



Thursday, May 22, 2025

## Your Details

Basic information about yourself

Name	Laura Padden
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I am a candidate running for...	Spokane Valley City Council, Position #7
Website Address	paddenforcouncil.com

### Please list any/all social media account URLs.

I do not have any particular social media account. Those tend to be echo chambers for a particular view point. During campaigns I do take advantage of the pop up ads that will show on the internet.

## Getting to Know You

This next section will give you the opportunity to provide details about who you are as a person, candidate, and member of the community.

### Tell us about yourself.

**I have lived in Spokane Valley since I was 2 years old. I am the youngest of 6 siblings although I share the honor with a twin brother. Both my mom and dad were attorneys and we were raised to work hard, study to do well in school, and give back to the community. Spokane Valley is a great place to live, work and raise a family. My husband Mike and I just celebrated our 48th wedding anniversary and raised our 5 sons here in the Valley.**

**My full-time working career started at Jacklin Seed Company beginning as office help and rising to be their Data Processing Manager. I left to have and help raise our children.**

**I graduated from WSU with a BS in Police Science and Administration. Approximately 15 years later, I returned to school and received a BS in Computer Science from EWU. I worked as a programmer in private industry for a number of years. Since 2006 I have been and currently am a web developer for Spokane Colleges (formerly Community Colleges of Spokane).**

**I have always been active in my Church serving in a number of different**

capacities including youth director, religious education teacher, volunteer for various social events/fundraisers and currently I am a member of the Church Finance Council.

I have been a frequent blood donor.

My dad was very active in Republican politics and I spent many hours helping him with signs, literature drops, helping during precinct caucuses, etc. At one time he was the Spokane County Republican State Committeeman and ran as a Republican for State Attorney General (1964). It is no wonder I married someone politically active and spent even more hours doing volunteer work for his campaigns and for other candidates as well. Stuffing envelopes, writing letters to the editor, door belling, phone calling - doing whatever I could to help get good people elected who stand for conservative values of family, freedom, fiscal responsibility and limited government. After many years working behind the scenes, I took a leap of faith and decided to run for office myself. It is very different being out there publicly defending and promoting our values. Four years ago I ran for and was elected to the Spokane Valley City Council, Position #7 replacing a more liberal incumbent. This has and continues to be both a challenging and rewarding experience. City government touches an amazing number of issues and gives us all many opportunities to apply our principles at the local level.

I enjoy bike riding and used to ride to and from work until remote working ended that. Mike and I love to ride on the many trails in the region and particularly the Trail of the Coeur D'Alenes in Idaho (cheaper gas there too!). I also love to travel and have good reason to do so with 2 sons and their families living overseas. The best and most enjoyable activity is playing with our grandchildren!

**List any relevant experience, leadership, or service.**

Spokane Valley City Council - 2021 to present

Republican PCO

Volunteer for many campaigns over many years - for my husband's races and for other candidates

Church Finance Council

Church Youth Director (former)

Web Developer for Spokane Colleges

Member, multiple Selection (hiring) Committees at Spokane Colleges

Member, Web Team Committee - setting policies and procedures for college web site management

Business owner, web consultant (former)

Programmer, Aurora Consulting Group (former). This was an IT start up founded by 3

professor/instructors from EWU. I saw first hand the challenges of starting and running a business to the point where it was successful enough to be bought out by a bigger company. Rather the goal all along.

Data Processing Manager, Jacklin Seed Company (former). This was my first experience managing people. It was a great learning experience!

Presidential Classroom for Young Americans - as a senior in high school, two of us were selected to travel to Washington DC to participate in a week-long program to learn more about the government, participate

in classes and listen to special speakers.  
Blood donor for many years

**Describe your duty to the office you are running for and how you will achieve success.**

As a member of the Spokane Valley City Council, I swear to uphold the Constitution of the US, the Constitution of the State of Washington, the laws of Washington State, the laws and ordinances of our City and the rules, regulations and procedures of our own Governance Manual. Within that framework, I believe it is important to be a minimalist - that is smaller government is better government. I believe in low taxes, strong and supportive business policies, a safe and law-abiding community, and increasing opportunities for home ownership - an important building block for personal financial stability. I will achieve success by working hard, always learning and looking for solutions, communicating and voting my values and policies, by NOT burning bridges and trying to find the areas where we can agree and move forward.

**What does success look like for this position and what key performance indicators should voters use to evaluate you?**

The performance indicators should primarily be how I voted on the items before me. It would be unfair to be rated/measured on the actual outcomes as it is a 7 member council and majority rules. One can be in the minority yet vote and argue to support the principles we hold dear. Yes, I have been in that situation. Other performance indicators include:

Adequate preparation for each item of each meeting to gain an understanding of the items before us.

Ability to ask good questions to either seek clarification of an issue, spark discussion, or determine impacts - good and bad - of a decision.

Understand how the city runs and the proper processes in place. This includes the role of Council in the City Manager/Council form of government and the statutory relationship that must govern interactions. Have some grasp of the history of what has happened in the past that helps determine our present day situations.

Operate without burning bridges.

Success can be measured a number of ways.

Does the Council member represent and work for the good of the City.

Are they active in discussions/questions or just 'go with the flow'

When constituents raises a concern, does the Council member respond and get some kind of resolution or explanation.

What gets done for the furtherance of City priorities.

In my case, I am on the correct side (I believe) of setting the policy to fill police officer vacancies, hiring and additional 10 officers, handling their hiring, training, equipment, vehicles, etc. all within existing funds when our revenue is flat and expenses have increased dramatically over the last few years. Remember double-digit inflation and supply chain issues? In response to a constituent concern, I pushed for addressing the illicit massage parlor/trafficking issue. It became a priority and we now have a strong ordinance where the City has been able to close 80% of the illicit parlors. I did not do the work, research, collaborating with prosecutors and State Association - others did that as the Council only sets the policy. In addition, we added a reckless endangerment ordinance around fentanyl and methamphetamine to try to address the danger to children and others when users expose them to these dangerous drugs. I was also able to advocate for a neighborhood to get their local streets maintained. I was fortunate enough to be successful in tangible ways in these examples, but again, when it takes 4 out of the 7 votes, it can be a challenge.

**What community activities are you engaged in? Have you held leadership roles in any of these organizations?**

I am a Republican PCO and so am associated with the Spokane County Republican Party.

In the past, I was a member of the Ponderosa Republican Women's Club

Member of Citizen's Alliance for Property Rights (CAPR)

I have not held leadership roles in any of the above.

Formerly on the Board of Human Life of Spokane

I am currently an ex-officio member of the Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce Board

Formerly a member of the Spokane Regional Law and Justice Committee

Very active in my Church. I am currently on the Finance Council and am a former religious education teacher and former youth director

# Your Political Beliefs

This section contains a series of questions about your alignment concerning broad governmental philosophies as well as some specific issues.

## **Where do our rights as citizens of the United States come from? Under what conditions can government infringe or suspend them?**

Our rights as citizens come from God, and are embodied in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Our rights are NOT granted by the State.

They should not be suspended or infringed upon. It can and does happen when the government oversteps its power or when there is a breakdown in societal order.

We elect members of Congress and State Legislators and they often pass laws that infringe on our rights, for example, some gun legislation. The government could declare martial law which would mean a catastrophe of major proportions and I would fear greatly that our Republic might never be restored.

## **Do you consider yourself a constitutional originalist or do you prescribe to it as a living document? Please explain.**

I consider myself a constitutional originalist. The principles set forth in the Constitution and the rights bestowed on us by God do not change with time. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are everyone's because of our humanity. The Constitution is the framework for protecting those. Viewing it as a living document means it will change depending on the latest fad, change in societal values/norms, or what group is applying more pressure and lobbying harder than others. Using that definition is actually the justification for changing the Constitution.

## **What is the purpose of government? If elected, how will you perform your duties based on that "purpose?"**

One can say that the overall purpose is to provide a safe environment where people can live, work, prosper and enjoy life (where we can achieve life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness). It takes rather different forms depending on the level of government. At the local level, I think the purpose can be fulfilled in the priorities listed below.

I think the top priority of city government is to provide for public safety. That includes police, fire, emergency care. Since incorporation, our population has grown substantially but the police force has not. A recent study showed that Spokane Valley was understaffed by approximately 30 officers. We plan to increase the number of police officers in stages. We voted to add 10 new officers in 2025 and managed to do hire, train, provide vehicles and equipment within the existing budget. The next stage also involves expanding space in the precinct building to accommodate the additional 7-10 officers for Phase II. Funding is yet to be determined.

The second priority is to provide the infrastructure for the movement of people, vehicles and goods. We have a number of challenges since the Valley is bisected by the railroad tracks which has been an impediment to movement. We have several large road/grade separation projects that are very expensive and we have successfully sought and obtained grant money from local, state and federal sources. We completed the project on Barker last year which serves the industrial area and has vastly improved business transportation, vehicle and pedestrian safety. We started the Pines/Trent grade separation this Spring.

Strong Economic Development efforts for jobs and prosperity. In the last few years we opened up more industrial park areas in the NE sector. It has been wildly successful in bringing in business. For our tourism plan, we are building a state of the art cross-country track that has been highly anticipated and drawn in events (before completion) for the NCAA Division I Regionals and NWACC Championships. Improvements continue at Greenacres Park and we also continue to develop Balfour Park adding the playground and Splash Park in the next Phase.

All of our decisions should be guided by:

Will it improve public safety without sacrificing privacy and freedom?

Will it improve the business opportunities, bring new businesses in and manage the flow of commerce?

Will it improve the quality of life?

Can we afford to do it????

All of the above projects qualify and, as a City, we aggressively pursue grant funding to bring our tax dollars back to the City and reduce the cost burden of our residents.

**When does life begin and at what point does the government have a duty to protect it?**

Life begins at conception and the duty to protect it starts at that moment.

**Do you have any criminal convictions, ever filed for bankruptcy, have any active or unresolved tax liens, any conflicts of interest that may jeopardize your candidacy?**

No  
No  
No  
No

**Describe how you will make yourself available to your constituents and vote as their representative, adhering to the values and answers you've provided in this questionnaire.**

I will be door bellling this entire spring, summer and fall listening to my constituents.  
I am available by phone, email or for meetings  
I attend community events and engage with the participants  
I am asked to speak at events - for example Monday is a Webelos group going for their civic badges so I will be speaking on city elections  
I listen and take notes during public comment at Council meetings and often follow up with the constituent(s)  
I am present and participate in the "Community Conversations" which take place for 50 minutes before Council meetings 1/month.  
I vote according to the values I presented here and in my election materials.  
There are always differences of opinions and as such, some will feel that I do not represent them well if we disagree on values/issues.

**Please provide any feedback, comments, or questions that you have for the SCRCC.**

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this process!  
You certainly are very thorough with your questions and have invested a ton of time, talent and energy.

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