



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

3 p.m. Tuesday, September 3, 2024  
Hybrid in-person and WebEx virtual meeting  
Katie Kosanke - Urban Forester

**Committee Members:**

- Kris Neely – Chair (Absent – Excused)
- X Tim Kohlhauff
- X Beth LaBar
- X Guy Gifford
- X Toni Sharkey
- X Cindy Deffe (Joined at 3:12 p.m.)
- X Joe Zubaly
- Matt Stewart – (Absent – Excused)
- Justyce Brant – (Absent – Excused)
- X Ben Kappen
- Paul Lower – (Absent – Excused)

**Parks Staff:**

Katie Kosanke  
Amber Ramirez  
Karin Cook

**Guests:**

**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 3:09 p.m. by committee member Tim Kohlhauff.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from April 2024, June 2024, and August 2024 were approved.

**Discussion Items:**

1. Ceremonies, Appointments, Announcements

- **Logan Callen Letter of Interest** – Logan Callen with the City of Spokane Environmental Programs Department submitted a letter of interest to be considered for appointment to the committee, to fill the city representative position. The committee members previously reviewed his letter of interest.

Cindy Deffe made a motion to appoint Logan to the city representative position. Guy Gifford seconded the motion. A vote was taken to appoint Logan Callen to the city representative position and passed unanimously 7-0.

**Public Comments:**

- None.

**Standing Report Items:**

1. Community Assembly – No report.
2. Staff Report - Katie Kosanke
  - a. Urban Forestry has several quality seasonals assisting the crew with a great deal of work. Alex Avery, one of the seasonals, has National Park experience, chain saw experience, lots of additional qualifications and certificates and has been fantastic for the crew.
  - b. Dead tree removals have continued throughout the summer season. Most removals are generally done over the winter and the rest are saved for the next season, but we have been removing them as we can. There has been an increase in removals due to beetle issues at Manito, Comstock, Audubon and Coeur d'Alene Park.
  - c. Reactive pruning tasks and routine clearance pruning are being completed throughout the park system.
  - d. Fall planting season is quickly approaching and many new and replacement trees will be planted throughout the parks.
  - e. The Parks Department has recently taken on a pilot program to help with the maintenance of general right-of-way areas that were previously taken care of by another department. There are a high number of dead trees and Urban Forestry is working with them to help resolve irrigation and maintenance issues before the trees are replaced.
  - f. Lars Erpenbach and Amber Ramirez will be working with the Indian Trail Library on Saturday September 21st for a tree planting demonstration as part of activities in conjunction with a pollinator project. The library had a read for trees program through the Susie Forest where kids read books for votes, then vote for their favorite tree and the winning tree will be planted in the courtyard. The week leading up to the event quite a few plantings will take place prior.
  - g. Planning has begun for the Fall Fest which will take place on Saturday October 19th. The date was moved up one week this year and we are hoping for better weather.
  - h. The iconic willow tree at Finch Arboretum cracked during the spring and was fenced off. One side of the willow tree has now failed. A survey is out asking the community what we should do with the area around the willow. Hundreds of responses have been received. Some ideas are a nature-based playground incorporating elements of the tree, an outdoor classroom, or events space. Many people have fond memories of the tree and are glad we are asking for input on what should be done with the area. Beth LaBar who is on the Citizen Advisory Committee was asked if she would be interested in creating a photo wall or art piece in the lobby at the arboretum where people can come and place their photos. In addition, it was discussed to view digitally uploaded photos. Urban Forestry is working on getting a high volume of cuttings off the tree to be potted up for future plantings. The Conservation District has some interns we may be able to utilize to assist with potting up and growing the cuttings. Many people have expressed interest in getting a cutting.
  - i. Several workshops will be taking place at the Finch Arboretum. On September 14th Michael Urlacher will be conducting a workshop called Intro to Tree Identification. A second workshop will be Engage in SpoCanopy, which aims at getting people interested in helping with planting efforts over the next five years as part of the large grant project.
  - j. A newsletter from the Finch Arboretum will be distributed twice a year digitally. It will feature trees and wildlife and will highlight projects going on and recognize volunteer groups efforts.

- k. Another round of planting is planned for fall at Comstock Park. Several plantings have already been done but more trees are needed as the park was hit hard with the past windstorms and many replacements are needed.
- l. SpoCanopy Planting will take place on Friday October 18th.
- m. Staff has been invited to the Climate Technical Advisory Committee of the City. If anyone is interested, they are in the initial stages and have a draft online under climate planning.

Joe Zubaly asked if anything was being done with the Willow before the Fall Leaf Festival. Katie advised she is not sure, but it might be the final sendoff/retirement party for it. Also, possibly the results of the survey may be announced at the Fall Leaf Festival.

## **Old Business:**

### **1. IRA Grant Update – Amber Ramirez**

Amber Ramirez gave an updated on the USDA/USFS IRA grant project. She reviewed the grant application process, our application proposal, and the boundaries determined by the federal government and the criteria for the areas within the boundaries where the work must be completed.

She went over the grant award advising the City of Spokane was awarded 6 million dollars and was one of only 15 awards within Washington State. The grant period will be over 5 years with a \$0 match. The Spokane County Conservation District was also awarded 6 million dollars and their program will also benefit the City of Spokane for tree planting support and intern work groups will likely assist with planting projects and minor maintenance projects. They will also be purchasing and storing a high volume of trees for the City of Spokane.

She went over the original proposal amount (\$24,798,019) and the scaled back proposal amount (\$6,000,000) and the original and revised numbers for pruning, removals, and plantings. She advised the revised removal number of 1,115 trees has been updated to 433 after field inspections, but additional trees may added after the first round of removals are completed. The lower number of trees for removal is due to many of the trees no longer being there.

A progress update was provided. Amber was hired in April 2024. Removals will be completed first, and all 15 neighborhoods in the CEJST have been vetted for dead and very poor condition trees. Detailed Tree Scopes of Work have been created for hired contractors to ensure grant funds go as far as possible. Pre-bid meetings for three scopes of work (planting, pruning and removals) took place on Friday September 6th, with bids being due by September 16. A website for the grant project will provide timelines for neighborhood work, neighborhood maps, FAQ's and more. Truck magnets will be provided to contractors to display while working under the grant to recognize the project and the funding source.

Two to three contractors will be chosen for each category (planting, pruning and removals) and work will be given to the contractors fairly based on how quickly they are completing neighborhood packages. Removal notices for street trees will be mailed out 30 days or more in advance to properties to let them know we will be working at their location. Planting projects and Tree Scopes of Work will be created for maintenance, park and street tree work and contracts with tree services will be established. Neighborhood Councils will also be communicated with.

Tree removals are projected to start in fall 2024 as soon as the contracts with the tree services are ready. Removal packages will be given to the contractors by neighborhood, and they may receive

packages for several neighborhoods at a time depending on volume of tree work in each. Coordination is being done with the Spokane Conservation District (SCD) to have the contractors doing removal work to bring 30-40 logs to the SCD for their Urban Wood Network program, with the possibility of more being brought in the future. Wood chips will also be taken to the SCD.

Tree Plotter Software, sponsored by Avista, was used to determine where to start removals and prepare for planting based on canopy data and census data.

Planting for year one will start this fall if the contracts are ready in time for fall planting. It is planned for contractors to plant 250 or more trees each fall and spring. Five species of trees have been chosen already for the fall planting.

The Lands Council will provide education and outreach services, determine locations for trees to be planted and obtain commitments to care for the trees from the property owners. One volunteer planting project will be held each spring and fall, with around 15 trees planted each season. Free tree sign-up will continue to be through SpoCanopy and there will also be a link on the City's grant website in the near future.

Urban Forestry will be working with the Downtown Spokane Partnership to offer replacement trees in the Riverside neighborhood and will form a separate project for downtown.

Pruning will take place in years two through five with the focus being on major issues and formative pruning. Two to three contractors are expected to be chosen and the pruning tasks will be packaged by neighborhood typically. Loads of wood chips resulting from the pruning can be taken to the SCD for their Urban Wood Network until they reach capacity.

Katie advised the Tree Plotter Software has powerful canopy tools and was greatly beneficial in making informative decisions on where to start the work.

Joe Zubaly asked who will be monitoring the trees after they are planted. Amber advised it will be the Lands Council and the property owners who commit to providing care for the trees, especially watering during establishment

Joe inquired as to how the pre-bid meeting was advertised. Amber advised it was sent to all vendors on the city licensed list and Katie advised it was also sent to the entire Washington MRSC Roster and that it was sent out by the City's purchasing department.

Ben Kappen inquired if the Tree Plotter software is only specific to boundaries within the city. Katie advised yes, but that it is web based so she believes any other city that utilizes the same technology would have the information available.

A question related to plantings downtown was asked. Katie advised the downtown IRA grant program has not been determined yet. Currently, the program is offering replacement trees to downtown property owners, with a cap on the number per parcel and cap of six per property owner. This program is separate from the other planting projects. Additional discussion will take place with DSP regarding additional opportunities downtown as projects in the past have not been successful with the city solely involved. Due to complexities downtown, it is of utmost importance for abutting property owners to be highly involved.

Amber advised there will be educational information provided to those who sign up for trees. There will be a five-to-ten-minute video required to view prior to signing up for a tree. We are also researching a watering program that would utilize a simple bucket method and providing watering reminders to ensure survivability. Katie advised we are only planting trees where people sign up and commit to caring for the trees and are willing to water them during establishment and beyond. As part of the Education and Outreach program there will be a robust monitoring program in place and a small amount of funding for back up watering if needed.

Guy Gifford asked if only homeowners can receive a tree or if renters will also be eligible to receive a tree. Katie advised we want all people to have trees regardless of ownership, however by ordinance it is the abutting property owner who is responsible for the tree's care and maintenance. In the past we have allowed renters to sign up, however they must note they received permission from the property owner for the tree to be planted.

Toni Sharkey asked if gator watering bags are effective, if they work and if they are high maintenance. Katie advised the watering bags are a common watering method which has been considered for the program, however they have a higher cost and downsides to them such as not being able to determine if they are empty, and they can easily be taken. She said we are leaning toward using the bucket method, which is simple, inexpensive, and effective.

## **2. SpoCanopy Update – Katie Kosanke**

Katie provided a SpoCanopy update with much of the information provided by Justyce. She advised the contract with the Lands Council and tree contractors should be ready soon for work to start in the fall but there is a possibility they could be pushed to the spring if the contracts are not ready in time for fall planting. Two hundred and fifty trees or more are anticipated to be planted each spring and fall. The Lands Council already has an extensive waitlist established with locations which provides locations to start with. The species selected for the upcoming plantings are Emerald sunshine elm, Littleleaf linden, serviceberry, Kentucky coffee tree, and Honey locust. A volunteer planting will take place on Friday October 18, 2024. Justyce Bryant has invited others on the committee to volunteer and is working on securing additional funding for food trucks for the volunteer planting event. It is anticipated tree contractors will start planting projects in October. Katie advised help would be appreciated in finding locations to plant trees and requested committee members let people they know they can sign up on the SpoCanopy website for a free street tree.

## **3. Downtown Education Program Update – Katie Kosanke**

Katie advised the replacement tree program for downtown property owners will continue through the fall. Further discussion will take place for investments for the IRA grant for a program specific to downtown, to possibly assisting with items such as temporary watering, catching issues before it is too late and educating property owners on their responsibilities and where to find help if they're encountering a problem.

**New Business:** None

## **Other Program and Partnership Ideas: Willow Tree Photo Display – Beth LaBar**

Beth met with Katie to discuss how we might be able to commemorate the willow tree. Beth's idea is to have a photo display board inside the Woodland Center by where you enter with photos of people at the willow. It was also discussed using parts of the tree as display components, such as slices/cross sections of the tree to put their name or special message on. Beth would also like to see an online presence. She suggested in addition to the survey asking the community what they would like to see done with the area where the willow tree was to also include the community in providing ideas on how to use pieces from the tree. Beth is leaning toward a photo mosaic where you take a picture of the tree then it is made up of all the pictures of people around the tree. This would be a great way at the Fall Leaf Festival to encourage people to bring their photos, either physical photos or have a way for people to upload them. She also suggested a print of the trunk to show the rings. Beth asked for other committee members suggestions.

Joe Zubaly said there is discipline of art called photo sculpture. It is taking pictures and using the pictures to create the sculpture that was the tree. He said it is three dimensional and would take up more space than something two dimensional.

Guy Gifford said it may be a big challenge to get pictures and public participation and having more options to collect pictures at various events may be the best way. Joe suggested putting the older pictures at the bottom and newer pictures at the top. Katie advised she had given a news reporter information about the idea, and they put it on Facebook asking for photos to be submitted and within a few hours 30 or more family photos including the special willow tree were submitted.

Toni Sharkey also suggested a bench.

Katie advised the willow tree is 78 years old and was planted in 1946. The woman who planted it has passed away, but staff have been in contact with her daughters regarding changes with the tree. Her daughters are pleased to be included in the discussion related to community feedback. During World War II, the city leased the land for federal housing and there were barracks there. She planted one tree in her back yard and one in her front yard. The barracks were torn down, but this one tree survived. The area later became an arboretum.

Cindy Deffe said she would also like to see in addition to a play space for children a space created where the tree was, where people can still get married or take photos and still have a component of the tree and replicate what the area meant to people. Where people can get together to do photos. She suggested maybe some step areas with trees around them.

Guy suggested having a field trip in November or December to the Spokane Conservation District.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is 3 p.m. October 1, 2024.



April 3, 2024

Garret Jones  
Director of Parks and Recreation  
City of Spokane  
808 West Spokane Falls Blvd.  
Spokane, WA 99201

Dear Mr. Jones,

This letter is intended to showcase my interest in being appointed on the Urban Forestry Citizen Advisory Committee (UFCAC) as a representative from City departments.

Currently, I am an Environmental Analyst in the Environmental Programs Department at the City of Spokane. I manage the greenhouse gas reporting efforts for the City, and our City's trees are an important element in ways to reduce emissions. Prior to achieving my B.S. in Environmental Science and M.S. in Environmental Policy and Management, I attended Spokane Community College's Forestry program where I gained experience with our local tree species and forestry best practices.

In 2020, I also assisted Angel Spell in analyzing the iTree canopy coverage data that was later released in partnership with Gonzaga University. I have also attended a wide variety of tree planting events around the region since the early 2000s.

With climate adaptation and resiliency becoming a larger concern for our region, I would like to be part of the Urban Forestry Citizen Advisory Committee to help ensure our City is successful in achieving the PLANT ordinance goals.

Sincerely,

**Logan Callen, MSc (he/him)** | Environmental Analyst  
City of Spokane | Public Works | Environmental Programs  
509-625-6961 | [lcallen@spokanecity.org](mailto:lcallen@spokanecity.org) | [greenspokane.org](http://greenspokane.org)



# Inflation Reduction Act Update

## Urban and Community Forestry Grant

UF Committees September 3, 2024





# IRA Urban and Community Forestry Grant

## 1+ Billion in Nationwide Investments

- ▶ Applied June 1, 2023
  - ▶ Quick Application Period (announced in late April)
  - ▶ Our Application - Tree Equity Spokane
    - ▶ Proposed to plant trees, provide urgent needed maintenance + educational programs
      - ▶ Street trees, park trees, school property trees

Within the boundaries of the City of Spokane and on City properties. All tree planting and maintenance work must be performed in disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution and underinvestment, as identified on a Federal Map (GRANT REQUIREMENT)

- ▶ Letters of support from Mayor/Administration, various City Council members, Park Board, Various Committees, Public Lands Commissioner Hilary Franz & more

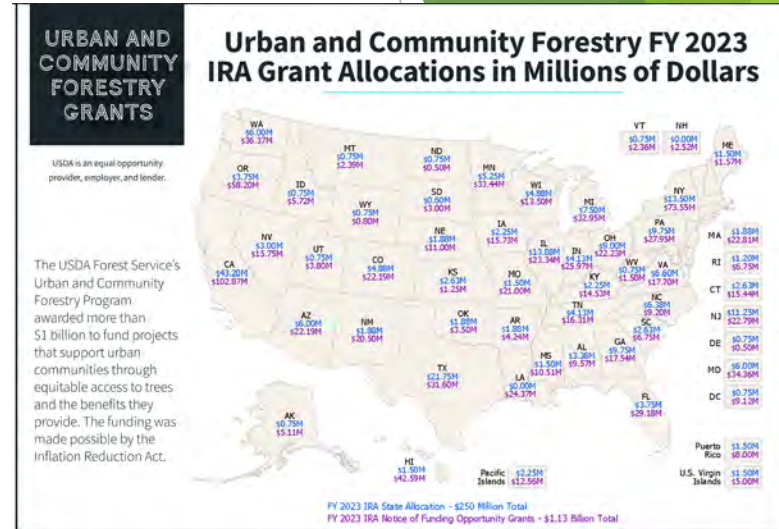


# IRA Urban and Community Forestry Grant

- ▶ Awards Announced September 14, 2023
  - ▶ City of Spokane Application - Tree Equity Spokane
    - ▶ Proposed to plant trees, provide maintenance + educational programs

City of Spokane Award  
\$6,000,000

- ▶ One of only 15 awards within Washington State
- ▶ Grant Period over 5 years / \$0 Match
- ▶ Spokane County Conservation Dist also awarded 6 Million
  - ▶ Their program will also benefit the City of Spokane for tree planting support, work groups likely will assist with planting and minor maintenance projects.



# Scaled Back Proposal

## Budget Overview:

▶ Original Requested Budget: \$24,798,019

Revised to: \$6,000,000 (Award Amount)

## Planting Overview:

▶ Originally requested: 1,000 trees per year and 3,000 seedlings per year

Revised to: 500 trees per year (250 each spring and fall) and 1,000 seedlings per year

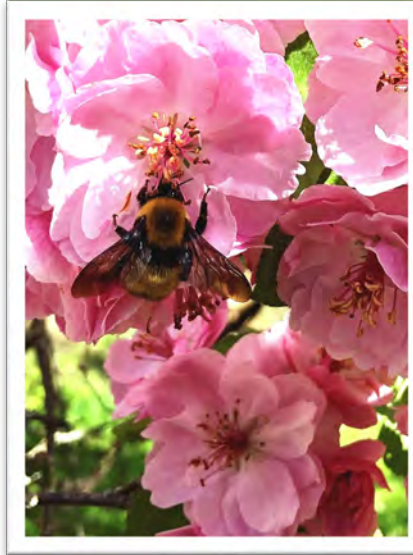
▶ SCCD to supply street trees with their IRA Grant

## Original numbers:

- 33,291 pruned
- 618 removed
- 20,000 planted
  - 5,000 street trees planted
  - 15,000 seedlings

## Revised to:

- **4,979 Pruned**
- **1,115 trees removed**
  - **UPDATED TO 433**
- **7,500 trees planted**
  - **2,500 street trees**
  - **5,000 seedlings**



# Progress Update

- ▶ Project Start Date: February 2024 to 2029
- ▶ Hired Urban Forester, Amber Ramirez
- ▶ Budget Coordination Completed with accounting/City Council for spending authority
  - ▶ SBO Complete (Parks Accounting, Rich Lentz)
- ▶ School Dist goals and priorities (on hold)
- ▶ All 15 neighborhoods vetted for dead and very poor trees- 433 currently
- ▶ Scopes of work created with detailed requirements for contractors ensuring that grant funds go as far as possible
- ▶ Bids due by September 16th
- ▶ Pre-Bid meeting for 3 scopes September 6th
- ▶ Website TreeEquity.org
  - ▶ Timelines for neighborhood work, acknowledgement, neighborhood maps, link to CEJST tool, FAQ's
- ▶ Truck magnets for contractors to display while working under grant



# Tree Maintenance

- ▶ 2-3 contractors expected to be chosen
- ▶ Removal notices sent certified mail or hand delivered 30 days in advance
- ▶ Outline planting projects and Create Scopes of Work for Maintenance - park and street tree work
- ▶ Establish On-call and/or multi-year contracts with tree services
- ▶ Communication with Neighborhood Councils, Postcard mailings, etc.



# Removals- Fall 2024

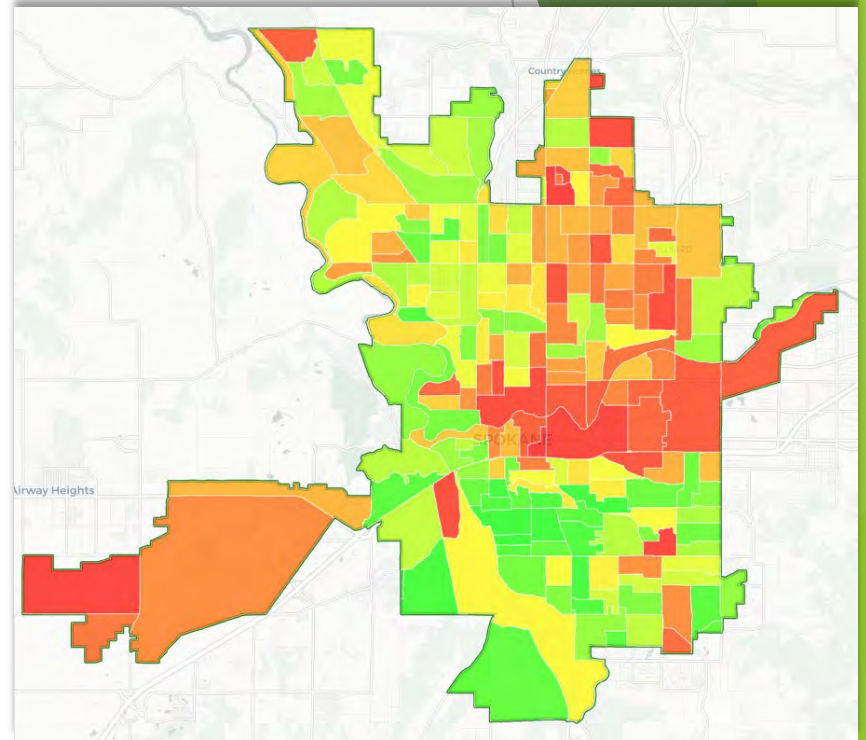
- 433 trees across 15 neighborhoods
  - 391 trees dead and very poor condition trees & 42 stumps
  - 2-3 contractors expected to be chosen
- Removals packaged for contractors by neighborhood
  - Several neighborhoods at a time possible depending on volume
  - 1-60 trees
  - Option in contracts to add additional trees/one offs later
- Additional very poor condition trees may be added
- 30-40 logs and loads of wood chips brought by contractors to Spokane Conservation District for Urban Wood Network
  - possibility for additional in the future



# Tree Plotter Software

Sponsored by Avista

- ▶ Used to determine where to start removals/prepare for planting
  - ▶ Low existing canopy
  - ▶ Low income
  - ▶ Population below poverty
  - ▶ Vulnerable population
  - ▶ Unemployment %



# Planting Year 1

- ▶ Coordinate trees (timing, species, etc) with SCD
  - ▶ SCD purchasing, storing and caring for project stock
  - ▶ 5 Confirmed species for fall
  - ▶ 2024 planting dependent on if contracts are ready
- ▶ 250 contractor planted each Fall and Spring planting season
- ▶ Contract for Education / Outreach, with the Lands Council
  - ▶ Focus on Education/Outreach/Determine locations for trees/Commitment to care
  - ▶ Monitoring / Temp Watering
- ▶ 1 volunteer planting project per Spring and Fall planting season-around 15 trees each
- ▶ Continue to receive free tree sign-ups through SpoCanopy & a link on TreeEquity.org website soon
  - ▶ Working with DSP to offer replacement trees in Riverside neighborhood that property owners can claim and have planted with certified and licensed city arborists





# Pruning Years 2-5

- One year out or earlier if removals go quickly-through the life of the grant
- 2-3 contractors expected to be chosen
- Packaged by neighborhood
- Major issues & formative pruning
  - Clearance
  - High risk items
  - Hangers
  - Dead wood
  - Mulching mature trees after pruning
- Resulting chip loads brought to SCD for Urban Wood Network



# Thank you!

Amber Ramirez  
Spokane Urban Forestry  
509-363-5499  
[aramirez@spokanecity.org](mailto:aramirez@spokanecity.org)

