with your Neighborhood Council, and participate in the Park Board's Citizen Advisory Committee. Attend your neighborhood(s) council meetings regularly and ask to give updates on your groups.

How to track volunteers:

- Free or low-cost software options – **what do people recommend?**

How to explore a physical improvement project:

If you have a physical improvement project you'd like to see done in your park, let's talk! Connect with your Park liaison. We'll explore how the project might align with our overall Parks & Recreation Master Plan. If the project meets mutual goals, we might be able to leverage some matching funds or grant dollars to accomplish more together. We have some great examples of projects done in partnership with Park Friends groups.

How to fundraise:

Fundraising can be important to helping you achieve your mission, whether it's supporting maintenance, hosting community events, or physical improvement projects.

When you approach a potential funder, you'll want to have a specific project in mind, an idea of what you'd like them to consider donating, and what you can offer in return. It's wise to have the plan in writing, so you can leave it with them to consider. You might have a single page that outlines the event, and different sponsorship levels and what benefits each level comes with (signage at the event, a free booth space, etc.). **(Example to share?)**

Consider asking individuals you know who might be willing to donate any amount, and don't be afraid to start small. Community institutions and local businesses benefit from a park that is clean, healthy, and vibrant, and they may be interested in providing in-kind supplies or some funding to support your work. You can also host a fundraising event. Consider establishing a membership fee and alternate volunteer time for membership. You may also explore having a Square device for payment, or developing a QR code and attaching it to a short membership form and payment.

We all know how important it is to say "thank you" to our donors, supporters, and volunteers, and showing your appreciation will go a long way in building a strong relationship.

Grants are another avenue to explore. **What's a good resource to find them (www.grants.gov, others?)?** If you've found one of interest, work with your Park liaison to ensure the project is do-able and to see if there might be a way to leverage the grant with other matching funds or letters of support.

Consider opening a checking and savings account, and when you reach \$10,000 consider establishing an endowment fund. One source for establishing this fund that some Park Friends groups have used is Innovia (www.innovia.org, 509.624.2606).

Good things can take time

We so appreciate your interest and time dedicated to working with us; together, we can do so much more.

Thank you. There are often many steps we have to go through as a Government agency, and we appreciate your patience as we navigate things. It might seem like extra steps or time, but we do our best to be efficient while also ensuring we follow required processes, serve as trustworthy stewards of Parks & Recreation resources, and balance competing priorities for deserving projects. It might take time, but when these great partnerships happen, the outcomes are incredible.

Thank you

Thank you for your interest in starting, joining, or growing an Adopt a Park or Park Friends group. We hope that you have found this information helpful, and we are always available for questions. As our programs grow and evolve, we will update and revise this toolkit, and we welcome your feedback.

City of Spokane Parks & Recreation
808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
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