

# Holiday Celebrations



## Holidays at Riverfront

The Riverfront Trail of Lights, Numerica Holiday Tree Lighting Celebration, and Winter Farmer's Market were all created to provide safe and enjoyable holiday activities for our community while supporting small businesses and the downtown economy.



## Drive-Thru & Walk-Thru Holiday Lights at Manito

We partnered with The Friends of Manito and several thoughtful sponsors to transform the park into a drive-thru and walk-thru holiday light show to brighten spirits.



## New Year's Eve Fireworks at Riverfront

Riverfront hosted the return of NYE fireworks with sponsor Coca Cola, lighting up the night sky at a family-friendly 9pm show. The fireworks followed a day packed with activities in the park.



Photo by James Richman



# Message from the Director

Amidst another year of evolving COVID-19 challenges, Spokane Parks & Recreation continued to find creative, thoughtful, and efficient solutions to deliver quality park spaces and programs for our community. This year further highlighted Spokane's value of our open spaces, healthy recreation, and safe gatherings that our division offers. From the return of some in-person programs,

to the re-opening of attractions, and the launch of the Pavilion concerts, Spokane came out to enjoy. One of my highlights was seeing Spokane Public Schools' high school graduations under the Pavilion – an iconic Spokane structure as the gathering place to celebrate educational achievements of our youth. Meanwhile, we made significant progress on capital projects and water conservation efforts, saw record numbers of people at our golf courses, and welcomed tens of thousands of smiling faces into our aquatic centers. We aren't sure what 2022 holds, but I'm proud of our Parks & Recreation team who remains dedicated to serving our community.

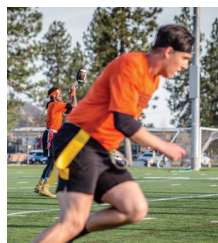
– Garrett Jones, Director

# Recreation

Amidst an ongoing pandemic and quickly-changing COVID-19 guidelines, our Recreation team employed flexibility, creativity, and perseverance to provide safe recreation opportunities for a community seeking physical and mental outlets. The Recreation team modified programs, adapted quickly, and was able to offer an incredible variety of healthy and safe activities for all ages and abilities.

210	New recreation programs offered
2,615	Recreation programs offered under COVID-19 guidelines
6,440	Sports Complex reservations booked (Dwight Merkel, Franklin & SE Complex)
22,210	Recreation program participants
61,652	Free open swim participants

- **Athletics:** Athletics saw 575 teams! Programs for adults include softball, flag football, volleyball, soccer, and cornhole. Youth athletics include flag football, tennis, basketball, volleyball, and soccer.
- **Aquatics:** Our six pools were unable to open in 2020 under COVID-19 guidelines, so we were thrilled to open them in 2021! And the community showed up - we welcomed more than 61,000 swimmers with free open swim. In addition, there were 4,818 reserved lap swimming sessions, and we certified 106 lifeguards.
- **Corbin Art Center:** Corbin classes remain popular, especially the preschool and youth art camps. We welcomed 1,414 participants across 200 classes.
- **Outdoor Recreation:** More than 1,800 people participated in programs like hiking, XC skiing, rafting, kayaking, snow showing, and Outdoor Adventure Camps. Nearly 500 Little Spokane River Shuttle participants enjoyed floating the river this summer, and almost 175 people rented kayaks from us!
- **Wellness and Enrichment:** Nearly 4,000 people participated in classes like esports, yoga, pilates, lawn bowling, martial arts, gymnastics, and more- a variety of almost 750 programs!
- **Sports Facilities & Operations:** Field rentals were popular for both practices and games of youth and adult sports. Our complex staff kept the facilities well maintained during a busy return to play.
- **Therapeutic Recreation Services:** More than 1,000 TRS participants enjoyed a variety of programs like line dancing, pickleball, ice skating, cornhole, and one of the most popular activities – the ski program at Mt. Spokane. Funshine Day Camp was also another big success!
- **Community Centers:** We affiliate with ten Community, Youth, and Senior Centers that provide resources and recreational services to our citizens: Corbin Senior Center, East Central Community Center (MLK), Hillyard Senior Center, Mid City Concerns, Northeast Youth Center, Project Joy, Sinto Senior Center, Southside Senior Center, Southwest Community Center, and West Central Community Center.



# Parks and Recreation

2021 Snapshot



## Park Operations

Our Park Operations team worked hard to ensure our parks were a safe and clean reprieve during the ongoing pandemic. With reduced staffing levels, they focused on our core service model of safety, sanitation, and asset protection. Staff from all departments, and some wonderful volunteers, also pitched in to clean up litter, weed, and mow. Some facilities required hand watering, and others remained closed as we focused limited resources on our core services to ensure healthy open spaces for our community.

32	lane miles of snow removal and maintenance of sidewalks/pathways
539	backflow prevention devices inspected and serviced
950+	playground inspections
1,011	mechanic service/repair orders for golf, recreation, and maintenance equipment
36,500	people attended the Drive-Thru and Walk-Thru Holiday Lights in Manito
1,00,000+	pounds removed from trash and recycling receptacles

## Natural Resources

### Urban Forestry

Spokane Urban Forestry creates a diverse, healthy, and accessible urban tree canopy for the benefit of Spokane's citizens through quality planting, protection, and stewardship. In 2021:

306	development and demolition plan sets were reviewed
312	site inspections were performed for certificate of occupancy
484	trees were pruned
488	street tree permits were processed representing 3,261 trees
602	new community trees were planted, including 118 in partnership with The Lands Council and community volunteers through the SpoCanopy program. SpoCanopy aims to ensure every neighborhood has access to trees and green space.
1,100	new seedlings were planted at Camp Sekani with Evergreen East Mountain Bike Alliance and their volunteers

The Urban Tree Canopy Cover Analysis was completed in partnership with Gonzaga University Environmental Studies' students. The neighborhood-by-neighborhood land cover study delivered percentage of tree canopy and the related ecosystem benefits.

A windstorm in January resulted in the loss of approximately 200 trees. A windstorm restoration plan ensured a quick and safe clean-up, repair of damaged property and irrigation systems, a 2-for-1 tree replacement with diversity of species, and additional water conservation measures through replacement of some turf with natural grasses.

### Natural Areas

Our goat grazing project for vegetation management at Hangman Park on the south hill bluff was funded in partnership with Avista and Friends of the Bluff. Two additional locations, Minnehaha and Meadowglen Parks, were also grazed with about 200 goats each. All three locations totaled 17 acres and were each grazed twice in 2021.

Washington Conservation Corps completed forest health and fuels reduction in the forested natural areas of Esmeralda Golf Course and along the Fish Lake Trail. Funding was provided by the Washington Department of Natural Resources.

## Park Planning & Development

- Comstock Irrigation Replacement:** The January windstorm brought significant damage to Comstock Park, causing a portion of the 1937 underground irrigation system to fail. The damaged irrigation system was replaced to create a fully automated watering system.
- Downriver Golf Course:** A complete irrigation replacement began in September, and will be completed in 2022, saving an estimated 7 million gallons of water annually while improving quality of play.
- Hoopfest Community Courts:** Corbin, Franklin, and Thornton Murphy basketball courts were renovated, thanks to the Spokane Hoopfest Association and their sponsors.
- Manito Park Koi Pond:** The pond in Manito's famous Nishinomiya-Tsutakawa Japanese Garden underwent a water conservation project improving pond quality and save 16-18 million gallons of water annually. The project was fully funded through a partnership with the Utilities division.
- Master Planning:** Our team is creating a roadmap for future priorities, focus areas, developments, and spending through an update of our Master Plan. Community outreach resulted in more than 5,000 responses, and that feedback created the foundation for the plan. The plan will be finalized and released in 2022.
- North Suspension Bridge (Riverfront):** The \$3 million dollar restoration of one of the Expo '74 bridges involved a new deck, repair/replacement of corroded steel floor beams, repair/replacement of lighting and electrical components, and an upgraded railing. The majority of work occurred in 2021, with a spring 2022 opening.
- Playgrounds:** Two new playgrounds were installed at Logan Peace and AM Cannon Park, thanks to funding by the City Council.
- Riverfront Park:** The entire north bank project was completed, including the fifth and final key bond project of an Ice Age Floods playground. Additional site amenities are a Hooptown USA basketball court, Roskelley Performance Climbing Boulder, wheels park, parking, maintenance facility, and improved street intersection.
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial:** The memorial, originally opened to the public in 1985, was cleaned, its cracks were repaired, and it was polished. Several amenities were added to the memorial, including a decorative handrail, benches, flag poles, an expanded plaza, wayfinding, and new plantings to enhance the greenscape. Thank you to the volunteer Vietnam Veterans Memorial workgroup and generous funding partners.
- Water conservation:** Ongoing water conservation projects at golf courses and parks are estimated to have saved 55-60 million gallons of water annually by the end of 2021 (about 8% of total park water use). Parks and Utilities entered into a new 10-year partnership to conserve water on public lands through annual funding of water conservation projects that support the Water department's stewardship program.



# Riverfront Spokane

## Community Engagement

2021 saw a return of many of our community engagement activities – free and low-cost ways to enjoy the park – that were postponed due to previous COVID-19 guidelines. Activities included the Riverfront Moves series featuring basketball, Zumba, and barre classes, a spring scramble, spring and winter farmers markets, pop-up vaccination clinics, Shakespeare in the Park, a free Labor Day concert by the Spokane Symphony, fall festival, and New Year’s Eve fireworks!

## Events

We were excited to welcome back event organizers and private group rentals! The park saw greatly increased activities, including the return of signature events, and the inaugural summer concert series at the Pavilion.

## Attractions

The Loeff Carrousel had to remain closed for much of 2020, but was able to reopen under COVID-19 guidelines on March 1! The Numerica SkyRide was open for most of the year, and the Numerica Skate Ribbon saw a popular start to the winter season on November 23. The restaurants in the park also reopened.

27,073	Numerica Skate Ribbon – The Ice
73,257	Numerica SkyRide
108,532	Loeff Carrousel

## Park Rangers

Our Park Rangers saw increased calls for service amidst an increase in park utilization, and did a great job meeting community need while serving as park ambassadors.

# Riverfront Redevelopment

In 2014, voters approved a \$64M reinvestment into our downtown urban park, the first major investment in Riverfront since Expo '74. The bond didn't raise taxes and covered 5 major elements, plus a few added amenities. Four projects were completed prior to 2021:

Recreational Ice Ribbon & SkyRide Facility	winter 2017
Loeff Carrousel building	spring 2018
Howard Street Promenade	fall 2019
U.S. Pavilion	fall 2019

## 2021/2022

On May 21, we celebrated the grand opening of the Ice Age Floods Playground, the fifth and final key bond project. The playground sits on the completely revitalized north bank of the park, and the grand opening celebration included many other new amenities: a wheels park, the Roskelley Performance Climbing Boulder funded by the Jess Roskelley Foundation, and a signature basketball court funded by MultiCare and Hooptown USA. New restrooms, additional parking, intersection improvements, and a maintenance and operations facility were also unveiled.

Looking ahead to 2022, the North Suspension Bridge renovation will be complete, and two art pieces will be installed as part of the redevelopment: Stepwell and The Seeking Place.

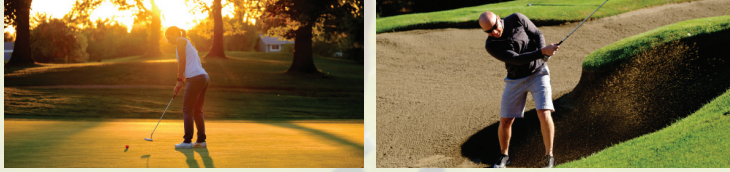


## Golf

Golf continued to see record numbers! Rounds were up nearly 25% from 2020, and up 40% compared to 2019. In addition, junior golf lessons were up over 40%!

Our City Championship was sold out, with 133 players over a 3-day tournament. Thank you to our sponsor, Renaissance Financial.

Irrigation upgrades started at Downriver, where it's estimated to save 7 million gallons of water a year when completed in 2022. When paired with course irrigation improvements at Esmeralda and Indian Canyon, the total annual water savings will be approximately 39 million gallons.



## Downriver

Dan Kleckner's Golf Classic raised \$100,000 for a variety of local veteran organizations and these most deserving men, women, and families. Downriver also produced 7,000 more rounds than 2020, despite the beginning of irrigation construction and an early closure.

## The Creek at Qualchan

Served 42,000 playing customers in 2021, the second most rounds in golf course history. Men's and Ladies clubs grew to the largest membership size ever.

## Esmeralda

Facilitated 5 PGA Jr. League teams, and instructed over 90 kids in various junior golf programs, which is an all-time high. Ezzy increased rounds played by 8,000+ compared to 2020.

## Indian Canyon

Generated over 10,000 more rounds than 2020. Junior golf participants have grown to an all-time high, with 100+ individual youth golfers. Both Men's and Ladies clubs have doubled in size since 2020.

## Park Friends Groups & Volunteers

Thank you to our Park Friends groups and all of our volunteers, who ensure Spokane's park spaces are supported by community efforts to help them thrive!

If you're interested in volunteering, please visit [SpokaneParks.org/volunteer](https://SpokaneParks.org/volunteer)



## Programming & Project Sponsors Thank You!

A special thank you to programming partners whose charitable in-kind or financial support help to make events, spaces, and programs possible:

93.7 The Mountain, Albertsons Foundation, Avista, Barre Code North, Bernardo Wills Architects, Beyond Pesticides, Beyoutiful Hot Yoga, Core Four Collective, David's Pizza, Downtown Spokane Partnership, Edward Jones, Fitragamuffin, Friends of the Bluff, Friends of Manito, Garco Construction, Global Credit Union, Gonzaga Ski Club, Great Clips, Gus Johnson Ford, Heads Up Hockey, Hooptown USA, iHeart Media, Inland Northwest Opera, Innovia Foundation, Jess Roskelley Foundation, KHQ, King Beverage, Knights of Columbus, Lake City Figure Skating Club, Lee & Hayes, Lilac City Painting, Mobius, Mt. Spokane Prime Timers, MultiCare, Natural Grocers, No-Li, Numerica Credit Union, OREO Cookies, Our Town Gala 2019, Pool World, Providence Health Care, Renaissance Financial, River Park Square, Sense Services, Sherwin Williams, Spin City, Spokane Arts, Spokane Barre, Spokane Chiefs Hockey, Spokane City Council, Spokane City Public Works & Utilities, Spokane County, Spokane County & Eastern Washington Regional Veterans Services, Spokane Hoopfest Association, Spokane Indians Baseball Club and 'Operation Fly Together Campaign', Spokane Parks Foundation, Spokane Public Schools, Spokane Rapids, Spokane Shakespeare Society, Spokane Symphony, Spokane Tribe, STCU, Swire Coca-Cola, TDS Fiber, The Lands Council, The Spokesman-Review, The Union, Townshend Winery, Wagstaff, Inc., Wake Up Call, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Washington State Recreation & Conservation Office, Washington Trust Bank

## Thank you Spokane Parks Foundation!

**The Campaign for Riverfront Spokane** has raised more than \$2.8 M to provide additional amenities beyond the bond-funded projects. Completed projects include Providence Playscape - the City's first all-inclusive playground, funded by Providence Health Care, and the Hooptown USA signature basketball court on the north bank, funded by MultiCare and Hooptown USA. As of the end of 2021, fundraising is ongoing for a dog park, Expo '74 butterfly, and interpretive signs, as well as a fund for the future to provide ongoing enhancements and accessible programs.

**Grant funds** totaling \$23,290 were provided to support recreation programs in 2021. They supported such programs as therapeutic recreation services, youth summer camps, and aquatics.

## Park Board

The Spokane Park Board was created in 1910 and granted power by the City Charter to layout, establish, purchase, procure, accept and have the care, management, control and improvement of all park grounds and parkways controlled by the City of Spokane and used for park purposes.

The charter also mandates eight percent of the City's annual expenditures be earmarked for Parks and Recreation. Additional funding comes from fees and charges for programs and services. The City's golf courses operate as an enterprise fund and are not supported by tax dollars. Visit [SpokaneParks.org/board](https://SpokaneParks.org/board) for meeting details.

### 2021 Park Board

**Jennifer Ogden**, President and Bylaws Committee chair  
**Bob Anderson**, Vice President, Finance Committee chair, and Development & Volunteer Committee chair  
**Nick Sumner**, Riverfront Park Committee chair  
**Rick Chase**, Urban Forestry Tree Committee chair  
**Greta Gilman**, Land Committee chair  
**Sally Lodato**, Recreation Committee chair  
**Gerry Sperling**, Golf Committee chair  
**Barb Richey**  
**Hannah Kitz**  
**Kevin Brownlee**  
**Michael Cathcart**, City Council liaison