



# Community Assembly

## Representative Handbook

Rev October 2022

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# Community Assembly

## Community Assembly Handbook

### Introduction

As part of the Community Assembly's (CA) self-challenge to improve and strengthen itself, the CA is working to better understand the relationship it has with the Neighborhood Councils (NC).

In 2015, a small group dedicated itself to actively strengthening that relationship. To do so, they conducted a survey and created a training from which this handbook was developed.

Nothing is static in life and Spokane neighborhoods are no exception. There are many new faces around the table, and that's exciting. It also means that there is little shared history, so a deep understanding of the richness and potential of the unique Neighborhood System that Spokane embedded into its charter may not be well understood.

This handbook is a resource for each Neighborhood Council and for each new CA representative. We all need to work together to create a Spokane that we will be proud to hand to our children.

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## A Brief History of the Community Assembly and Neighborhood Councils

The Community Assembly (CA) and the Neighborhood Councils (NC) grew out of two committees that did their work in the early 90s.

In 1993, *Vision Spokane* was formed with the charge to look at Spokane and make recommendations for actions that would assist the City of Spokane moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. One of the proposed actions was to form a "Citizen Council" to participate in policy discussions and decisions.

In 1994, Mayor Jack Geraghty established a second citizens group which was directed to develop a system that would provide neighborhoods with an avenue to communicate with the city government and have the ability to affect city actions related to neighborhoods. This group developed the organizational structure and the initial policies for the CA and the NCs. At this time, the only recognized neighborhoods were the eight Community Development (CD) neighborhoods that were based on income criteria established by the federal government, Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). This program was administered at the neighborhood level by Neighborhood Steering Committees. These committees made recommendations to allocate funds for sidewalks, home rehabilitation, and capital projects.

The original CD neighborhoods were: East Central, West Central, Logan, Nevada/Lidgerwood, Emerson-Garfield, Hillyard, North Hill and Cliff-Cannon. In 1995, Mayor Geraghty established the Office of Neighborhood Services (ONS). Geraghty was strongly supported by Councilwoman Phyllis Holmes and Councilwoman Beverly Numbers. Molly Myers was the first director of the new department. Rod Minarik was hired in 1996 as the Public Information Officer.

As the development of full policies and procedures for the CA was left to the members' discretion, a few neighborhood leaders and ONS staff began planning meetings. These meetings continued for several months as the Community Assembly (CA). Over time, new neighborhoods joined the CA, and the meetings eventually moved into the ONS office at City Hall. Over the next few years, a full Policies and Procedures document was created, and the number of official neighborhood organizations grew. All of the original Community Development neighborhoods became recognized as Neighborhood Councils, and sent representatives to the CA.

In 2000, some of the CA members became concerned that the Neighborhood Council program was subject to the discretion of the mayor. This concern gave rise to an effort to establish the NC program in the City Charter. A ballot measure was drafted and placed before the City Council. The Council placed the measure on the ballot, and it passed overwhelmingly.

Section 71 was placed into the Spokane City Charter and became effective on November 2000. The full language pertaining to the NCs is contained in Sections 71-76 of the Charter. This language provides for the creation, organization, establishment, duties and responsibilities and purpose of the Neighborhood Councils. A great amount of civic power and responsibility is granted to the NCs, an arrangement that became a model for many cities in the United States. Below is the full text of Section 75 of the City Charter pertaining to the Community Assembly:

**Section 75. Neighborhood Councils Program – Community Assembly – Purpose**

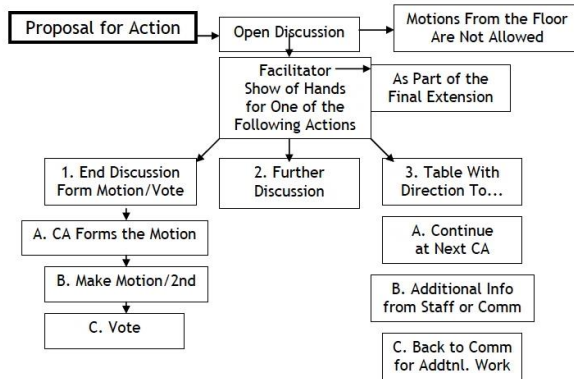
*The Community Assembly is a coalition of independent neighborhood councils and serves as a forum for discussion of issues of broad interest. Each neighborhood council selects one representative and a designated alternate to serve on the Community Assembly. Representatives are expected to represent the interests of their respective neighborhood councils. The Community Assembly meets with the City Council's Neighborhood Committee and the City's Office of Neighborhood Services periodically to discuss community-wide issues. The responsibilities of the Community Assembly include to:*

- A. review and recommend an action, policy, or plan to the City Council Neighborhood Committee, the City Council, the mayor, the City, and any City agency, commission, or board on any matter affecting the City;*
- B. support and promote citizen participation and neighborhood enhancement;*
- C. promote and facilitate open communication between the City and neighborhood councils and provide the primary means of communication between individual neighborhood councils;*
- D. support and assist, as requested, individual neighborhood councils in becoming recognized and in performing their functions and responsibilities; and*
- E. serve as an information resource to neighborhood councils.*

*Effective Date: November, 2000*  
*ORD C32687 Section 5*

Starting in 2000, the CA continued to grow and went through several phases that characterize newly formed, growing organizations. There were some changes made to the original Policies and Procedures (P&P), so a committee

charged with updating the P&P spent several months of regular meetings to craft a document, most of which is still in effect today.



In 2014, the CA adopted our current decision making process. (See *Graph* page xx) This process was created to ensure that everyone has a voice and to eliminate grandstanding and agendas that did not serve the whole city. It was one key element in erasing

territorial thinking that occurred in the early years of the CA.

Over the years, the CA has been involved in many issues of importance to neighborhoods and the city as a whole. Examples include traffic safety (e.g., red-light cameras), graffiti, outdoor storage of materials and/or vehicles on residential property, land use, changes in the allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, and many more. The CA has grown into a more mature organization, taking on important issues, informing neighborhoods, and striving to become increasingly relevant and active in creating a city that reflects the concerns of citizens and neighborhoods.

The new Community Engagement Fund Program has expanded the ability of the neighborhood councils to be more proactive in their neighborhood by fostering engagement programs such as concerts, block parties, and other special events. These funds have also allowed the NCs to advertise and market through welcome bags, banners, flags, brochures, and many other means.

## Community Assembly Core Values and Purpose

At the 2013 annual retreat, the CA redefined itself by clarifying our overall purpose, our **Big, Hairy, Audacious, Goal (BHAG)**, and our core values. These vital and directing words were crafted over several months and were approved by unanimous votes of the CA and appear in every packet distributed prior to CA meetings.

### **CORE PURPOSE:**

Provide a vehicle to empower neighborhood councils' participation in government.

### **BHAG:**

Become an equal partner in local government.  
(This will be further expounded upon in the Vivid Description below.)

### **CORE VALUES:**

Common Good: Working towards mutual solutions based on diverse and unique perspectives.

Alignment: Bringing together the independent neighborhood councils to act collectively.

Initiative: Being proactive in taking timely, practical action.

Balance of Power: Being a transparent, representative body giving power to citizens' voices.

### **VIVID DESCRIPTION:**

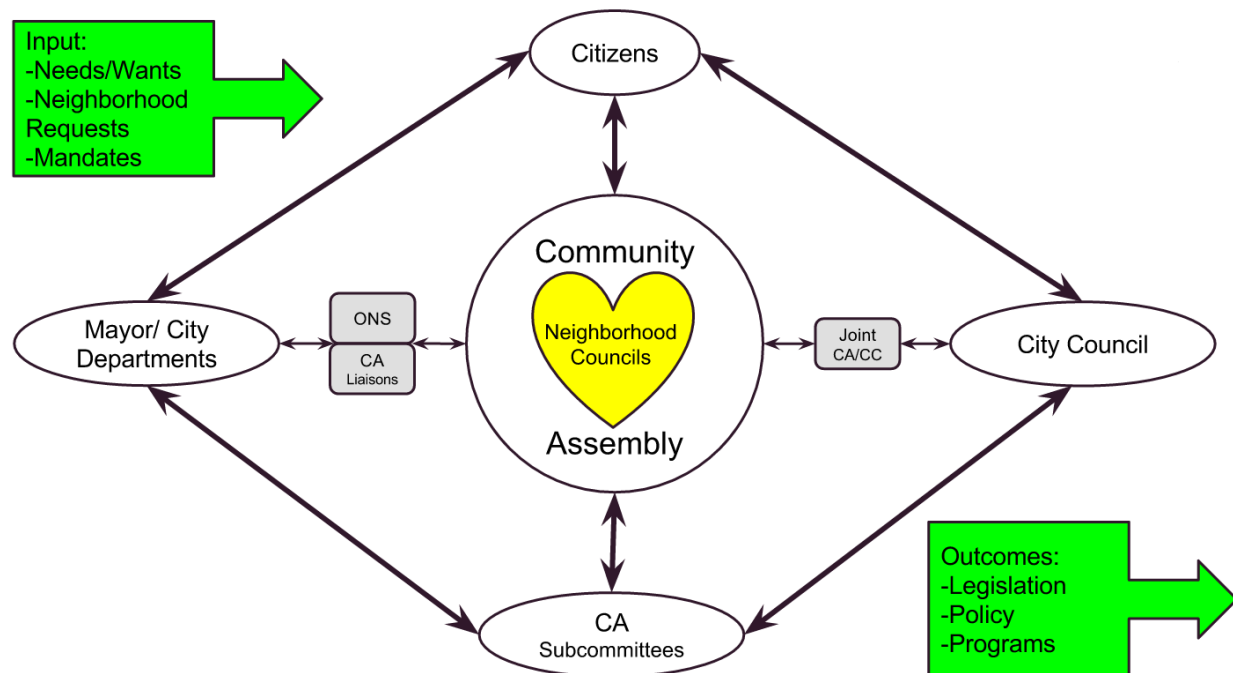
The Community Assembly fulfills its purpose, achieves its goals, and stays true to its core values by its members engaging each other and the community with honest communication and having transparent actions in all of its dealings. Community Assembly representatives are knowledgeable and committed to serving their neighborhood and their city as liaisons and leaders.

The Community Assembly initiates and is actively involved early and often in the conception, adoption and implementation of local policy changes and projects. The administration and elected officials bring ideas to the Community Assembly in the forming stages for vetting, input and participation. The Community Assembly is a valuable partner to these officials and neighborhoods in creating quality policy and legislation for the common good.

## How Do We Fit Into City Government?

### Interconnected

The Community Assembly, composed of all the neighborhoods of the City of Spokane, has a dual role in city government. While the Neighborhood Councils are the heart and soul of the Community Assembly, it's important to understand the CA is its own entity. As such, the CA both gives input to the City and takes information from them and disseminates it to the neighborhoods and citizenry. The following graphic illustrates the interconnected nature of the relationship:



As you can see, the system takes input from one of the outer ovals and produces an outcome. The citizens of Spokane, of course, inform all the actions of the City Administration, Community Assembly and City Council. All three have information to share with or input to seek from the citizens. All areas are interconnected, with Neighborhood Councils at the heart. The Neighborhood Councils comprise the CA. The CA has committees, joint meetings with the City Council, liaisons to boards and commissions, and works with the Office of Neighborhood Services and other city departments to accomplish those outcomes.



## Input and Outcomes

Inputs take many forms. The primary focus is on the wants and needs of the city, however that can take many forms and be very subjective. Any of the three entities (City Administration, CA and City Council) can take direct neighborhood requests. When those requests are directed through the Community Assembly however, they carry more weight. Generally, if one neighborhood has an issue, other neighborhoods can relate and support the request from a single neighborhood, thus communicating to the city, with the backing of all the neighborhoods of the City of Spokane. The system can work in reverse as well. A mandate from the City (Administration, Council, or even an outside entity such as the state or federal government) can come through the Community Assembly to the neighborhoods to engage citizens in the process of government.

The Community Assembly is the most effective in their role as a partner in local government when they are involved in the early stages of an idea or concept, challenge, project, plan, etc. However, the CA is not a "rubber stamp." The system is least effective when an outcome is presented to the CA for rubber stamping or ratification. There are multiple stakeholders that need to be involved for that to work. The CA is proactive and solution-oriented and as such, excels by a process of public participation, committees and neighborhood councils. These entities vet and develop ideas and projects in ways that small groups of elected officials or city administration do not have the accurate perspective to achieve.

The CA process results in recommendations on legislation, policy and/or programs to elected officials and administrators, as an advisory body. Policies and programs are very subject-specific and are worked through the CA committees before being revisited by the CA for adoption and then passed on to the City. The Community Assembly can also work within the City's legislative process to produce outcomes. The City Council often works with CA or a subcommittee to define, refine and vet ideas and ordinances. We also work with City departments such as Streets, Planning, Engineering, etc. to accomplish ordinance and policy changes, as well as specific projects in the various neighborhoods.

There are challenges. There can be language and jargon that is difficult for neighborhood volunteers to understand. City Legal may get involved to vet the legality of any outcomes. ONS and the City Council office can be resources to help in this area. The CA may draft policy, memorandums

of understanding, and ordinances from committees, from the floor of CA meetings, or directly from Neighborhood Councils or other community organizations, and may require a decision during a meeting. Based on individual neighborhood council by-laws, some representatives are not empowered to participate in a vote, somewhat diluting full representation.

## How the Community Assembly Works

The CA is an experiment in democracy. The representatives to CA are selected by their neighborhood councils per their own bylaws. The CA functions *collaboratively*, NOT through centralized authority. It does this by distributing decision-making and leadership.

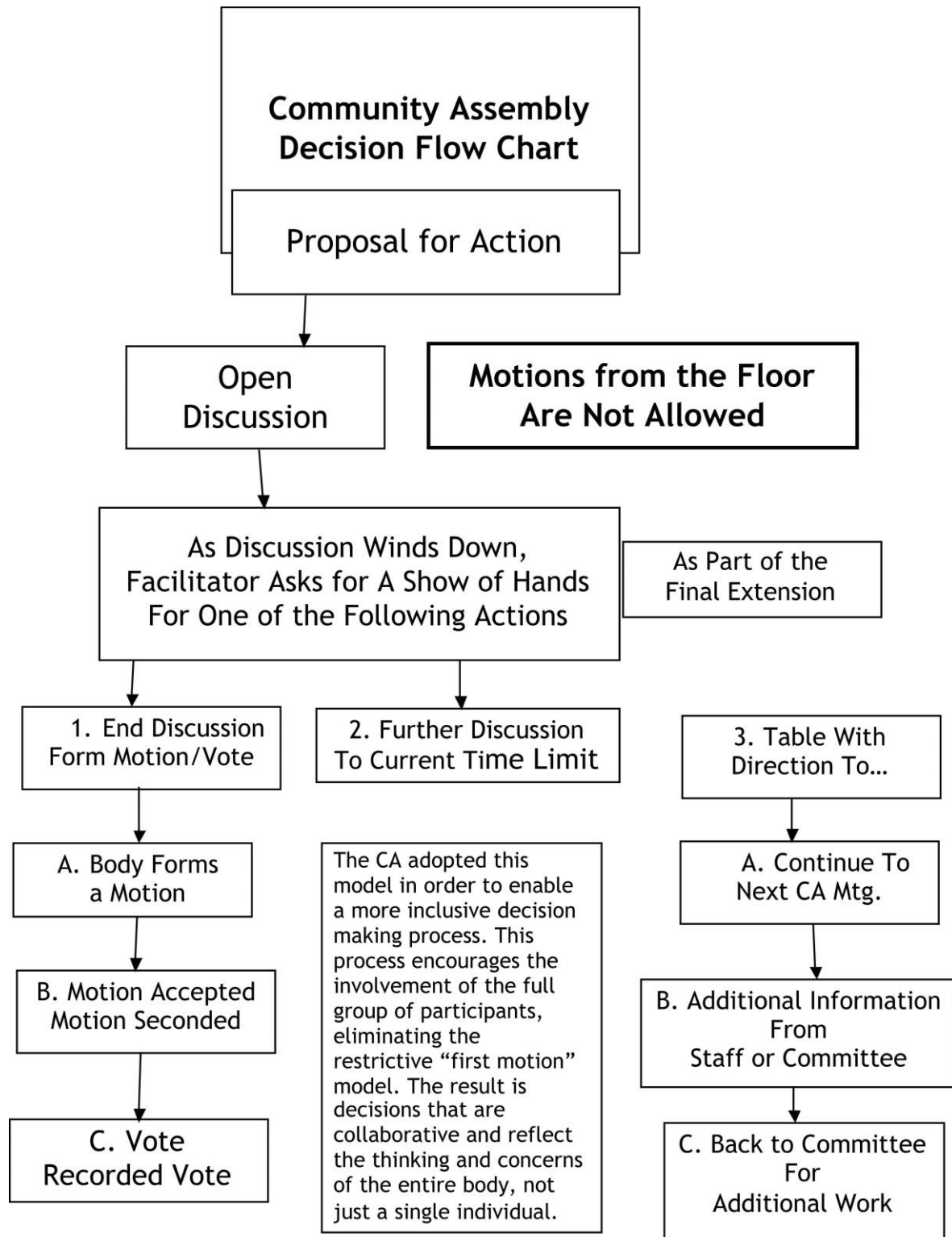
The Admin Committee sets the agenda and the chair can officially sign for the organization, but major decisions are made by the entire CA membership in attendance at meetings. The Admin Committee is also the body to submit any grievance issues to.

To get on the CA meeting agenda, a request to the Admin Committee needs to be submitted with the suggested amount of time needed for the topic. The Admin Committee will decide if and when it will be placed on the agenda. They may also adjust the time, depending upon what the rest of the agenda looks like.

CA committees bring recommendations to the CA, but the CA *as the entire membership attending meetings* ratifies and finalizes those recommendations.

## Decision-Making

The CA strives to make every voice heard. It is for this reason that we do not use Roberts Rules of Order or support 'motion making' as methods of making decisions. It is our practice to encourage discussion on all sides of every issue and *after* discussion to propose a phrase that clarifies the situation and that will allow the members to vote. The decision comes *first* so that all ideas and concerns can be aired. We find that doing this often changes what needs to be voted upon and that the group has a better sense of their areas of agreement even before a vote is taken. The vote simply solidifies and clarifies the decision that has already been reached. If there is not apparent agreement, then the issue is sent back to committee or more research and input is requested before a vote is taken. These practices are codified in the following graphic.



The CA strives to not vote on a matter of relevance to the neighborhoods until the representatives have taken the CA recommendation back to their neighborhoods for a neighborhood vote. The neighborhood vote is brought back to the CA by the neighborhood representative, and voted as part of the CA decision. This improves NC involvement as some representatives cannot vote until they have talk with their councils. If a decision cannot be reached, then a discussion to address the various concerns is held and a new vote taken. *If the vote is time sensitive* then the representatives will vote during the meeting (if allowed by the NC bylaws) and are expected to report that vote back to their NC. If there is no time constraint or if the decision is so important that neighborhood participation is essential, then the representatives return to their neighborhoods to get another decision on the revised proposal and a new vote will be taken at the CA when they return.

This process also requires that all parties (neighborhoods, standing committees, ONS, City Council) plan ahead to include this timeframe so that decisions can be made within the process. There are times when this kind of planning is not possible. That means that the representatives need to be empowered by their neighborhoods to act on their behalf, with the stipulation that any vote or decision made under these conditions is reported back to the neighborhood.

### **Neighborhood Council By-Laws and the CA Process**

The neighborhood councils have been encouraged to write their own bylaws and self-determine their internal structure and the relationship and responsibilities of their representative to both the CA and their Neighborhood Council. Copies of these bylaws are kept in ONS.

This means that:

- Not all CA reps are elected. Some NC by-laws have the CA as an appointed position. Some have term limits, some do not.
- Not all issues brought forth are taken back to the NC, either by the personal choice of the representative, or because the rep's duties and responsibilities are not clearly defined by the NC.
- The CA cannot dictate to the NC when their meetings are held in relationship to the CA meetings. In this case, the NC may not meet often enough to participate in the voting on significant issues.
- Some NCs' by-laws state that the CA rep cannot vote on issues that need input without the vote of the NC. This may limit that NC from voting on internal CA issues, and even on some significant NC issues that come up in the CA.
- Not all NCs have a provision in their bylaws for electronic voting on issues with

a short time frame. This is a new strategy some NCs are considering to stimulate participation.

- Additionally, there are issues decided on at the CA meetings that are not necessarily taken back to the NC. These issues can be brought forth by the Admin Committee, be a recommendation by the committees, from a liaison, or the City Council itself.

The CA process takes time. Planning is required by all parties (ONS, City Council, committees, and NCs) to ensure a strong discussion, timeframe, sufficient and respectful participation, and to minimize any frustration or anxiety..

### **CA Standing Committees**

The Community Assembly uses committees to examine specific issues more deeply than possible at regular CA meetings. The committee will then report back to the CA with a recommendation for action. If the CA has concerns, they may make changes or recommend that the committee do additional work. The committees often work with other City Boards and Commissions by providing liaisons to represent the interests of the NCs and the Community Assembly.

Each CA committee is assigned a staff member from the Office of Neighborhood Services to support the committee's work. (Staff support information can be found on the city website.)

Following are the current standing committees of the Community Assembly:

- The **Administrative** Committee is responsible for setting the monthly CA meeting agendas, signing CA communications and notifying neighborhood council executive committees of the absences of a CA representative or assigned alternate at regular CA meetings.
- The **Budget** Committee was created (and funded by the City Council) to manage Community Engagement Funds. The committee establishes and administers a budget process which assists Neighborhood Councils (NCs) financially to support and develop themselves to better serve their neighborhoods.
- The **Building Stronger Neighborhoods (BSN)** Committee's mission is to promote the growth of Neighborhood Councils through training, education, and engagement opportunities, with input from the Neighborhood Councils.
- The **Community Assembly/Community Development (CA/CD)** Committee provides a forum for educating neighborhoods regarding Community

Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, and makes policy and other recommendations in regard to neighborhood CDBG allocations to the Community Assembly, and ultimately to the Community, Housing and Human Services (CHHS) Board. They also facilitate the allocation of these funds through neighborhood council engagement.

- The **Land Use** Committee works with City of Spokane Planning and ONS to seek opportunities to interact with Neighborhood Councils, citizen groups and individuals (within the boundaries of the City of Spokane). The committee serves as a resource to land use resolutions which proposes changes to policies, regulations, actions and plans that affect the CA.
- **The Liaison** Committee manages the application process and appointments for positions to provide Community Assembly representation on various City boards, committees, and commissions. They also periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the liaisons.
- The **Pedestrian, Traffic and Transportation (PeTT)** Committee supports the CA and Neighborhood Councils by focusing on Spokane's transportation-related problems and opportunities to create safer, more accessible streets for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and public transportation passengers.
- The **Neighborhood Safety** Committee works to bring awareness and solutions regarding neighborhood safety issues. They will research issues involving public safety, and provide recommendations on these issues to the Community Assembly.

The meeting dates and times of these committees change according to their needs. The CA Agenda packet contains all committee meeting minutes, and provides quarterly presentations to the CA. The committees are open to any individual who wish to volunteer to participate on the committee's scope of work, as long as they are active in their neighborhood council.

**The CA also utilizes timely, temporary and action committees:**

- The **Nominations** Committee contacts all eligible candidates for the Administrative Committee, and brings a ballot to the body to elect each year's new Admin Committee.
- The **Policies and Procedures** Committee reviews and advises changes to the CA policies and procedures at regular intervals and in response to immediate needs.

- The **Retreat** Committee was created to coordinate the annual Community Assembly retreats. They may also work with Building Stronger Neighborhoods Committee to strengthen and continually improve and refine the shared vision of the CA.

In many ways, the committees are the lifeblood of the Community Assembly. They are responsible for taking ideas and elevating them from the CA to the City Council and/or City administration level. They work closely with City Council members, City department heads, and outside experts on issues of importance to the neighborhoods.

Community Assembly representatives (and their alternates) are encouraged to participate on at least one committee, and to invite interested members of their neighborhood councils to participate as well. Several neighborhoods have designated representatives (other than their regular CA representative), to the CA committees.

## **CA Liaisons**

Since the inception of the Neighborhood Council Program by a charter amendment in 1994, the Spokane City Council has instituted liaison and representative membership positions on eight (8) of its advisory boards and commissions for individuals who are neighborhood council members and are nominated or selected by the Community Assembly. And in 2021, the Park Board created two positions for Community Assembly nominees related to one of its standing committees. Here is the list of these ten (10) positions [with a citation to their authorization]

*Nominated by the Community Assembly for appointment by the City Council*

- CHHS      Community Housing and Human Services Board
- DRB      Design Review Board
- HAS      Housing Action Subcommittee
- PC      Plan Commission
- UFCAC    Urban Forestry Citizens Advisory Committee

*Appointed by the Community Assembly on recommendation by its Pedestrian, Traffic, and Transportation Committee (PeTT)*

- CTAB      Citizens Transportation Advisory Board
- PCTS      Plan Commission Transportation Subcommittee

*Nominated by the Community Assembly for appointment by the Park Board*

- DVC Development and Volunteer Committee
- DVCAC Development and Volunteer Citizens Advisory Committee

The names and contact information for these individuals can be found on the Community Assembly web page at [SpokaneNeighborhoods.org](https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/community-assembly/). There is a Community Assembly Liaisons list toward the bottom of the page:

<https://my.spokanecity.org/neighborhoods/community-assembly/>



## Being a Community Assembly Rep: Commitment and Participation

Being an effective CA Rep requires commitment and participation. Educate yourself on issues that the CA is working on so that you can effectively participate in discussions and vote, participate in CA meetings and trainings, NC meetings, and be involved with committees and/or boards, and don't be afraid to ask questions.

Your job is to represent your NC at the CA Table, and to represent the CA back to your NC and in committees. Above all, you are representing the CA and our Vision. Carefully consider issues and vote in ways that allow the CA to achieve our goals. We work for the Common Good.

Each NC has their own bylaws. Learn what yours are, and how much autonomy you're given. Some reps are unable to vote at the CA table without input from their NC. Other reps are given voting ability to vote in the moment for what they view as the best for their NC. If you feel restricted by your bylaws, then request a review at your NC so that you can provide more effective representation.

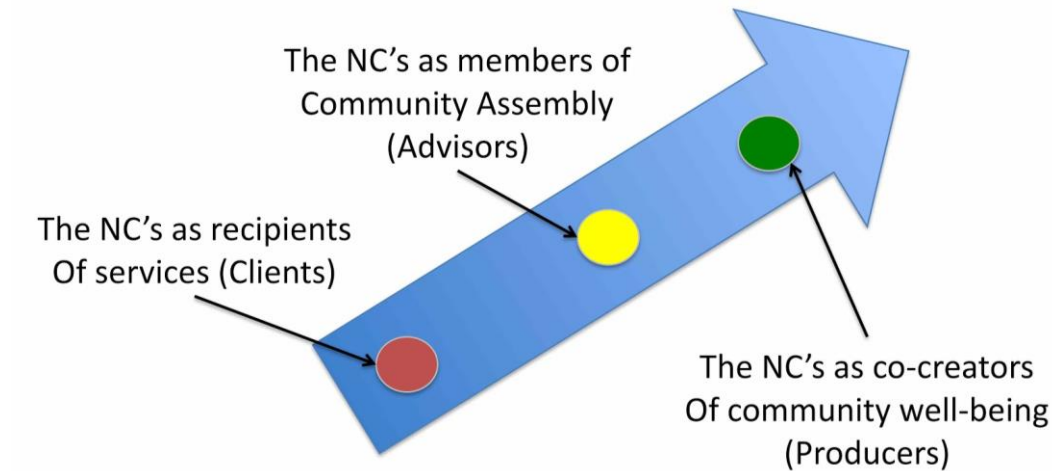
Not all issues directly impact your NC. Be empathetic, not apathetic. Look at the Big Picture and work together to achieve CA goals.

Be an Ambassador. Spread the word about this valuable organization, and encourage citizens to get involved and make a difference.

Work with your fellow CA reps and share successes with other NCs. Likewise, lean on your fellow reps and NCs for help when you have an issue or struggle.



## Changing Role of the Neighborhood Councils



There is a renewed sense among City departments and the City Council to involve the neighborhoods more deeply in City projects and processes that affect the neighborhoods directly.

In 2015, City Council President Ben Stuckart submitted a proposed ordinance that would allow neighborhoods to have legal 'standing,' and therefore a voice in projects that impact neighborhood viability and life style. This ordinance (passed in 2015) gives the neighborhoods the right to legally be involved in some of the decisions that affect their neighborhood. It also means that neighborhoods will receive the same notice of prospective actions as City departments for those projects that require notification.

When the changes are new buildings or demolitions, then there are tight timelines to respond. This means that the neighborhood councils need to research and act quickly to voice their concerns in time.

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding allocation process has been reconfigured to expand how neighborhoods can use their allotted funds by districts. The districts are charged with working with their respective NCs to come to agreement on the projects to be supported. There is a strong desire on the part of the City for neighborhoods to work together on projects. This can include working with the neighborhoods to develop long-term projects that would exceed one funding year. This

process opens up potential partnerships with other neighborhoods, local businesses, and community non-profit organizations.

These changes require Neighborhood Councils to look at the bigger picture, including the entire community and long-term impact in order to strategically understand their best use of leverage and power. Having a neighborhood plan in place and understanding the vision of both the City and the other neighborhoods enables long-term thinking.

This can strengthen the role of the Community Assembly as it provides an arena for the various Councils to come together and share needs, interests, resources, and support. Neighborhood Councils can bring areas and issues of concern to the whole Assembly and ask for guidance, support, and insight, thus strengthening capacity to act effectively.

These changes will also require that the Neighborhood Councils keep themselves informed and able to act quickly and effectively when needed. Researching the issues, knowing the ordinances and policies that impact or are affected by their concerns are first steps that enable the neighborhood to make powerful statements to the City Council.

## **NEW HORIZONS**

In the past the Neighborhood Councils have used ONS as a support system and depended upon them to provide information and training. The NCs are in the position of receiving services and support from ONS. This relationship is still helpful as ONS provides suggestions for partnerships, directions to other City departments that should be involved, and logistic support.

The City Charter sees the NCs as advisors to the City Council through the Community Assembly. The Community Assembly is working toward having a regular presence at City Council meetings as a recognized authority on neighborhood issues. Neighborhoods should be confident about speaking at City Council meetings on issues that impact them. The goal is to be a respected resource and advisor for City Council decisions that impact neighborhoods.

The evolving changes require that the NCs continue to strive becoming co-creators with City Council as we envision a healthy City of Spokane together. This is the percolating possibility that we are striving to achieve. As neighborhoods become notified of potential changes earlier in the process, we have the opportunity to make significant impacts to these projects. As

neighborhood planning initiatives are accomplished, they should be integrated with the City planning process and the continual changes in the Comprehensive Plan so that desires and initiatives are strengthened and are not “surprises.”

## **NEW CAPABILITIES**

The Community Assembly is the place of learning and development for the Neighborhood Councils. By sharing best practices, by improving meetings, teaching facilitations skills, thinking strategically, and fostering collaboration, we can become a coherent and aligned body of citizens that actively participate in the growth of the City of Spokane.

## **STRENGTH BUILDING STRATEGIES**

In order to become strong players in Spokane City government, Neighborhood Councils need to:

- Be informed on what the City and various vendors are planning.
- Act proactively, as city departments and vendors may not communicate with neighborhoods.
- Know the history, the policies and current ordinances that impact your area of concern.
- Attend the Community Assembly to learn, share and create partnerships.
- Ensure that your representative is bringing your NC information from the CA and is bringing the CA your NC's point of view (not the individual's).
- Meet often enough so that your voice is heard on matters of requested input and in every vote.
- Be prepared to go before City Council if necessary.
- Sit on at least one committee so that you have direct input into ordinance creation and other issues.
- Get to know other neighborhoods and their issues for future partnering and continuous learning.
- Get training and education on best practices and issues.
- Learn to think strategically about the City *as a whole*, being clear on how your specific neighborhood will be affected.

## Addendum

### Community Assembly Policies and Procedures (Rev. April 2022)

#### **I. Purpose**

According to Article VIII, Section 75 of the City of Spokane City Charter, "the community assembly [herein referenced as the "CA"] is a coalition of independent neighborhood councils and serves as a forum for discussion of issues of broad interest" to the neighborhoods and City.

#### **II. Duties and Responsibilities**

According to Article VIII, Section 75 of the City Charter, the CA shall:

- A. Review and recommend an action, policy or plan to the city council, neighborhood committee, the city council, the mayor, the city, and any city agency, commission, or board on any matter affecting the City;
- B. Support and promote citizen participation and neighborhood enhancement;
- C. Promote and facilitate open communication between the City and neighborhood councils and provide the primary means of communication between individual neighborhood councils;
- D. Support and assist, as requested, individual neighborhood councils in becoming recognized and in performing their functions and responsibilities; and
- E. Serve as an information resource to neighborhood councils.

#### **III. Membership**

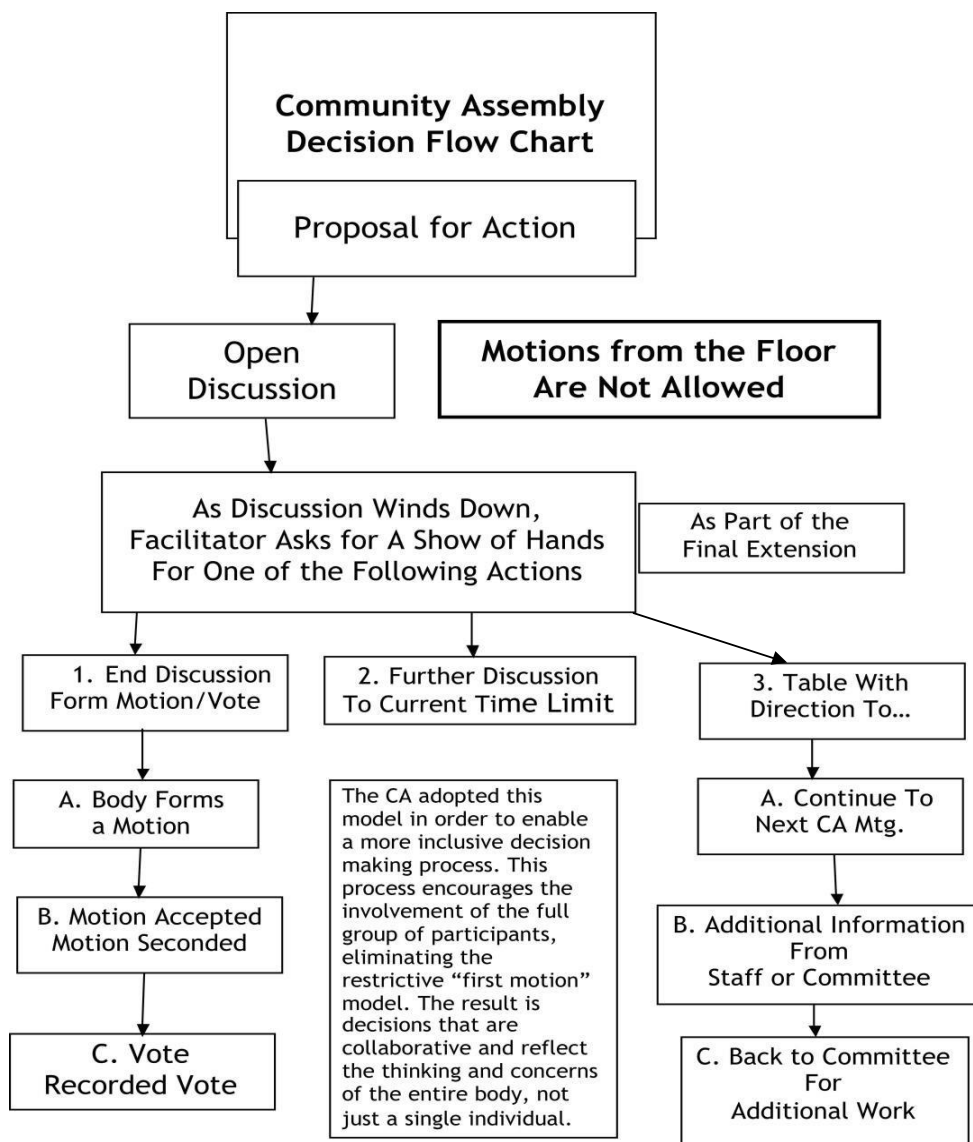
- A. Membership in the CA is available to neighborhood councils, as recognized in Article VIII, Section 75 of the City Charter.
- B. Each neighborhood council selects one representative and a designated alternate [hereinafter referred to as representatives] to serve on the community assembly.
- C. Representatives are expected to represent the interests of their respective neighborhood councils.
- D. Each neighborhood council shall submit, in writing or by email, the names of their representative and designated alternate to the Office of Neighborhood Services as changes occur.
- E. Each neighborhood council representative has one vote.
- F. A representative may only vote on behalf of the neighborhood they represent at CA meetings.
- G. The Office of Neighborhood Services shall maintain an email distribution list for communicating to representatives of the CA. The distribution list shall include, at minimum, the current email addresses for each

neighborhood council's CA representative and designated alternate, chair, vice-chair, and all CA committee chairs.

#### **IV. Meetings**

- A. A minimum of ten CA regular meetings shall be held annually.
- B. Meetings of the CA and City Council shall be held a minimum of three times annually.
- C. Electronic recording of regular meetings of the CA and CA committee meetings shall only be allowed if approved by a majority of voting members present at the meeting. If a recording is to take place, it shall be disclosed by the recorder, including members of the media, and announced by the CA facilitator or committee chair prior to the beginning of that meeting's business.
- D. An independent facilitator shall preside at CA regular meetings. In the absence of an independent facilitator, an Office of Neighborhood Services representative may facilitate the meeting. The facilitator shall act in accordance with the procedures outlined herein.
- E. Presentation and decision-making process (figure on page 3)
  - 1. To speak at a meeting, a person must be recognized by the facilitator. Only one person can be recognized at a time. Each speaker has two minutes. When all who wish to speak have been allowed their time, the rotation may begin again.
  - 2. When a proposal for action is made, open discussion shall occur before a motion is formed by the group.
  - 3. Presentation timetable protocol
    - a. When a presenter has one minute left in the time allotted, the facilitator shall raise a yellow card and give a verbal notice.
    - b. Should any representative wish to extend the time of the presentation or comment/question period, they may make a motion to extend the time by five (5) minutes.
    - c. An immediate call shall be made for a show of hands in support of the extension of time. With a simple majority (50% plus 1) concurring, the time shall be reset by the amount of time requested.
    - d. Extensions shall be limited to two (2) or until a request fails to show a simple majority approval.
    - e. When the allotted time has expired, a red card and verbal notice shall be given.

- f. As part of a final time extension request, the facilitator shall request a show of hands by the representatives to indicate which of the following actions the group wants to take:
- 1) End discussion and move into forming the motion and voting,
  - 2) Further discussion,
  - 3) Table discussion with direction,
  - 4) Request time to continue discussion at next CA meeting,
  - 5) Request additional information from staff or CA committee, or
  - 6) Send back to the appropriate CA committee for additional work.



4. Other questions regarding the conduct of the meeting shall be decided by the facilitator. If someone speaks out of turn or disrupts the meeting, the facilitator shall rule that person out of order. If anyone objects to any decision by the facilitator, that person may challenge the ruling of the facilitator. When this occurs, each representative and the facilitator may speak to the challenge once and for only one minute. Debate is then ended and a vote is taken immediately to either uphold or reject the decision of the facilitator.
- F. Quorum and Attendance:
1. A quorum is defined as a simple majority (50 percent + 1) of CA representatives that have attended regularly. If the neighborhood representative has been absent for two or more consecutive meetings, they are not counted in the quorum. Once the representative attends again, he/she is added to the number on which a quorum is established.
  2. Absent neighborhood council representatives shall be noted in the CA minutes.
  3. If a neighborhood council is not represented for two consecutive meetings, the Administrative Committee shall notify that neighborhood council's executive committee of the absences. (See Section VI.A.3.)
- G. Minutes:
1. Minutes of CA meetings, which are the official record of the CA proceedings, shall be prepared by the Office of Neighborhood Services.
  2. All discussions and actions by the CA shall be documented in the minutes, with all motions and votes documented verbatim.
  3. As soon as practical, allowing time for adjustment, a draft of the minutes shall be distributed to the CA email distribution list as information to the neighborhood councils and for review and comment by attendees. A final draft shall be included in the next CA packet for approval at the next regular meeting.
  4. The approved minutes shall be published on the Office of Neighborhood Services website.

## **V. Committees**

- A. The function of CA committees shall be to research or address issues that may impact neighborhoods or issues designated by the CA and report their findings and proposed recommendations to the CA for appropriate action.



- B. All committees must include a minimum of three (3) assigned representatives in order to have standing.
- C. When a committee is initially established by the CA, one of the representatives shall be appointed the interim chairperson by the CA. At the first committee meeting, there must be an election of officers.
- D. Types of committees:
  - 1. Standing committees are established by the CA for ongoing work to address citywide neighborhood issues.
  - 2. Ad hoc committees are established by the CA to address specific issues that do not fit within the charge of any standing committee. An ad hoc committee, e.g. a grievance committee, shall sunset after its work has been completed.
- E. The CA shall have the following standing committees:
  - 1. Administrative
  - 2. Budget
  - 3. Building Stronger Neighborhoods (BSN)
  - 4. Community Assembly/Community Development (CA/CD)
  - 5. Land Use (LUC)
  - 6. Liaison
  - 7. Pedestrian, Traffic and Transportation (PeTT)
  - 8. Neighborhood Safety
- F. Membership and Officers/Terms
  - 1. In addition to the CA representative, committee membership shall be open to all interested Spokane residents and representatives of agencies, businesses, government, organizations and property owners.
  - 2. Each committee shall have a minimum of two (2) elected officers. These officers shall be a chair and secretary.
  - 3. Officers shall be elected at the first meeting of the committee and as determined by the committee thereafter.
  - 4. Each officer of the committees must be a member of a neighborhood council.
- G. Committee Meetings
  - 1. Standing Committees
    - a. Standing committee meetings shall generally meet at a regular time and location and be included on the Neighborhood Meeting Calendar on the city's website.

- b. Standing committee meetings and agendas shall be announced in advance using the Office of Neighborhood Services' email distribution list for that committee.
- c. The Office of Neighborhood Services shall maintain email distribution lists for all standing committees. The list shall include, at a minimum, neighborhood chairs and vice-chairs, CA representatives and alternates, committee officers, and committee members. Other interested parties may request to be added to any committee distribution list.
- d. When a committee meeting is to be held virtually, the meeting link shall be included in the meeting announcement.

## 2. Ad Hoc Committees

- a. Ad hoc committee meetings and communications shall be the responsibility of the committee's chair.
  - b. Information regarding meeting times, locations, and agenda items shall be shared with committee members as well as any CA representative or alternate that has made a request to the committee chair to be kept informed of the committee's activities.
- H. Committees shall follow the CA's decision-making process. (See Section IV.E.)
- I. Committees shall present a report to the CA on a quarterly basis or more often if requested by the CA. Standing committees are encouraged to present a report to the CA at least once a year.
- J. Recommendations from a committee shall be presented at regular meetings of the CA to determine appropriate action.
- K. Standing Committee Policies and Procedures
- 1. Each committee will complete/review/modify a Policy and Procedures Committee document in accordance with the Committee Policies and Procedures Template prior to the November CA meeting and submit the revised document to the ad hoc Policies and Procedures Committee for inclusion in the main document.
  - 2. The document shall include its charge, goals, membership, meeting times, officers and terms, reporting, decision-making process and calendar. (See addendum titled "Committee Policies and Procedures Template.")

## **VI. Administrative Committee**

### **A. Duties**

The Administrative Committee shall:

1. Set CA meeting agendas. In the time between an Administrative Committee meeting and the next scheduled CA meeting, the Administrative Committee may adjust the draft agenda through email discussion and vote.
2. Sign CA communications.
3. Notify neighborhood council executive committees of the absences of a representative at regular CA meetings. (See Section IV.F.3.)
4. Keep and maintain a yearly calendar of recurring CA business and events.
5. Manage the use of the City Council placeholder position. (See Section VIII.)
6. Take emergency actions on behalf of Community Assembly. (See Section VI.G)

### **B. Membership and Officer Positions**

1. The committee shall consist of five members.
2. There shall be three officer positions of the committee: chair, vice chair, and secretary. An officer, with the exception of the secretary, may serve only two terms in any one position.
3. The chair shall serve as the contact person, spokesperson, and signatory for the CA.
4. The vice chair shall assume the duties of the chair in their absence.
5. The secretary shall record minutes and keep attendance for Administrative Committee meetings.

### **C. Qualifications**

Members of the CA Administrative Committee must:

1. Be a current CA representative.
2. Have attended at least six (6) regular CA meetings within the last two (2) years.
3. Agree to serve at least one full term.

### **D. Nominations and Elections**

1. An ad hoc Nominating Committee shall be formed each September and be composed of three (3) representatives selected by the CA.
2. Representatives serving on the Nominating Committee are not eligible to be nominated for the Administrative Committee.

3. Assumption of duties: The newly elected Administrative Committee members will assume office and duties at the next regular meeting of the Administrative Committee.
  4. Nominating Election Time Frame
    - a. September – Form Nominating Committee.
    - b. October – Bring back a pool of qualified potential candidates.
    - c. November – Vote by CA for Administrative Committee members.
- E. Term Limits
1. An Administrative Committee member may serve for a maximum of three (3) consecutive one-year terms.
  2. A one-year break in service from the Administrative Committee will allow qualified candidates to be nominated.
- F. Replacement of Administrative Committee members
1. In the case of a vacancy, the CA shall elect a replacement at the earliest convenience from a pool of qualified candidates. (See Section VI. D.)
  2. If the vacated position is the chair, the vice chair shall assume the chairperson's position and a replacement vice chair will be appointed by the Administrative Committee.
- G. Emergency Actions
- It may be necessary for the Administrative Committee to take action on behalf of CA due to time constraints or other circumstances beyond the control of the CA. On such occasions, the following provisions shall apply.
1. Taking action at a regular CA meeting shall always be the preferred option.
  2. If an electronic vote of CA representatives can be performed within the time constraints, then that will be the second most preferred option. The voting period will be at least 48 hours. A simple majority of those voting is sufficient for the vote to pass.
  3. As a final option, the Administrative Committee may make an interim decision, which shall require a super-majority vote of the Administrative Committee to approve.
  4. Any emergency decisions by the Administrative Committee shall be documented in the next monthly CA meeting packet, announced, and a vote of confirmation sought during the meeting.

**VII. Use of Community Assembly Logo**

- A. The Community Assembly logo is only to be used under the following circumstances:
  - 1. By the chair of the Administrative Committee for official CA business,
  - 2. By a vote of the CA,
  - 3. By the Office of Neighborhood Services, on behalf of the CA, for official CA communications and publication, or
  - 4. By CA committee chairs and secretaries for CA committee minutes and agendas.
- B. Committee proposals not yet approved by the CA may use the logo accompanied by a "DRAFT" watermark on the document.
- C. Use of the logo otherwise is not allowed without permission of the CA membership or Administrative Committee.

**VIII. CA Placeholder on the City Council agenda**

- A. The CA placeholder on the City Council agenda shall be used for reports and statements that have received majority approval of the CA.
- B. Any committee or group of neighborhoods, who has prepared a position paper on behalf of the CA, may request of the Administrative Committee time on the CA agenda in order to present the paper, seeking feedback and approval. Once approved, the committee or group may represent the CA at a City Council meeting, when appropriate.
- C. The Administrative Committee will notify the City Council of the use of the placeholder.
- D. In the case of time-sensitive issues, the Administrative Committee may approve a position paper/report by four (4) affirmative votes and allow the use of the placeholder position at a City Council meeting. In this instance, the report will not be considered to be representative of the entire CA, and such will be stated to the City Council. This action will be reported at the next CA meeting.

- IX. Boundary Changes:** The affected neighborhoods shall reach a mutually agreeable resolution to any proposed boundary change(s). No recommendation shall be presented to the CA without an agreement between or among the respective neighborhoods.

**X. Amendments**

- A. Establish an ad hoc CA Policies and Procedures (P&P) Review Committee in November of each year.
- B. Present a written report including any amendments to the approved policies and procedures to the CA in February of each year.

- C. A vote to approve any amendments shall occur at the following regularly scheduled meeting.
- D. Amendments require a 2/3 affirmative vote.
- E. The formal amendment process described herein does not apply to the Committee P&P documents.

**XI. Historical Record Retention:** The Office of Neighborhood Services, as staff support to the CA, shall be responsible for maintaining the historical records of the CA and its standing committees. This shall include, at a minimum, the meeting minutes, agendas, and policy documents of the CA and its standing committees.

## **Addendum - Committee Policies and Procedures Template**

### **Committee Name (Revision Date)**

- 1. **Charge:**
  - 2. **Goals:**
  - 3. **Membership:**
  - 4. **Meeting Times:**
  - 5. **Officers and Terms:**
  - 6. **Reporting:**
  - 7. **Decision-Making Process:** Refer to the CA Policies and Procedures.
  - 8. **Calendar:**
  - 9. **ONS Staff Support:** As Assigned
-

## Acronyms

### Common Acronyms used at Community Assembly

ACRONYM	MEANING	CATEGORY
Admin	CA Administrative Committee	CA Related
AHANA	Asian, Hispanic, African-American & Native American Association	Outside Agency
ARPA	American Rescue Plan Act	Federal
BAB	Bicycle Advisory Board	City Board
BID	Business Improvement District	Planning
BSN	CA Building Stronger Neighborhoods Committee	CA Related
CA	Community Assembly	CA Related
CA/CC	Community Assembly/City Council	CA Related
CA/CD	Community Assembly/Community Development Committee	CA Related
CC	City Council	City
CCS	Community Colleges of Spokane	Education
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant	Federal
CE	Code Enforcement	City
CHHS	Community, Housing and Human Services	City
CIP	Capital Improvement Program	City
CM	Council Member	City Council
CP	Council President	City Council
COPS	Community Oriented Policing Services	Other Neighborhood Org.
CPTED	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design	Planning
CTAB	Citizen's Transportation Advisory Board	City Board
DOE	Department of Energy or Education or Ecology	Federal/State
DRB	Design Review Board	City Board
DSHS	Department of Social and Health Services	CA Related
DSP	Downtown Spokane Partnership	Outside Agency
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	Federal
ESBA	East Spokane Business Association	Other Neighborhood Org.
ESG	Emergency Services Grant	Federal
EWU	Eastern Washington University	Education
GHBA	Greater Hillyard Business Association	Other Neighborhood Org.
GIS	Geographic Information System	Planning
GMA	Growth Management Act	Planning
GSI	Greater Spokane Incorporated	Outside Agency
GU	Gonzaga University	Education
HUD	Housing and Urban Development	Federal
Legal	City of Spokane Legal Department	City
LUC	CA Land Use Committee	CA Related
MIS	Management Information Systems	City
MRSC	Municipal Research & Services Center	State Agency
NC	Neighborhood Council	CA Related
NCDP	Neighborhood Community Development Program	City
NECC	Northeast Community Center	Outside Agency
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Agency	Federal
NEPDA	Northeast Public Development Authority	Other Neighborhood Org.

ACRONYM	MEANING	CATEGORY
NHHS	Neighborhoods, Housing & Human Services	City
NRO	Neighborhood Resource Officer	City
NPAC	Neighborhood Project Advisory Committee (to the WQTIF)	Planning
ONS	Office of Neighborhood Services	City
OPMA	Open Public Meetings Act	State
OPO	Office of the Police Ombudsman	City
ORD	City Council Ordinance	City Council
PC	Plan Commission	City Board
PDA	Public Development Authority	Planning
PeTT	CA Pedestrian Transportation and Traffic Committee	CA Related
PIES	Public Infrastructure, Environment & Sustainability Committee	City Council
NPAC	Neighborhood Project Advisory Committee (WQTIF)	Planning
NS	CA Neighborhood Safety Committee	CA Related
RCW	Revised Code of Washington	State
RES	City Council Resolution	City Council
SBA	Small Business Administration	Outside Agency
SBO	Special Budget Ordinance	City Council
SCA	Spokane Clear Air, short for Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency	Outside Agency
SCAPCA	former acronym for Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency	Outside Agency
SCC	Spokane Community College	Education
SEPA	State Environmental Protection Agency	State
SFCC	Spokane Falls Community College	Education
SFD	Spokane Fire Department	City
SIMBA	Spokane Independent Metro Business Association	Outside Agency
SMC	Spokane Municipal Code	City
SNAP	Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners	Outside Agency
SPD	Spokane Police Department	City
SPFD	Spokane Public Facilities District	Outside Agency
SPS	Spokane Public Schools	Education
SRCAA	Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency	Outside Agency
SRCVB	Spokane Regional Convention and Visitor's Bureau	Outside Agency
SREC	Spokane Regional Emergency Communications	City
SRHD	Spokane Regional Health District	Outside Agency
SRTC	Spokane Regional Transportation Council	Outside Agency
STA	Spokane Transit Authority	Outside Agency
TBD	Transportation Benefit District	Planning
TIF	Tax Incremental Financing	Planning
TOD	Transit Oriented Development	Outside Agency
TRAC	Trent Resource & Assistance Center	City
U-D	University District (East of Downtown)	Planning
WAC	Washington Administrative Code	State
WCCC	West Central Community Center	Other Neighborhood Org.
WSDOT	Washington State Dept. of Transportation (pronounced "wash dot")	State
WSU	Washington State University	Education
WQTIF	West Quadrant Tax Incremental Financing	Planning