



**City of Spokane Park Board
Recreation Committee Meeting**

2:15 p.m. Wednesday, Apr. 01, 2026
Hybrid in-person and WebEx teleconference meeting
Jennifer Papich – Recreation Director

Committee members

X Sally Lodato – Chair
X Greta Gilman
X Doug Kelley
X Lee Williams

Parks staff

Jennifer Papich
Al Vorderbrueggen
Rich Lentz
Ryan Griffith
Fianna Dickson
Kris Behr

Guests

Holly Moatt
Steve Yunk
Denise Fanazick
Claudia Ouwerkerk
Liz Claiborne
Rachel Moore
Kim Ferraro
Owen Esperas
Harlan Henderson
Freda Gandy
Mike Clinesmith

SUMMARY

- The committee passed the following action items which will be presented to the Park Board for consideration and approval:
 - Approval of Spokane Youth and Senior Center Association Grant Funding Application RFP results and funding allocations for 2027/2028 for the total amount of \$628,914.00 – consent agenda item
- Jennifer Papich presented the first quarter recreation report.

The next regularly scheduled Recreation Committee meeting is set for 2:15 p.m. Wed. May 06, 2026.

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 2:22 p.m. by committee chair Sally Lodato.

Action items:

1. [Approval of Spokane Youth and Senior Center Association Grant Funding Application RFP results and funding allocations for 2027/2028 for the total amount of \\$638,578.00](#) – Jennifer Papich
 - a. Historically, the City of Spokane provides parks fund financial support to the 9 Spokane Youth and Senior Center Association (SYSCA) centers. The centers deliver recreation programs, social connections and community services throughout a variety of neighborhoods. The funding for the centers has remained consistent and has not been reviewed since 2013.
 - b. In December 2024, the Southwest Community Center closed, resulting in an undesignated balance of \$39,947 which opened the door to revisit the funding model. Moving forward, the Recreation Committee and staff wanted to ensure the process was intentional, transparent, fair, equitable and data driven. The main goal was to align the evaluation process, so all SYSCA Centers are evaluated on the same criteria regarding their recreational programming.
 - c. A Funding Model Review Committee was established in March of 2025. After over 9 months of arduous discussion and planning, and two discussion items at recreation committee to gather input and feedback an application was finalized in December of 2025. Each SYSCA applicant (center representative) was required to attend a training webinar this past January and all applications were due February 20th. A separate Scoring Committee was also given training on the application and were given 3 weeks to independently analyze and score each application based on specific measured categories.
 - d. The funding model consists of a baseline plus application score. Every SYSCA member submitting a complete application was guaranteed 80% of the [current year funding](#), which is their baseline. Added to this amount is their score. The total grant amount available is \$638,578. After the 80% baseline award, \$159,673 remains to be allocated based on grant ranking (score), which is the 20% plus the \$39,947 of undesignated funds. The remaining \$159,673 was distributed proportionally based on grant application scores. Centers were ranked 1–9, assigned points on a 9-point scale (highest score = 9 points, lowest = 1), and each center's share was calculated by dividing its points by the total points (45).
 - e. Once this action item is approved by the Park Board on April 9th, each center will receive an award letter with ranking, detailed scores and the [2027/2028 distribution amount](#). Moving forward, every two years, this same type of funding model will be used to determine SYSCA funding grant awards.

Public Comments and Action Item Questions:

1. Mike Clinesmith wanted clarification how the 80% baseline was determined. Al Vorderbrueggen explained this was very thoroughly discussed and determined anything more than a 20% drop in the budget would be challenging. Moving forward, the 80% baseline will be to be determined.
2. Denise Fanazick asked if the funding amount follows the number of participants each center provides services for. Jennifer Papich explained the funding followed the activities, but not the participation amount. She explained that the amount of people being served at the center is not part of the scoring criteria, as this grant is strictly related to recreational programming. Al explained that it is not justifiable to track participation numbers as it can be easily skewed and is a Parks and Recreation industry standard. Participation counts are more used to measure program trends to evaluate offerings and adapt based on programs that are successful. The awards are granted, both historically and today, based on recreational programs being provided and their impact on the neighboring community. Denise further questioned why taxpayer funding is going strictly to recreation. Sally explained that these funds come out of the Recreation Department Budget of Parks and Recreation and according to the mission statement, the monies are to be used strictly for recreational purposes. She further explained that even during extremely lean years, this reserve has been protected and the allocations have never decreased. The Park Board and the Recreation Committee values SYSCA and the work they do in the community.

Motion #1 – Sally Lodato moved to recommend Spokane Youth and Senior Center Association Grant Funding Application RFP results and funding allocations for 2027/2028 for the total amount of \$638,578.00

Doug Kelley seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0 vote).

The committee agreed to present this recommendation as a consent agenda item on the Apr. 9th Park Board meeting agenda.

Standing Reports:

[Recreation Report](#) – Jennifer Papich

Jennifer presented the first quarter numbers. Out of the 266 Recreation Winter Quarter programs that were offered 205 were a go, even with the lack luster snow season. Of the 3,466 participants, 311 were newcomers to Spokane Parks and Recreation. Winter adult volleyball and flag football leagues finished off their season with 186 teams. Four scholarships were awarded totaling \$230. The Recreation Youth Scholarship Fund currently has a balance of \$917. All 143 donors received a thank you letter from the Spokane Parks Foundation.

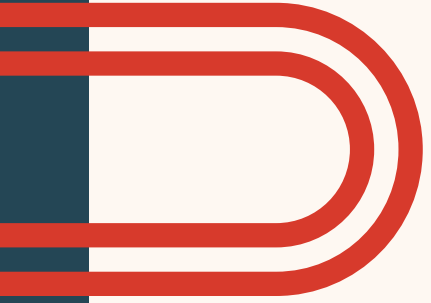
Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled Recreation Committee meeting is set for 2:15 p.m. Wed. May 06, 2026.

Spokane Park Board Briefing Paper



Committee	Recreation Committee		Committee meeting date: 4/1/2026
Requester	Jennifer Papich		Phone number: 509-363-5420
Type of agenda item	<input type="radio"/> Consent <input type="radio"/> Discussion <input type="radio"/> Information <input checked="" type="radio"/> Action		
Type of contract/agreement	<input checked="" type="radio"/> New <input type="radio"/> Renewal/ext. <input type="radio"/> Lease <input type="radio"/> Amendment/change order <input type="radio"/> Other		
City Clerks file (OPR or policy #)			
Master Plan Goal, Objective, Strategy (Click HERE for link to the adopted plan)	Goal G Objective 2	Master Plan Priority Tier: (pg. 171-175)	First Tier
Item title: (Use exact language noted on the agenda)	Spokane Youth and Senior Center Association Grant Funding Application RFP results and funding allocations for 2027/2028 for the total amount of \$638,578.00		
Begin/end dates	Begins: 01/01/2027	Ends: 12/31/2028	<input type="checkbox"/> 06/01/2525
Background/history: The funding model for Spokane Youth and Senior Center Association (SYSCA) centers has not been formally reviewed since 2013. Community center funding distribution has long been a sensitive and widely discussed topic—recognized as important to address, yet complex and challenging to navigate. As stewards of public funds, the City has a responsibility to ensure that funding decisions are transparent, equitable, and justifiable. In late 2024, the closure of Southwest Community Center resulted in an undesignated fund balance, creating a timely opportunity to revisit and evaluate the existing funding model. The purpose of this review was to establish a funding model that is fair, transparent, and data-driven; ensure consistency by aligning the evaluation process so all SYSCA centers are assessed using the same criteria; and clearly link funding allocations to the delivery and quality of recreation programming. To support this effort, a grant process was implemented. All SYSCA centers submitted complete and timely applications, which were evaluated and scored. Funding for the 2027–2028 budget was then allocated using a Baseline plus Application Scoring model. We will present the data-driven methodology used to determine the funding allocations.			
Motion wording: I move to approve the Spokane Youth and Senior Center Association Grant Funding Application RFP results and funding allocations as presented for 2027/2028 for the total amount of \$638,578.00			
Approvals/signatures outside Parks: <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No If so, who/what department, agency or company: Name: _____ Email address: _____ Phone: _____			
Distribution: Parks – Accounting Parks – Sarah Deatrich Requester: Grant Management Department/Name:			
Fiscal impact: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Expenditure <input type="radio"/> Revenue Amount: \$628,914.00 Budget code:			
Vendor: <input type="radio"/> Existing vendor <input type="radio"/> New vendor Supporting documents: <input type="checkbox"/> Quotes/solicitation (RFP, RFQ, RFB) <input type="checkbox"/> Business license Expiration date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance Certificate			



**2027/2028
SPOKANE YOUTH
& SENIOR CENTER
GRANT AWARDS**

SYSCA CENTERS

THE WHY

THE GOALS

THE PROCESS

Timeline, application creation, training, and scoring

FUNDING MODEL

2027/2028 FUNDING RESULTS

For Park Board Approval

The City of Spokane provides Parks Fund financial support to **nine (9) Senior and Youth Community Centers** that deliver recreation programs, social connection, and community services throughout Spokane neighborhoods.

- **Corbin Senior Center**
- **Hillyard Senior Center**
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Center**
- **Mid City Concerns**
- **Northeast Youth Center**
- **Project Joy**
- **Sinto Senior Center**
- **Southside Senior and Community Center**
- **West Central Community Center**



THE WHY

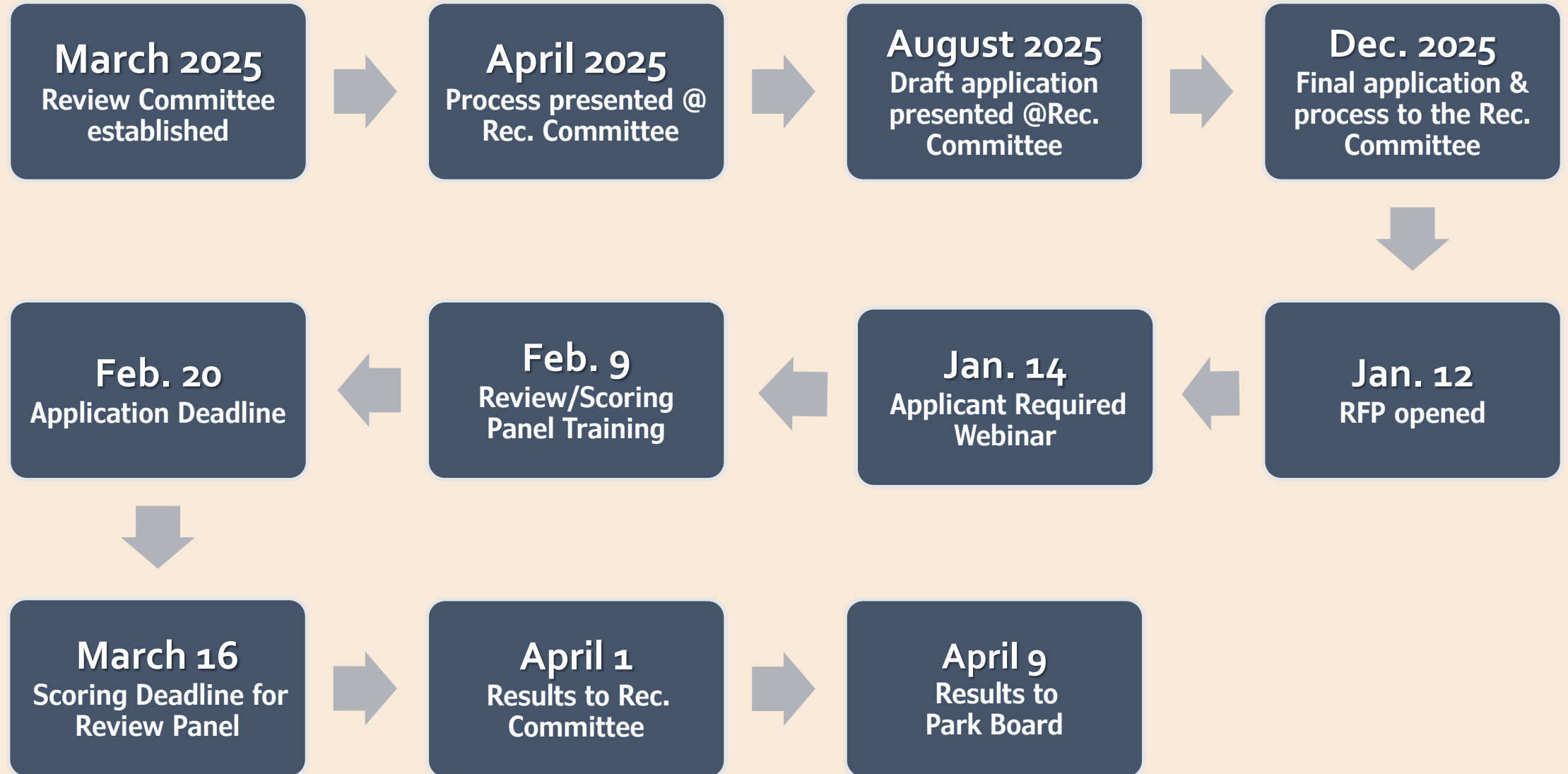
- The funding model for the Spokane Youth and Senior Center Association Centers (**SYSCA**) has not been reviewed since 2013.
- Community Center funding distribution has long been a sensitive and widely discussed topic, recognized as important to address, though complex and challenging to navigate.
- As stewards of public funds, decisions must remain transparent, equitable, and justifiable.
- At the end of 2024, when Southwest Community Center closed, it resulted in an undesignated fund balance of \$39,947.
- Perfect opportunity to revisit the funding model.



THE GOALS

- Establish a new funding model process that is fair, transparent, and data-driven.
- **Align the evaluation process so all SYSCA Centers are evaluated on the same criteria regarding their Recreation Programming.**
- Ensure that funding is clearly linked to recreation programming

THE PROCESS





THE FUNDING MODEL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Jennifer Papich

Recreation Director

Al Vorderbrueggen

Park Operations Director

Sarah Clements-Sampson

Community & Family Engagement Manager

Jerry Unruh

Retired Hillyard Senior Center Director

Sally Lodato

Recreation Committee Chair

**THE REVIEW
COMMITTEE**



SYSCA COMMUNICATION

JAN. 2025: SYSCA Email of upcoming funding review.

APRIL 2025: SYSCA invite to Rec. Committee when discussing the SYSCA Funding Review

AUGUST 2025: SYSCA invite to Rec. Committee when discussing the draft funding grant application.

DEC. 2025: SYSCA invite to Rec. Committee when discussing Final funding grant application.

JAN. 2026: Grant Open – Sent to all Centers, Held a required grant applicant informational virtual meeting

FEB. 20, 2026: Grant Application Deadline



**THE SCORING
COMMITTEE**

Al Vorderbrueggen

Park Operations Director

Ryan Griffith

Assistant Recreation Director

Sally Lodato

Park Board Member

Bob Anderson

Park Board President

Lindsey Shaw

Park Board Member

Stephanie Splater

Executive Director of Athletics/Activities For SPS

Jennifer Hansen/Josh Pierce

Community Health Program Manager at SRHD



THE SCORING COMMITTEE

Scoring committee members attended a virtual interactive training, which covered:

- The full grant application
- Overview of each application section in detail.
- Best practices for fair and ethical scoring.

They were given 3 weeks to independently review and score the 9 applications.

GRANT APPLICATION SCORED CATEGORIES

- **COMMUNITY NEED - 30 PTS.**

Explain the challenges, gaps, or opportunities your recreation programs address, supported by data and examples.

- **QUALITY – 25 PTS.**

How are you engaging, inclusive, safe, and aligned with best practices.

- **EQUITY – 15PTS.**

How are your recreation programs reduce participation barriers and serve underserved populations.

- **FINANCIAL CAPACITY 10 PTS.**

Detail ability to manage grant funds responsibly and sustain programming.

- **FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY 10 PTS.**

Outline systems for responsible fund management, including budget preparation, expense tracking, and report reviews to prevent errors, waste, or fraud.

- **LASTING IMPACT – 10PTS.**

Outline plans to sustain or expand the recreation program after the grant period. Describe how activities will be tracked and outcomes measured.

This model balances stability with progress. It maintains critical services today while creating a clear, measurable path forward.

Funding Model Objectives

- **Equitable** by preserving baseline support
- **Data-driven**, by tying a portion of funds to application scores
- **Transparent and defensible**, with a clear methodology for distribution

BASELINE + APPLICATION SCORING MODEL

Total Available Funds \$638,578

(\$598,631 in current funding + \$39,947 of undesignated funds.)

BASELINE FUNDING: All SYSCA members who submitted a complete application were guaranteed **80% of the prior year's funding.**

\$478,905 = Total Allocated Baseline Funding

APPLICATION SCORING: The remaining available funds were allocated based on grant scoring results using a **score-based ranking system.**

\$159,673 = Total Funds Allocated Based on the Grant Rankings.

(\$119,726 (20%) plus the \$39,947 in undesignated funds).

THE FUNDING MODEL

2027/2028 SYSCA BASELINE FUNDING

SYSCA Centers	2026 Current Funding	80% Base Line
Northeast Youth Center	\$139,538	\$111,630
Southside Com. & Sr. Center	\$106,563	\$85,250
Hillyard Senior Center	\$80,000	\$64,000
Sinto Senior Center	\$77,210	\$61,768
West Central Com. Center	\$72,675	\$58,140
MLK Center	\$41,800	\$33,440
Corbin Senior Center	\$31,350	\$25,080
Project Joy	\$30,970	\$24,776
Mid City Concerns	\$18,525	\$14,820
	\$598,631	\$478,905

80% Baseline ranges from
\$14,820 to \$111,630.

Centers are entering this from
very different funding levels

SCORE-BASED RANKING SYSTEM

A proportional distribution method was used to allocate the remaining **\$159,673** funds based on application scores.

- Centers were ranked 1-9 from highest to lowest grant score and assigned points on a 9-point scale.

(with 9 points awarded to the highest-scoring center, 8 to the next, and so on)

- The total points across all centers equal 45.

($9 + 8 + 7 + 6 + 5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 45\text{pts.}$)

- Each center's share of the **\$159,673** was calculated by dividing its points by the total points.

EXAMPLE:

The highest-scoring center received 9 points.

$$9 \div 45 = 20\%$$

$$20\% \text{ of } \$159,673 = \$31,935$$

This means the highest scoring center receives **20%** of the remaining funding pool (**\$159,673**), resulting in an allocation of **\$31,935** which was then added to their **80% baseline funding** amount.

- For fairness, tied scores received equal percentages.

2027/2028 SYSCA APPLICATION SCORING RESULTS

SYSCA Centers	Grant Rank	Calculation	% Distribution of \$156,256	Distribution Amount
Northeast Youth Center	1	9/45	20.00%	\$31,935
Hillyard Senior Center	2	8/45	17.78%	\$28,386
Southside Com. & Sr. Center	3	7/45	15.56%	\$24,838
Corbin Senior Center	4	6/45	13.33%	\$21,290
MLK Center	5	4.5/45	10.00%	\$15,967
West Central Com. Center	5	4.5/45	10.00%	\$15,967
Mid City Concerns	7	3/45	6.67%	\$10,645
Sinto Senior Center	8	2/45	4.44%	\$7,097
Project Joy	9	1/45	2.22%	\$3,548
			100.00%	\$156,256

2027/2028 SYSCA Grant Funding Results

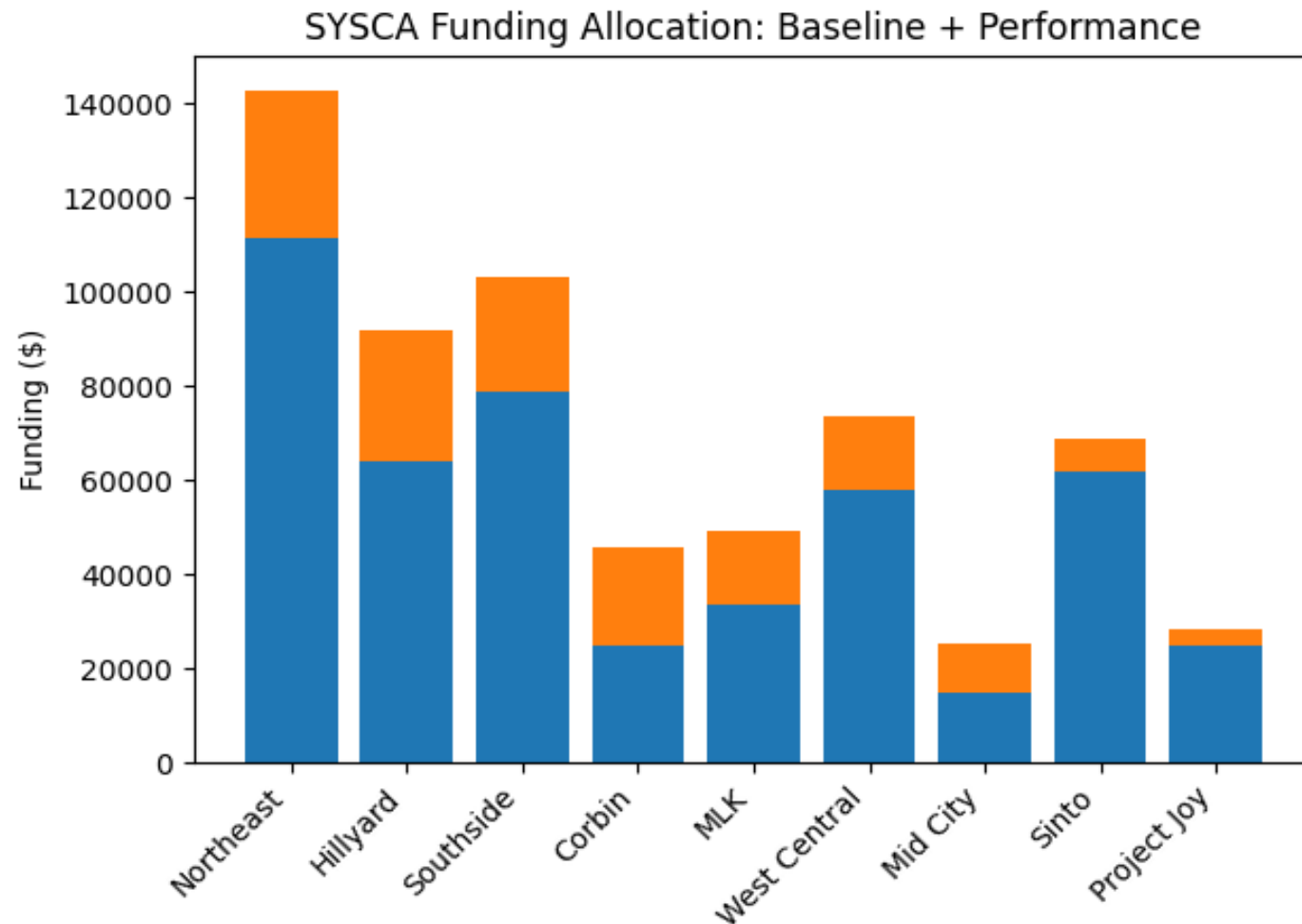
SYSCA Centers	Grant Rank	% Distribution of \$159,673	Distribution Amount	+	80% Base Line	=	2027/2028 Funding
Northeast Youth Center	1	20.00%	\$31,935		\$111,630		\$143,565
Hillyard Senior Center	2	17.78%	\$28,386		\$64,000		\$92,386
Southside Com. & Sr. Center	3	15.56%	\$24,838		\$85,250		\$110,088
Corbin Senior Center	4	13.33%	\$21,290		\$25,080		\$46,370
MLK Center	5	10.00%	\$15,967		\$33,440		\$49,407
West Central Com. Center	5	10.00%	\$15,967		\$58,140		\$74,107
Mid City Concerns	7	6.67%	\$10,645		\$14,820		\$25,465
Sinto Senior Center	8	4.44%	\$7,097		\$61,768		\$68,865
Project Joy	9	2.22%	\$3,548		\$24,776		\$28,324
		100.00%	\$159,673		\$478,905		\$ 638,578

Funding changes reflect BOTH 80% of past funding levels and grant performance - not grant scores alone

Due to the wide range in starting points, the final funding changes can appear uneven at first glance.

Centers with higher historical funding already have a larger base, making any increase look smaller, while lower-funded centers have more room to grow.

What may look inconsistent is the result of applying the same formula across all centers.



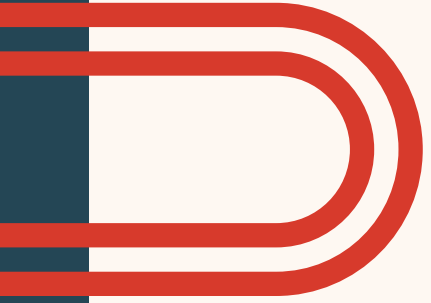
Funding changes reflect BOTH 80% of past funding levels and grant performance - not grant scores alone

SYSCA Centers	2026 Current Funding	2027/2028 Funding	Change
Northeast Youth Center	\$139,538	\$143,565	\$4,027
Hillyard Senior Center	\$80,000	\$92,386	\$12,386
Southside Com. & Sr. Center	\$106,563	\$110,088	\$3,525
Corbin Senior Center	\$31,350	\$46,370	\$15,020
MLK Center	\$41,800	\$49,407	\$7,607
West Central Com. Center	\$72,675	\$74,107	\$1,432
Mid City Concerns	\$18,525	\$25,465	\$6,940
Sinto Senior Center	\$77,210	\$68,865	-\$8,345
Project Joy	\$30,970	\$28,324	-\$2,646
	\$598,631	\$ 638,578	

While NEYC received the largest performance allocation of \$31,935, its overall increase appears smaller because of their high starting baseline

Sinto and Project Joy will see a decrease from current funding; however, both remain above the 80% baseline.

All Centers will have the opportunity for the 2029/2030 funding cycle to strengthen their application, potentially improve their score, and influence future funding levels.



Public Comment?

**Park Board
Questions?**



Proposed Motion:

To approve the Spokane Youth and Senior Center Association Grant Funding Application RFP results and funding allocations as presented for 2027/2028 budget cycle for the total amount of \$638,578.00

Next Steps:

Pending Park Board approval on April 9th.

Centers will receive formal notification of 2027/2028 funding.



205 out of 266 Programs offered were a go!!

3,466 Participants with 311 of them being 1st timers

We had 186 Athletic Teams Participate in Winter Adult Volleyball and Flag Football Leagues

Awarded 4 Scholarships for a total of \$230

143 people donated a total of \$917 to our Recreation Youth Program Scholarship fund

