



# Chapter 12

## Parks and Recreation

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## 12.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the City of Spokane's Comprehensive Plan summarizes the Spokane Parks and Recreation "Roadmap to the Future" master plan document. The complete 2010 Roadmap to the Future master plan, or as amended, is available on the internet at [spokaneparks.org](http://spokaneparks.org).



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 past, the citizens of Spokane have encouraged and supported the development of a park system superior to that of most other cities. Today, changing recreational pursuits and changes to the demographic characteristics of our population make the provision of parks and open spaces even more challenging and important.

For the future, different work schedules, income levels, and lifestyles will have a profound impact on the way that parks and open space are provided. Because of reduced public budgets, many more recreational facilities and programs traditionally provided by public agencies are now being offered by private organizations. Scarce land has resulted in recreational facilities being located over and under freeways, on top of buildings, and in underground locations. Additionally, recreation planners are taking a much broader look at the way recreational opportunities are provided. Open spaces and park facilities are being integrated with other types of land uses rather than being provided as an isolated set of spaces or experiences.

This plan is intended to guide the public and private decisions that relate to the scope, quality, and location of leisure opportunities that meet the needs of the city's residents and visitors. It is not intended to be a blueprint for the acquisition and development of specific parks and recreation land or facilities. The Spokane Park Board, composed of ten members appointed by the mayor and a Council Liaison appointed by City Council, meets monthly and provides policy direction to the Spokane Parks and Recreation Department.



## **12.2 VISION AND VALUES**

Spokane volunteers working on the Comprehensive Plan identified important themes in relation to Spokane's current and future growth. A series of visions and values was crafted for each element of the Comprehensive Plan that describes specific performance objectives. From the Visions and Values document, adopted in 1996 by the City Council, the Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies were generated.

### **Vision**

"Spokane will acquire, operate, enhance, and protect a diverse system of parks, boulevards, parkways, urban forest, golf courses, and recreational, cultural, historical, and open space areas for the enjoyment and enrichment of all."

### **Values**

"The things that are important to Spokane's future include:

- Providing and maintaining parks to serve all neighborhoods;
- Maintaining open spaces, golf courses, and trails;
- Being close to the outdoors, recreation, and nature;
- Providing recreation facilities and programs; and
- Maintaining linkages between parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces."





## 12.3 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.

### PRS 1 PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION

**Goal: Assure the preservation and conservation of unique, fragile, and scenic natural resources, and especially non-renewable resources.**

#### Policies

#### PRS 1.1 Open Space System

*Provide an open space system within the urban growth boundary that connects with regional open space and maintains habitat for wildlife corridors.*

**Discussion:** The city should work with other park and open space providers to create a regional open space and green belt system. This may include coordination with local utilities for joint use of utility corridors for passive recreational uses.



#### PRS 1.2 River Corridors

*Protect river and stream corridors as crucial natural resources that need to be preserved for the health, enjoyment and responsible use and access of the community, consistent with the Shoreline Master Program.*

#### PRS 1.3 Funding for Open Space and Shoreline Land Acquisition

*Purchase open space and shoreline land when they become available using funding sources available.*

#### PRS 1.4 Property Owners and Developers

*Work cooperatively with property owners and developers to preserve open space areas within or between developments, especially those that provide visual or physical linkages to the open space network.*

**Discussion:** This should be a consideration during the approval process for subdivisions, planned contracts, and shoreline permits. The city should explore the use of regionally consistent incentives to protect open space. Incentives may include bonus densities, transfer of development rights, and tax abatement or deferment.



### PRS 1.5 Open Space Buffers

*Preserve and/or establish areas of open space buffer to provide separation between conflicting land uses.*

### PRS 1.6 Opportunity Fund

*Create an "Opportunity Fund" to protect open space or acquire parkland, which would be lost if not immediately purchased.*

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## PRS 2 PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

**Goal:** Provide a park system that is an integral and vital part of the open space system and that takes advantage of the opportunities for passive and active recreation that a comprehensive open space system provides.

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### Policies

#### PRS 2.1 Amenities Within City Boundaries

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

#### PRS 2.2 Access to Open Space and Park Amenities

*Provide for linkages and connectivity of open space and park amenities.*

**Discussion:** To maintain the viability and health of the city, residents should have equitable access to open space and park amenities. Design for the development of new or redevelopment of existing open space and park amenities should include consideration of sidewalks, trails, bicycle paths, and mass transit linkages.



#### PRS 2.3 Parks and Recreation Amenities

*Continue to develop parks and recreation amenities that enhance the local economy.*

**Discussion:** Parks and recreation amenities including trails, interpretive areas, plant materials, public squares, viewpoints, sports complexes, golf courses, sports fields, recreation opportunities, public gardens, entertainment venues, and interpretive signage, provide benefits to both residents and visitors.



## PRS 2.4 Urban Forestry Program

*Support a comprehensive urban forestry program.*

**Discussion:** An urban forestry program includes an inventory of existing trees and all available tree locations and establishes goals for new and replacement tree planting and total canopy cover. The program could serve as a means to educate the public regarding the benefits of trees and their necessary maintenance. Citywide regulations and street standards that require establishing and maintaining plantings in traffic islands and planting strips and that allow large canopy street trees are recommended.

The City of Spokane should continue to work with the Spokane County Conservation District, which is a state-chartered agency established to promote education and preservation of natural resources. This cooperation avails the city of greater funding opportunities, encourages the sharing of staff expertise, and promotes tree planting programs on a countywide basis.

## PRS 2.5 Park Funding

*Consider all potential funding sources to maintain the adopted level of service standards for parks.*

## PRS 2.6 Capital Improvement Program

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

## PRS 2.7 Cultural and Historic Parks

*Encourage the preservation of and showcase the cultural and historic character of the parks and the park system.*

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## PRS 3 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

**Goal: Work with other agencies to provide a convenient and pleasant open space-related network for pedestrian and bicyclist circulation throughout the City of Spokane.**

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### Policies

### PRS 3.1 Trails and Linkages

*Provide trails and linkages to parks in accordance with city adopted plans.*

### PRS 3.2 Trail Corridor Development

*Include landscaping, revegetation, and reforestation in trail corridor development where appropriate and desirable to provide a pleasant trail experience, compatible with adjacent uses.*





**Discussion:** Low Impact Development (LID) techniques should also be incorporated into trail corridor development when feasible. Land compatible design, natural drainage patterns, native landscaping, protection of natural features, and porous pavement are merely a few of the techniques that should be considered during trail corridor development.

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## PRS 4 MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

**Goal:** Recognize and update Spokane’s existing park resources by continuing the park preventative maintenance program.

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### Policies

#### PRS 4.1 Maintenance Management Program

*Implement a maintenance management program that will project maintenance, facility, and replacement costs.*

**Discussion:** The current Park Operations budget is part of the Park Fund budget. The maintenance management program should include six-year projections of maintenance and capital needs in addition to facility and equipment replacement costs. Typical elements include playground equipment, community buildings, pavilions, shelters, restrooms, park furniture, irrigation systems, turf/tree/shrub areas, aquatics centers, splash pads, sports facilities and infrastructure.

#### PRS 4.2 Park Circulation Patterns

*Improve park circulation patterns for motorists, bicyclists, equestrians, and pedestrians.*

#### PRS 4.3 Park Sign Plan

*Implement and maintain a park sign plan that standardizes all park signs, including entrance, direction, and rules signs.*

**Discussion:** This policy does not pertain to historic signs.

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## PRS 5 RECREATION PROGRAM

**Goal:** Assure an indoor and outdoor recreation program, which provides well-rounded recreational opportunities for citizens of all ages and abilities.

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### Policies

#### PRS 5.1 Recreation Opportunities

*Provide and improve recreational opportunities that are easily accessible to all citizens of Spokane.*



**Discussion:** Continue to support community-oriented special interest programs that are responsive to expressed demands, foster community support, and improve the health of the community.

### **PRS 5.2 Private Partnerships**

*Create public-private partnerships and develop incentives for community-oriented programs that are responsive to needs and foster participant support of all ages and abilities.*

### **PRS 5.3 Special Programs**

*Support special population participants in Spokane Parks and Recreation Department programs.*

### **PRS 5.4 Community Outreach**

*Promote parks and recreation programs, services, and facilities through an effective community outreach program, utilizing a variety of communication methods.*

### **PRS 5.5 Indoor Recreational Facilities and Programs**

*Provide facilities and programs that afford the public the opportunity to participate in a broad range of indoor recreational activities.*

**Discussion:** Indoor recreational activities may include fine arts, historical appreciation, performing arts, arts and crafts, fitness, swimming, and indoor athletics.

### **PRS 5.6 Outdoor Recreational Facilities**

*Provide facilities and programs that allow the public the opportunity to participate in a broad range of outdoor recreational activities.*

### **PRS 5.7 City Golf Courses**

*Continue to provide for and maintain the public golf courses in Spokane.*



## PRS 6 COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

**Goal:** Encourage and pursue a climate of 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.

### Policies

#### PRS 6.1 Duplication of Recreational Opportunities

*Facilitate cooperation and communication among government agencies, non-profit organizations, school districts, and private businesses to avoid duplication in providing recreational opportunities within the community.*

#### PRS 6.2 Cooperative Planning and Use of Recreational Facilities

*Conduct cooperative planning and use of recreational facilities with public and private groups in the community.*

#### PRS 6.3 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.*



## PRS 7 PARKS SERVICE QUALITY

**Goal:** Provide a parks and recreation system that is enjoyable, efficient, financially responsible, and a source of civic pride.

### Policies

#### PRS 7.1 Quality of Service

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

#### PRS 7.2 Modern Management Practices

*Employ state-of-the-art techniques in the park and recreation profession by providing staff training, labor-saving equipment, automatic systems, durable materials, effective facility design, and responsive leisure services.*



### PRS 7.3 Standards and Policies

*Maintain open communication and collaborative planning processes that help define service levels based on good management practices while providing quality service to the public.*

**Discussion:** Open communication with all citizens is important to the Spokane Park Board. Open monthly committee and board meetings are held for this purpose. Service levels are defined through this process that may also include neighborhood, community, and special interest group meetings.

### PRS 7.4 Volunteers

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

### PRS 7.5 Evaluations

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

### PRS 7.6 Action Plan

*Develop an action plan to ensure elements of the Roadmap to the Future master plan are implemented.*

### PRS 7.7 Public Participation

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

