



The chapter you see here is the result of months of work by countless individuals throughout the community. It represents a combination of inputs generously provided by the public, Plan Commission, City Council, and many others. This updated chapter will eventually be considered by the Plan Commission and City Council for inclusion in [PlanSpokane 2046](#).

Our teams have worked hard to create these updated chapters. Each has been discussed at the Plan Commission, by various Plan Commission subcommittees, with City Council in general, and shared with the public at various points along the way. These chapters represent the efforts of many, helping to describe the policy and guidance the Comprehensive Plan can provide in each topic area.

Please note this version supersedes any previously published versions, including the release of many chapters last October. All prior versions should be considered out-of-date from this point on.

As with prior versions, this chapter includes the basic text, but might not match the visual look and format of the final document (we're still working on that). To help readers identify where updated language has been provided, a series of icons are shown at right along the way. These aren't part of the final document--they're provided to help readers understand where certain changes may have come from, where past policies have been combined, etc. A guide to those icons is provided below. Each chapter will use the same set of icons for consistency.

General information or notation is provided, clarifying overall changes to the text.



Policy language was added to ensure consistency with changes in law at the State/Federal level.

Language was streamlined or condensed for readability or clarity.



Text was added as a result of the City's study of Racially Disparate Impacts and Displacement.

A new Goal or Policy was added, not sourced from the currently adopted plan.



A policy or text was added as recommended by the Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board (CRSB).

Multiple Policies from the currently adopted plan were combined into one, usually done to eliminate redundant language.



A goal or policy was removed or moved to another chapter. These are listed at the end of each chapter and include a reason.



What's Next for PlanSpokane?

Because this is the first complete view of some chapters (e.g. Growth Strategy, Transportation, Capital Facilities), we anticipate one more release of updated chapters and maps later this summer. After that, Plan Commission will likely hold a hearing to consider the overall document. We'd love to hear from you along the way.

If you have any comments on the chapters, please engage with us at <http://planspokane.org> or by email at planspokane@spokanecity.org. All comments are considered and each will be provided to the Plan Commission and City Council for their consideration prior to any hearings on the proposed document.

Parks & Recreation

Introduction

The opportunity for relaxation, recreation, and the enjoyment of natural features and landscaping provided by parks and open spaces has long been recognized as important in the City of Spokane. Throughout its history, Spokane's residents have encouraged and supported the development of a high quality and beautiful park system that has frequently ranked in the top 25 in the United States.

Today, changing recreational pursuits and demographic characteristics of the population have made the provision of parks and open spaces even more challenging and important. Seeking to explore and understand the new environment in which Parks and Recreation will operate in the future, the Parks and Recreation Department adopted a Master Plan for the City in 2022. This important document outlines the challenges and opportunities the City faces when providing an integrated and interconnected network of parks and recreational opportunities available for all in the City of Spokane.

The Spokane Parks Master Plan, incorporated by reference in the Comprehensive Plan, provides important guidance and background information the City should use in decision making and the development of funding, programs, and development in the near future. Along with the Master Plan, which has a shorter planning horizon than the Comprehensive Plan, the following goals and policies are also provided to inform decision making from a parks and recreation perspective into the distant future, commensurate with the overall vision and values the community has identified.

Goals and Policies

Goals and policies provide specificity for planning and decision-making. Overall, they indicate desired directions, accomplishments, or aims in relation to the growth and development of Spokane as it relates to the development, maintenance, and operation of parks and recreational uses in the city.

Goal: PR-1, Preservation and Conservation

Assure the preservation and conservation of unique, fragile, and scenic natural and non-renewable resources for the enjoyment and use of the public.

Policy: PR-1.1, Regional Open Space System

Partner with regional park and open space providers to create and maintain a regional system within the urban growth boundary that connects open spaces and habitat for wildlife corridors.



The introduction has been rewritten to reflect the current situation as well as the recently adopted Parks Master Plan.

The previous Comp Plan goals and policies used PRS in the title. Goal and policy titles in this version use PR. Any references to previous Comp Plan goals and policies will use the PRS indicator.



The order of these goals (and their attached policies) has changed somewhat to flow better and to correspond more closely to the format and layout of the Parks Master Plan.



Policy 1.1 was reworded to make collaboration a stronger part of the sentence.

Policy: PR-1.2, River Corridors

Recognize, enhance, and preserve access to the Spokane River and various waterways for the recreational enjoyment and use of the public, recognizing the health, social, and cultural benefits access to the waters of Spokane provides, while maintaining consistency with habitat preservation and protection standards.

Policy: PR-1.3, Acquisition of Natural Areas

Acquire and preserve natural lands that support opportunities for passive recreation while preserving the land in its natural state and help to preserve and provide priority wildlife and habitat protection.

Policy: PR-1.4, Open Space Dedication

Implement and maintain development standards calling for required natural open space and parks dedication and development within new developments where appropriate while working cooperatively with property owners and developers to secure and preserve open spaces between developments where possible.

Policy: PR-1.5, Open Space Buffers

Establish standards for and encourage the use of both developed and undeveloped open space buffers between conflicting land uses and infrastructure, including provisions and incentives for clustering of development.

Goal: PR-2, Parks and Open Space System

Provide a park system that is an integral and vital part of the City's public amenities, taking advantage of the opportunities for passive and active recreation provided by a comprehensive open space network.

Policy: PR-2.1, Amenities Within City Boundaries

Provide open space and park amenities that serve all residents throughout the city, as determined by the level of service standards.

Policy: PR-2.2, Access to Open Space and Park Amenities

Provide equitable public access to linkages and connected open space and park amenities, including features such as sidewalks, trails, bicycle paths, and mass transit.

Policy: PR 2.3, Connecting the River and Adjacent Uses

Study and develop ways to enhance the river by coordinating access and use of the waterways in Spokane with access to adjacent uses and opportunities, such as providing river access for both people and watercraft adjacent to shops and restaurants.



A cross-reference to Chapter 9, Natural Environment, will likely be included here, as that chapter deals heavily with surface waters.



Policy 1.3 was updated to focus more on acquisition and less on finance.



A cross-reference to Chapter 3, Growth Strategy, is likely to be included here as well as to the Parks Master Plan.



A cross-reference to Chapter 9, Natural Environment, will likely be included here, as that chapter deals with open space as well.



Equitable access was added here in reference public engagement discussions.



Previously policy PR-1.3 in a former draft, recommended as a new policy from the Chapter Review Subcommittee, tying business and river access together.

Policy: PR-2.4, Parks and Recreation Amenities

Develop and maintain parks and recreation amenities, including but not limited to interpretive areas, sports complexes and fields, structured play areas, public gardens, and entertainment venues, that provide benefits to both residents and visitors and enhance the local economy.

Policy: PR-2.5, Urban Forestry Coordination

Coordinate with the urban forestry program when developing parks and recreation facilities throughout the City.

Policy: PR-2.6, Historic and Cultural Value in Parks

Preserve and showcase the cultural integrity and historic characteristics of individual parks and the overall park system.

Policy: PR-2.7, Efficient Property Management

Assess unimproved park land holdings within the city and, considering level of service standards, develop modifications and solutions to increase level of service benefiting residents.

Goal: PR-3, Recreational Programs and Facilities

Maintain and expand an indoor and outdoor recreation program in the city, providing well-rounded recreational opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.

Policy: PR-3.1, Inclusive Recreational Access

Provide and improve recreational opportunities that are affordable to all people in Spokane and that reflect the diverse needs and socio-economic status of people in the city.

Policy: PR-3.2, Community Partnerships

Create public-private partnerships and develop funding and incentives for community-oriented recreational programs responsive to the diverse needs of participants of all ages and abilities.

Policy: PR-3.3, Parks for All

Upgrade park facilities and recreation opportunities to be accessible, culturally inclusive, and responsive to the needs of all Spokane residents, regardless of income, age, gender, or ability.

Policy: PR-3.4, Community Outreach

Promote parks and recreation programs, services, and facilities through an effective and inclusive community outreach program and marketing campaign, utilizing a variety of communication methods and ensuring language access and cultural relevance.



A cross-reference to applicable parts of Chapter 9, Natural Environment, is likely here.



A cross-reference to applicable parts of Chapter 8, Urban Design & Historic Preservation, is likely here.



This new policy was added to help Parks & Recreation begin to improve and adjust their unimproved land holdings to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.



Diversity was added here in reference to RDI and public engagement discussions.



Diversity was added here as well. A cross-reference to Chapter 10, Social Health, is likely to be included as well.

Policy: PR-3.5, Community Gardens

Establish and maintain publicly accessible community gardens on city property, as appropriate, in partnership with local organizations to support traditional Indigenous food gardens and culturally specific growing practices as well as to increase access to local and culturally diverse food for all residents.

Policy: PR-3.6, Indoor Recreational Facilities and Programs

Provide facilities and programs that provide the public the opportunity to participate in a broad range of indoor recreational activities year-round.

Policy: PR-3.7, City Golf Courses

Provide for and maintain the public golf courses in Spokane as appropriate.

Goal: PR-4, Trails in Parks and Open Spaces

Provide a convenient and pleasant open space-related network for walking, rolling, hiking, and biking circulation throughout the City of Spokane and the region through coordination with local partners.

Policy: PR-4.1, Trails and Linkages

Provide trails, pathways, and linkages between and among parks, open spaces, and nearby communities in accordance with City plans and programs, prioritizing people-oriented transportation in natural areas while considering special interests like equestrian use.

Policy: PR-4.2, Trail Corridor Development and Enhancement

Include landscaping, revegetation, and reforestation in trail corridor and shared-use pathway development where appropriate and desirable, providing a pleasant trail experience, compatible with adjacent uses, and in consideration of the natural environment found in the region.

Policy: PR-4.3, Innovative Trail Development Techniques

Incorporate innovative techniques into trail and pathway design, including but not limited to Low Impact Development, natural drainage patterns, native landscaping, protection of natural features, and porous pavement to further protect and enhance the natural environment.

Goal: PR-5, Coordination and Cooperation

Encourage and pursue cooperation between government agencies, non-profit organizations, and private business in providing open space, parks facilities, and recreational services that are beneficial for the public.



Policy 3.5 recommended from the Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board (CRSB).



Policy 4.1 is a combination of two original policies that both dealt with trails and circulation. (Original policies. PRS 3.1 and PRS 4.2) Connections to nearby communities was suggested by Parks staff.



This new policy (4.3) was formerly found in the discussion of another policy. It warrants highlighting in its own policy here.

Policy: PR-5.1, Avoiding Duplication of Recreational Opportunities

Facilitate cooperation and communication among government agencies, non-profit organizations, school districts, and private businesses to maximize efficiency when recreational opportunities are planned and provided for the community.

Policy: PR-5.2, Joint Park and Open Space Planning

Ensure that parks, open space, and trails are planned and funded in coordination with Spokane County prior to allowing urban development within the city's Urban Growth Area (UGA), yet outside city limits.

Goal: PR-6, Quality Parks and Recreation Services

Provide the community with a parks and recreation system that is enjoyable, efficient, financially responsible, and a source of local pride.

Policy: PR-6.1, Up-To-Date Management Practices

Employ state-of-the-art techniques in the park and recreation profession, seeking to increase efficiency in both staff operation and facility mechanism, such as providing staff training, labor-saving equipment, automated and weather-based controls, and development of drought response plans, etc.

Policy: PR-6.2, Celebrate Local Landscapes & Build Resilience

Model Spokane's natural landscape & the value of the SpokaneScape program by seeking opportunities to incorporate lower water use meadowland and natural landscape with trails into parks and open spaces wherever possible.

Policy: PR-6.3, Park Equity & Investments

Equitably expand the City's programming, park maintenance, and preservation activities to increase amenities that address comfort and protection from extreme weather such as shade and drinking fountains and that improve safety, education, and community resources at parks, prioritizing investments in the most vulnerable parts of Spokane.

Policy: PR-6.3, Standards and Policies

Address areas of the city where parks and recreation facilities and opportunities do not meet current level of service standards, maintaining open communication and utilizing collaborative planning processes that help define service levels based on good management practices while providing quality service to the public.



Goal 6 (originally goal 7) and Policy 7.1 were combined as they contained duplicate information.



Policy 6.1 has been modified in response to public feedback on modeling sustainable practices.



Policy 6.2 is a newly proposed policy in response to public feedback and in collaboration with the Parks Department. Potential cross-reference to SpokaneScape-related policy in the Natural Environment will be added.



Policy 6.3 recommended from the Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board (CRSB).

Policy: PR-6.4, Community Volunteers

Encourage and recruit volunteers to serve on advisory boards for program and facility design, leadership in program offering, and community service stewardship.

Policy: PR-6.5, Evaluations and Monitoring

Conduct periodic monitoring of the Spokane Parks and Recreation Department services, facilities, and programs through staff, participant, and public evaluations.

Policy: PR-6.6, Master Planning

Develop and implement periodic updates to the park master plan to ensure effective maintenance and operation of existing parks while exploring needs for new and updated parks and recreational opportunities.

Goal: PR-7, Maintenance and Funding Programs

Recognize and update Spokane’s existing park resources by continuing preventative maintenance and exploring various funding possibilities for both construction of new parks and maintenance of the City’s existing facilities and resources.

Policy: PR-7.1, Maintenance Management Program

Implement an ongoing maintenance management program that will include preventative and ongoing maintenance, efficient and comprehensive facility management, and funding for the replacement of facilities and equipment.

Policy: PR-7.2, Park Sign Plan

Implement and maintain a park signage and wayfinding plan that standardizes all park signs, enhances clarity in direction, and integrates universal accessibility. Features should include entrance, direction, and rules signs and exclude historic park signage where appropriate.

Policy: PR-7.3, Park Funding

Consider all potential funding sources to maintain and enhance the adopted level of service standards for parks, seeking funding in addition to the general fund contribution to Parks and Recreation.

Policy: PR-7.4, Opportunity Fund

Create an “Opportunity Fund” to protect open space or acquire parkland, targeting valuable open space lands that would otherwise be lost to development, ensuring that funding is sustainable for long-term stewardship of these areas.



A cross-reference to applicable parts of the Governance chapter may be added here.



The policies here are not new—they have been moved into this topic from various other goals in the existing chapter. Some language has been updated.



While not strictly new, policies 7.4 & 7.5 were reworked in consultation with the Chapter Review Subcommittee to be more robust and to better consider original intent.

Policy: PR-7.5, Funding for Open Space and Shoreline Land Acquisition

Ensure that any funding for the purchase of open space and shoreline land maintains sufficient balance and flexibility to nimbly and rapidly acquire and protect land when it becomes available.

Policy: PR-7.6, New Development Funding Needed Parks

Adopt development fees and development requirements ensuring public park land dedication and improvement occurs at the time of development or redevelopment, commensurate with adopted levels of service.

POLICIES REMOVED FROM THE TEXT:

The following policies have been removed from the text, largely due to redundancy, unclear goals/success, and similar factors.



Policy: PR-3.7, Outdoor Recreational Facilities

Provide facilities and programs that allow the public the opportunity to participate in a broad range of outdoor recreational activities, including expanding the hours and dates these locations are available where feasible.



Policy: PR-5.3, Cooperative Planning and Use of Recreational Facilities

Coordinate and cooperate with local private and regional entities when planning and operating recreational facilities to ensure efficient, integrated, and cooperative uses and operations.



Policy: PR-7.1, Quality of Service

Provide high quality service to the community in all parks and recreation programs, services, and facilities.



Policy: PR-7.3, Capital Improvement Program

Prepare and update annually a six-year capital improvement program for implementation of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan.



Policy: PR-7.7, Public Participation

Ensure that decisions regarding the city's park and open space system encourage the full participation of Spokane's citizenry.



Policy 7.6 was added per the Parks Master Plan, calling on development to help fund the parks needed because of new growth.

Policy PR-3.7 (originally PRS-5.6) being removed as it is redundant with Policy 1.2.

Policy PR-5.3 (originally PRS-6.2) removed as it is redundant with Policy 5.1.

Policy 7.1 was incorporated into its overarching goal, as it provided no additional detail in its original form (see Goal 6)

A CIP is a requirement of state law for all capital projects by the City. Repeating it here adds nothing to the process and is redundant.

Policy 7.7 is already covered substantially by the Governance Through Civic Participation Chapter.