



University District Public Development Authority Incubation Village Market Needs and Assessment Final Report

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Feasibility Study Final Report

To begin the process of developing an incubation village and maker space, the Spokane University District Public Development Authority (UDPDA) contracted with d&b Creative to review literature, summarize data, and conduct interviews as part of a comprehensive feasibility study. This report summarizes work completed throughout the project.

Background

In 2009, the University District Revitalization Area (UDRA) was created by [City of Spokane Ordinance C-34470](#) as a special funding district to revitalize the area east of downtown Spokane. Led by Mithun, the University District (UD) recently completed “*You Belong in the UD! Next Generation Conceptual Plan 2065*”, a 40-year plan to create a thriving, prosperous district for all. The plan is guided by two priorities: climate resilience and racial-social equity.¹ To accomplish these goals, the plan calls for collective action with “coordinated improvements, investments, programs, and actions of the strong institutions, businesses, community organizations, and people who call the UD home.”² Three concepts drive the plan’s recommendations: Reveal and Learn, Rewild, and Rise Together. Spokane’s future incubation village falls under the third concept of Rise Together. According to the plan, “Business incubators, R&D workforce, and social programs increase opportunities and support essential needs and services. While the plan envisions growth and development, it is paired with an approach and strategies to support the people, organizations, and businesses of the UD and reduce displacement.”³ The incubation village will support the creation of a destination within the UD and support local food manufacturing, maker spaces, and the creative economy.

The UD has worked to ensure that community engagement is a key strategy for accomplishing the organization’s goals. Not only were open houses and focus groups held, but the organization has also incorporated interviews with community-based organizations and small businesses into the Incubation Village Market Needs and Assessment.

¹ *You Belong in the UD! Next Generation Conceptual Plan 2065*, University District, 2024, p.8

² *ibid*

³ *ibid*

Existing Materials Review

The d&b Creative team reviewed a large variety of sources, including websites, strategic plans, reports, histories, and presentations. A complete list of sources can be accessed at the end of this document.

The team focused on information relevant to the following topics:

- Spokane regional workforce development
- Spokane employment and job creation
- Business incubation services

Information Sources

- UDPDA
- City of Spokane
- Spokane County
- Spokane Workforce
- Regional and national organizations supporting business incubators and maker spaces
- Local and regional business incubators and maker spaces
- Universities

Summary

The team compiled best practices and trends from existing literature that emphasized data-driven decisions, placekeeping, and a human-centered approach.

Trends:

- Supplemental funding contributes to program success
- Championing and coordinating small business assistance, providing space, and funding existing incubators were

Placekeeping is the active care and maintenance of a place and its social fabric by the people who live and work there. It is not just preserving buildings but keeping the cultural memories associated with a locale alive, while supporting the ability of local people to maintain their way of life as they choose.

- U.S. Department of Arts and Culture

the most common responses as to how similar projects could promote small business development

- Successful incubators provide more than just physical space
- Incubator success depends on both design/development at the outset and successful operations management on an ongoing basis
- Funding is the top concern among entrepreneurs
- Among food-focused entrepreneurs, space ranked ahead of funding as a top concern

Best Practices

- Share best practices that emerge throughout the project
- Evaluate what works
- Measure the maker movement's development
- Publish market analyses
- Financially support education opportunities related to the maker spaces

Data Summary

To complete the data summary related to the incubator village and maker space, the d&b Creative team reviewed a large variety of sources, including websites, reports, and presentations.

The team focused on data relevant to the following topics:

- Population
- Economic vitality
- Employment
- Education
- Job creation
- Poverty

Information Sources

- UDPDA
- City of Spokane
- Spokane County

- Spokane Workforce
- Local universities

For the complete summary of data, including charts and highlights from the U Pulse Small Business Survey, see Appendix C: Data Summary.

Interviews with Community Leaders

The d&b Creative team interviewed 27 community leaders to gather input on the benefits, challenges, needs of business owners and makers, and keys to success for the project. The team coded the responses by the following themes:

- Location and building (external)
- Building (internal)
- Services for businesses, makers, and the community
- Business and maker equipment needs
- Challenges to the launch and sustainability of the project
- Benefits to businesses, community, and economy
- Keys to success
- Opportunities for collaboration with the UD

Location and Building (external)

Nearly all respondents discussed the need for walkable areas and a building with a low carbon footprint. They had many suggestions for ways to make the space welcoming to all, including:

- Sensory garden
- Incorporating special needs
- Greenhouse, Zen space, and/or atrium
- Astronomy dome

Safety was an important topic, and interviewees discussed the importance of freedom from ICE deportation raids, zoning, parking, flow of traffic and respect for all neighbors, including the unhoused. They expressed concerns about gentrification and the displacement of the unhoused. Along with people, discussions also touched on the environmental impact and questions about how the river will benefit, and emphasized the

need for industrial composting. Many expressed the desire for the space to be more than just “business as usual” or “not the typical Spokane building.”

Building (internal)

Questions about the space elicited excitement and a broad variety of ideas from interviewees. These suggestions are summarized in the table below.

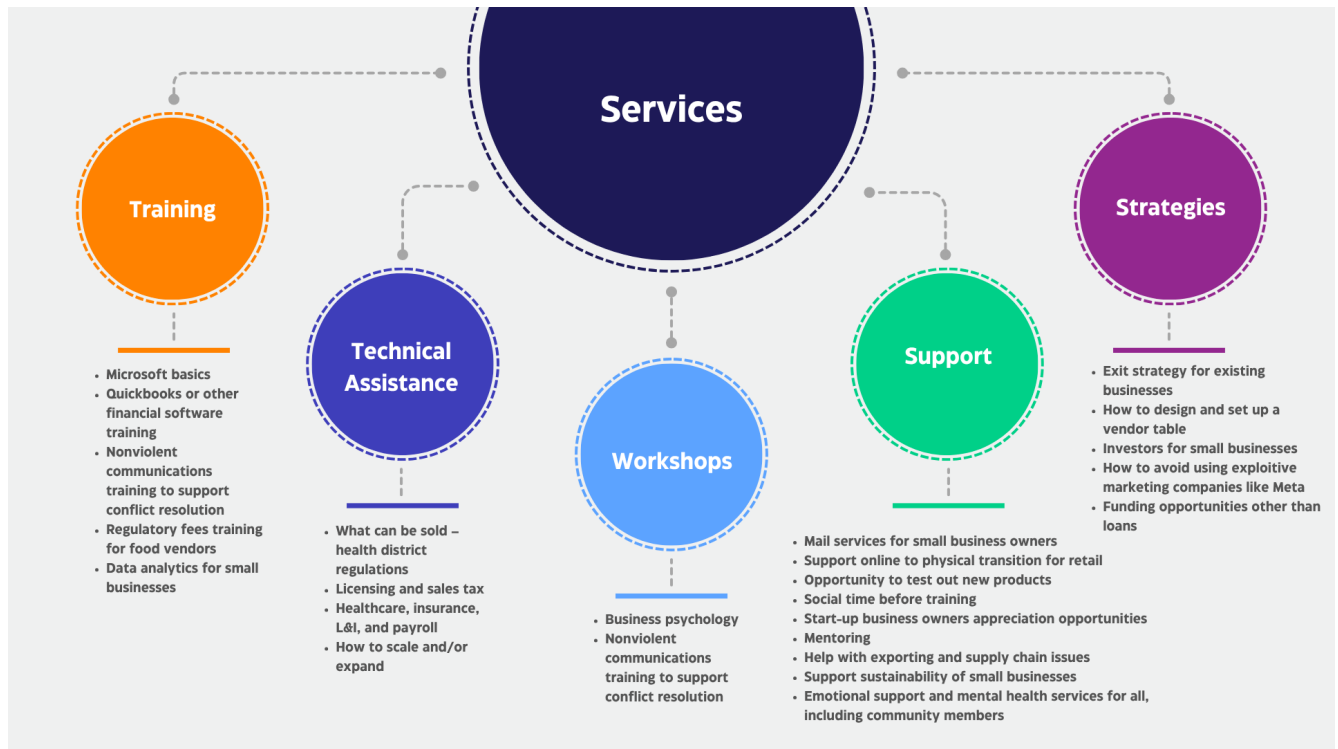
Cultural	Physical	Operations/Maintenance
People are more engaged when they feel safe	Environment feels healthy – light, air quality, spacious, atrium, colorful	Receptionist/Greeter
Events to bring in customers	Classroom/instructional, streaming	Temporary and long-term rent/lease options
Community people and hosts	Extra space for people to connect	Water
Trauma-informed	Pitch/presenter area	Ventilation
Not too stimulating, different spaces and experiences	Historic	Waste disposal
Intentional on how people are grouped – avoid the “diversity corner”	Peaceful, surround sound	Variety of open hours
Open houses	Public showers	Booking system
Programs relevant to what is happening in the community	Storage	Low rent
Develop community	Good lighting	Business model – do people buy into it? If so, what is the fee?
	Accessibility	Equipment rental
	Group meeting/conference space	Childcare
	Instructions and signage in multiple languages	Tenants symbiotic – supplier or purchaser circular as possible
		Administration – turning over space, reviewing applications
		Janitorial

agreements and enforce them		Who is managing/curating the vendors and makers?
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Services for Businesses, Makers, and the Community

When asked about services that could be provided to businesses, makers, and community, interviewees were quick to respond that the new space does not need to start from the beginning. Having a physical space and plan to invite other organizations providing services into the space for training or technical assistance would be ideal. Interviewees also heavily emphasized the need for space and opportunities for small business owners and makers to network, commiserate, and share lessons learned with each other. One interviewee suggested sending a survey to small business owners in the region to better understand their needs for local sourcing and to avoid supporting large corporations like Amazon.

Additionally, multiple interviews discussed the challenges related to traditional food preparation. Sharing food is one of the most powerful ways to learn from and connect with people from diverse backgrounds. However, local food regulations can hinder the sale and sharing of traditional foods. **The UD can work with community organizations to advocate for change to food preparation regulations that honor traditional foods and keep everyone safe.**



Business and Maker Equipment Needs

When asked what small businesses and makers need in the village, the answers were consistently “space and lots of it!” Interviewees also stressed the need for affordability and a large variety of equipment:

- Computers, printers, reliable Wi-Fi
- Credit card processing
- Cooking and food storage

Immigrants and refugees often leave behind weave looms, sewing machines, and other large equipment when they come to the U.S.

For creatives, cost and space are huge factors when it comes to weaving and other large equipment, so makers need to be able to access these in various spaces.

Challenges to the Launch and Sustainability of the Project

Interviewees were quick to acknowledge that building the village and makers space will not be easy.



“Like your energy but not a viable product” is often heard about projects like this

Siloed groups not working together

Groups working from a scarcity mindset

Cost/funding

Some people don’t understand small business data and might not think the project will be successful – small businesses generate more revenue

Need a road map

Spokane doesn’t know how to build it and make it lucrative

How to prioritize – what do we fix first

Success will not come in the first year

Too many naysayers

The belief that we don’t need another retail market

Path forward may not be what people want

“So much has been poured into UD with not much result”

Benefits to Businesses, Community, and Economy

Interviewees were quick to list the benefits to small businesses, the community, and the Spokane economy. The space provides the opportunity to highlight Spokane’s diversity. For Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) small business opportunities can be typically blue collar. The space provides opportunities for more creativity among business types. It can also be a place that welcomes minority immigrant groups.

Participants also highlighted the importance of celebrating the arts, particularly as placemakers and the codification of cultural narratives, assets, and histories. Arts also provide positive experiences for youth and teens, and foster curiosity and hope. The space can also support emerging artists and foster the creative economy. One interview talked

about the desire to take non-certification courses in creative fields (e.g., welding and cooking).

The project also has the potential to provide collaboration, networking, and business opportunities, while giving different business categories the room to flourish. It keeps dollars in the community and raises Spokane's profile. Businesses can leverage an immediate customer base and engage with the public to boost sales. They can also rely on more predictable sales every month and cross-pollinate ideas with each other.

Along with the tangible benefits to the economy, maker spaces have the potential to support mental health and a healthy social fabric. They can foster a sense of belonging and show care for the neighborhood. Collaborative environments break down barriers and create support networks.

Keys to the Success of the Project

Diversity, consistency, transparency, communications, and affordability were common themes in discussions around the success of the incubator village and maker space.



Incorporate feedback from the people who will be using the space



Getting the word out in the right way – partner with local organizations as trusted messengers



Ensure steady customers, including new customers from outside Spokane, and calculate the number of customers per vendor



Vision together, and listen to naysayers and incorporate valid points into plans



Build in culture and ensure diversity of makers



Create multiple pathways to get involved



Intergenerational collaboration



Build off the cycle of arts ecosystem



Identify and engage champions – dynamic leaders who know who to talk to



Make sure services offered are not duplicating what is already here



Ensure diverse funding streams



Achieve 1-2 project successes, then tell the story and build off those successes



Have patience – this is a long-term process



Keep it fresh so people will come back



Be ready for feedback and change, and pivot when challenges arise



Food service should not be just selling hot food: accommodate wholesale and catering too

Opportunities for Collaboration with the UD

Several interviews expressed interest in participating in the project and collaborating with the UD. Spokane Public Schools and Spokane Colleges could provide unique opportunities for collaboration. The Community School, a project-based high school, stated that they are interested in collaborating on green architecture and other environmentally focused projects. Spokane Colleges offers an entrepreneurship certification program and is looking for ways to expand its specialization offerings, including culinary, construction, and welding. It develops its programs to be relevant to what is happening in the community and is very open to collaborating with small business development centers.

Additional suggestions included the following:

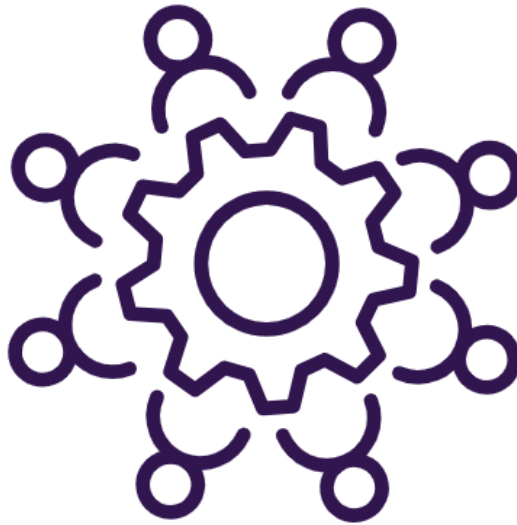
**Hub/Satellite for
Spark Central**

**Satellite for
Spokane Library**

**Satellite for Feast
chefs**

**Work with
stakeholders to
advocate for
regulation
changes related to
traditional foods**

**Fill in gaps from
Terrain**



**Classes or trainings
from small
business
organizations like
SBDC, SCORE,
SIMBA**

**Outreach for social
services conducted
by local nonprofit
organizations**

**Education
collaboration with
Spokane Schools
and Spokane
Colleges**

Existing Food Markets

To research existing food markets, the team worked with Spokane Workforce to obtain job data and compiled a list of farmers' markets. The team anticipates that this section will

complement and be expanded upon in the work completed by Ken Meter, an expert food systems analyst and consultant on the UDPDA's feasibility study.

Spokane Farmers Markets

In addition to the recently opened Scale House Market, the region's first year-round farmers market, Spokane is home to the following farmers markets:

- Spokane Farmers Market (Browne's Addition), 2nd & Chestnut, Coeur d'Alene Park
- Spokane Valley Farmers Market, CenterPlace Regional Event Center, 2426 N Discovery Place
- Perry Street Thursday Market, 1000 South Perry Street
- Emerson-Garfield Farmers Market, Emerson Park
- Kendall Yards Night Market, West Summit Parkway between Cedar and Adams Alley
- Millwood Farmers Market, 9301 E Frederick Ave, Millwood City Park
- Fairwood Farmers Market, 319 W Hastings Rd, Spokane
- Hillyard Farmers Market, 4001 N Cook St, Northeast Community Center
- Liberty Lake Farmers Market, 1421 N Meadowwood Lane
- Wonder Market, 835 N Post Street, Spokane

According to a recent national survey published by the Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development, the average spend per visit at farmers markets is \$15-\$28. It is also worth noting that SNAP Market Match, a program that helps SNAP shoppers buy additional fruits, vegetables, herbs, and plant starts (\$25 or more per day), is available at many of the above markets.

Food Services

Accommodation and Food Service is in the top five of employment industries in Spokane.⁴ There are currently 1,298 eating and drinking establishment business listings in Spokane County as of January 2025.⁵ According to a survey conducted by the Spokane Independent Metro Business Alliance (SIMBA), there were 223 anticipated food trucks in 2023. However, for mobile food services, Spokane is lower than the national average when it comes to hiring and available talent for the industry.

⁴ *Local Integrated Workforce Plan Program Years 2024-2028*, Spokane Workforce Council, 202

⁵ Dun & Bradstreet

Light Hiring Competition Over a Thin Supply of Regional Talent



*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Mobile Food Services and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Spokane County, WA. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

Figure 1. Spokane Workforce Council, Industry Snapshot, Mobile Food Services

Most jobs in Spokane County are found in food preparation and serving-related occupations:

Most Jobs are Found in the Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations Industry Sector



Figure 2. Spokane Workforce Council, Industry Snapshot, Mobile Food Services

The data presented could indicate a variety of opportunities related to the incubator village and maker space. While there appears to be a robust food service industry in Spokane based on the number of registered businesses and anticipated food trucks, the hiring pool may not support those numbers. Interviewees indicated that many of the businesses that would be supported by the space typically hire family members and friends, which can lead to hiring opportunities not necessarily expressed in the current workforce data.

Business Incubation Services

The Spokane region currently has several options for business incubation services and makers spaces. This list emerged from the community leader interviews and d&b Creative research.

- AHANA – limited spaces available and offers both small business services and physical space.
- Feast World Kitchen – while Feast does provide incubation services, this is just a small portion of the work they do.

- WSU Pullman Incubator – works with entrepreneurs from all industries and provides mentoring and networking opportunities
- Coeur d’Alene Makers Space – nonprofit organization that offers equipment and training, as well as materials. They offer a sliding scale for students, individuals, and businesses.
- Vets Garage – shop with tools for woodworking, metal shaping, casting, CNC cutting tools, laser engravers, and 3D printers. They also offer classes in woodturning and the use of the equipment in the space. The space is available at no cost to veterans and for a small fee to non-veterans.
- Spark Central – makers space located in West Central Spokane, open to all economic backgrounds.
- Art Salvage – offers makers meet-up events at their location.
- Northtown Mall – latest vendor and maker space in the basement of the Northtown Mall.
- Spokane Library – offers a variety of makers spaces at library locations. The Hive hosts 6-month long residencies for selected artists. Space is limited and highly competitive.

Based on interviews with a sample of representatives from the above list, there are opportunities for the UDPDA to collaborate with current incubators as the village is developed. These opportunities could include:

- Satellite space throughout the incubator village that the organizations can use
- Cooking classes or food made by Feast World Kitchen chefs
- Vendor opportunities in the village for makers from other spaces
- Classes or training provided by entrepreneurs, mentors, and makers associated with other organizations

Recommendations for Immediate Next Steps

Based on the materials review, data summary, engagement plan, and final report, d&b Creative is recommending the following next steps for the project:

- Compile next steps from all consultants conducting studies to prioritize and identify any overlaps or connections
- Implement Engagement Plan (see Appendix D)

- Conduct round tables with community leaders
 - Develop a stakeholder project plan
 - Create outreach materials
 - Identify project champions
 - Identify an organization to operate the space
- Conduct an economic impact study
- Develop a communications plan to reach a broader community, including naysayers
- Develop funding plan
- Develop a project work plan
- Develop a matrix to ensure recommendations from community leaders are implemented throughout the project

Conclusion

The Spokane region has a solid foundation for economic growth, food service, and incubator spaces, but challenges remain to developing an incubator village. It will be important for project leaders to continue to engage the community in the project development, emphasize placekeeping over placemaking, collect and share data with multiple stakeholder groups, and incorporate best practices and lessons learned from similar spaces. The incubator village and maker space should emphasize inclusion, accessibility, and safety for everyone. This may include wheelchair access, while also providing public showers and walkability, while also protecting the immigrant and refugee community from deportation raids. Keys to the project's success include ensuring that community voices are heard and incorporated, and not expecting immediate success. These approaches will help support the people, organizations, and businesses of the UD and beyond.

Appendix A: Sources

[You Belong in the UD! Next Generation Conceptual Plan 2065](#), University District, 2024

[Spokane University District: Urban Amenities research and Analysis for the South UD](#), Walker Macy, Cascadia Partners, 2023

[U Pulse Small Business Survey](#), University District, 2023

[U Vision 2044 Strategic Plan: Goals, Strategies, and Tactics](#), University District, 2023

City of Spokane Quarterly Economic Indicators, Eastern Washington University, 2023

[U-District Co-Working Space](#), Spokane Workers Cooperative, 2023

Local Integrated Workforce Plan Program Years 2024-2028, Spokane Workforce Council, 2023

Towards a Unified Definition of Workforce Development, San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development, 2023

Understanding the Impacts of Neighborhood Change on Small Business, The National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders, 2018

Reimagining Small: Creating Incubator Communities for Small Growing Businesses, Le’Gary Jackson, 2024

How Cities Can Grow the Maker Movement, National League of Cities, Center for City Solutions and Applied Research, 2016

Small Business Development, Incubators, and Accelerators: Strategic Assessment, Port of Seattle, 2016

Residential Code Initiatives: Range of Alternatives, University District Development Committee, 2022

Greater Spokane Incorporated Strategic Plan, Greater Spokane Incorporated, 2016

[Strategic Master Plan Update and South Subarea Action Plan](#), University District Development Association and Public Development Authority, 2019

[A People’s History of the University District](#), Larry Cebula, 2024

University District Ecological Assets and Performance Standards, Greene Economics, 2024

Homes, Jobs, Community: Opportunity Zones Implementation, NDC, 2019

Workforce Roadmap: Manufacturing in Spokane, Washington, Spokane Workforce Council, 2022

U.S. farmers market attendance and experiences: Descriptive results from a national survey, Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development, ISSN: 2152-0801, <https://foodsystemsjournal.org>

Hacienda Community Development Corporation website: <https://www.haciendacdc.org/>

Portland Mercado website: <https://www.portlandmercado.org/>

Appendix B: Interviewees with Contact Information

Organization	Name	Contact Information
AHANA	Marvo no longer there	ahana.ed@ahana-meba.org
Nuestras Raices	Ethan Mendoza-Pena	ethan.m@hbpaofspokane.org
Feast World Kitchen	Ross Carper	ross@feastworldkitchen.org
Muslims for Community Action and Support	Naghmana Sherazi	naghmana.sherazi@equity.wa.gov
Carl Maxey Center/Calvary Baptist	Amos Atkinson	amos@carlmaxeycenter.org
INBA	Lindsey Lewis	lindsey@inbachamber.org
Spectrum	Vanessa Delgado	vanessa@spectrumcenterspokane.org
Terrain	Jackie Caro	jackie@terrainspokane.com
Latinos in Spokane	Jennyfer Mesa	jmesa@latinosenspokane.org
Asians for Collective Liberation	Lea Molina	lmolina@aclspokane.org
Reimagine Spokane	Ryann Louie	ryann@reimaginespokane.us
Spokane Handweavers Guild	Judy Olsen	president@spokaneweavers.org
Spokane Art Salvage	Katie Patterson Larsen	katie@artsalvagespokane.com
SIMBA	Robin Haynes	robin@spokaneindependent.org
Vets Garage	Chris Wade	cmwade04@gmail.com
Pacific Keep, Ukrainian Church	Boris Borisov	boris@pacifickeep.com
Whitworth Continuing ED	Brooke Kiener	bkiener@whitworth.edu
Manzanita House	Patricia Castaneda	pcastaneda@mhspokane.org
Gonzaga/Spokane Tribe of Indians	Barbara Gongyin	
Spokane Workforce	Mark Mattke	mmattke@spokaneworkforce.org
Northeast Community Center	Amber Waldref	awaldref@spokanecounty.org
Community Colleges of Spokane	Kevin Brockbank	Kevin.Brockbank@ccs.spokane.edu
StartUp Spokane	Mark Pond	mpond@spokanelibrary.org
The Community School	Cindy McMahon	cindymc@spokaneschools.org
Craft 3	Megan Hulsey	mhulsey@craft3.org
Avista Foundation	Kristine Meyer	kristine.meyer@avistacorp.com
Spark Central	Posie Kalin	posie@spark-central.org

Appendix C: Data Summary

Population

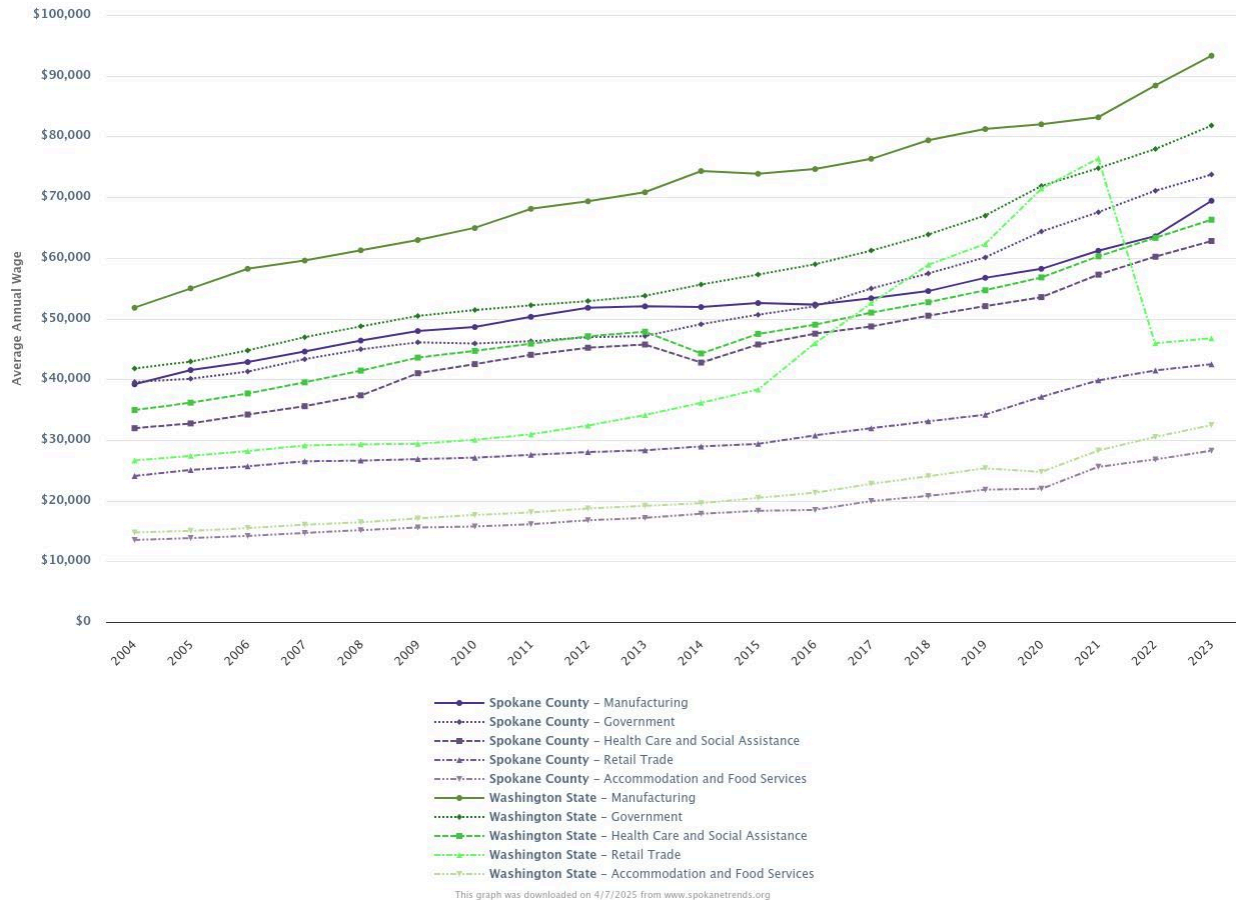
For the purposes of this project, the research team focused on Spokane County data.

- Spokane County, 2024: 559,400; annual growth rate: 0.87%
- Spokane County, 2023:
 - Ages 18-34: 23.4%
 - Ages 35-64: 36.6%
- Total arts-related businesses: 72 (Community Indicators Initiative of Spokane)
- Total eating and drinking establishments: 1,298 (Dun & Bradstreet)

Economic Vitality

In 2023, in Spokane County, the median household income was \$73,583. The top-five sectors are Manufacturing, Government, Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, and Accommodation and Food Services. The average annual wage in these sectors is included in the graph below.

2.1.5 Average Annual Wage in the Top-5 Employing Sectors

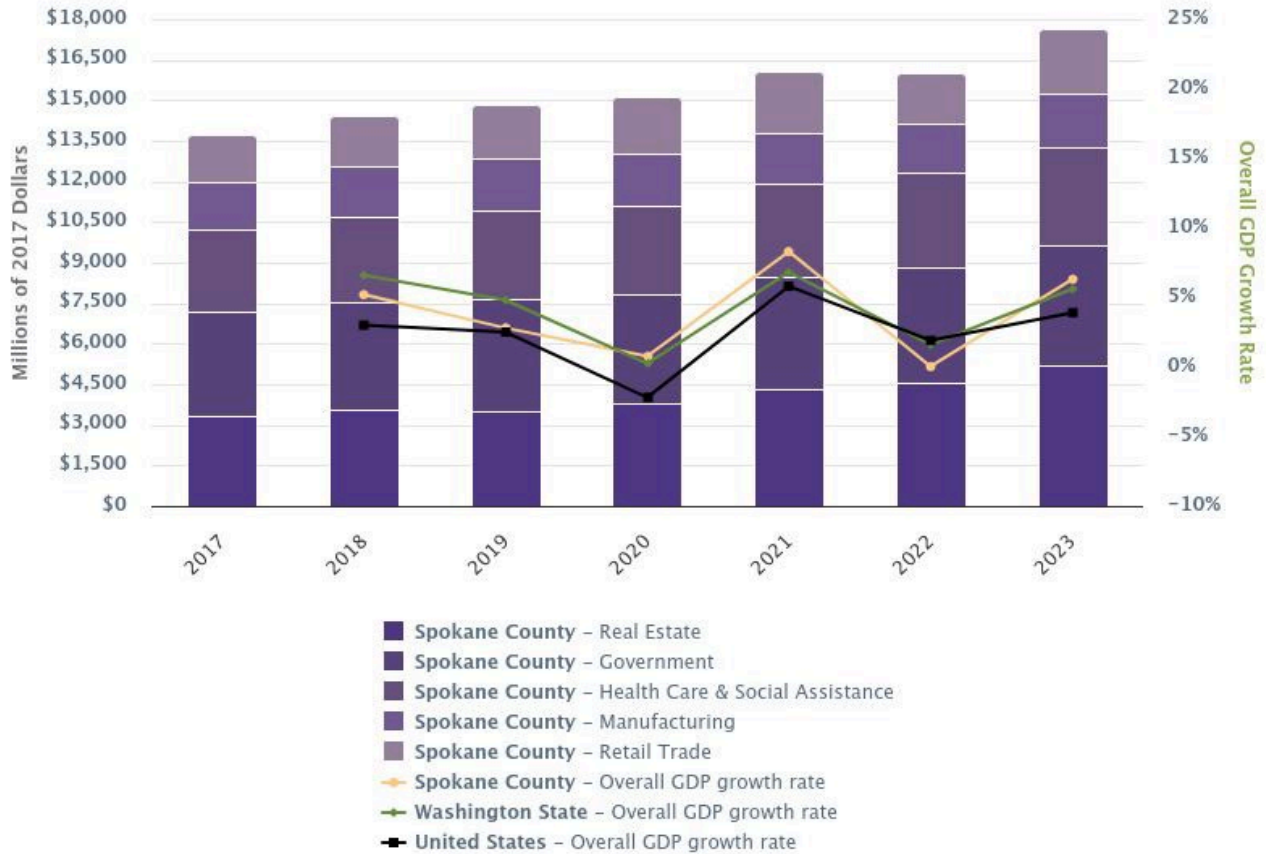


Economic Activity

In 2023, the new business applications submitted in Spokane County totaled 8,297, while the number of very small businesses (1-9 employees) totaled 9,854. The county also saw \$15 billion in annual taxable retail sales in 2023.

The total GDP of the top-five major sectors and the total GDP growth rate in 2017 dollars are illustrated in the graph below.

.2.2 Total GDP of the Top-5 Major Sectors & Total GDP Growth Rate – in 2017 Dollar Value



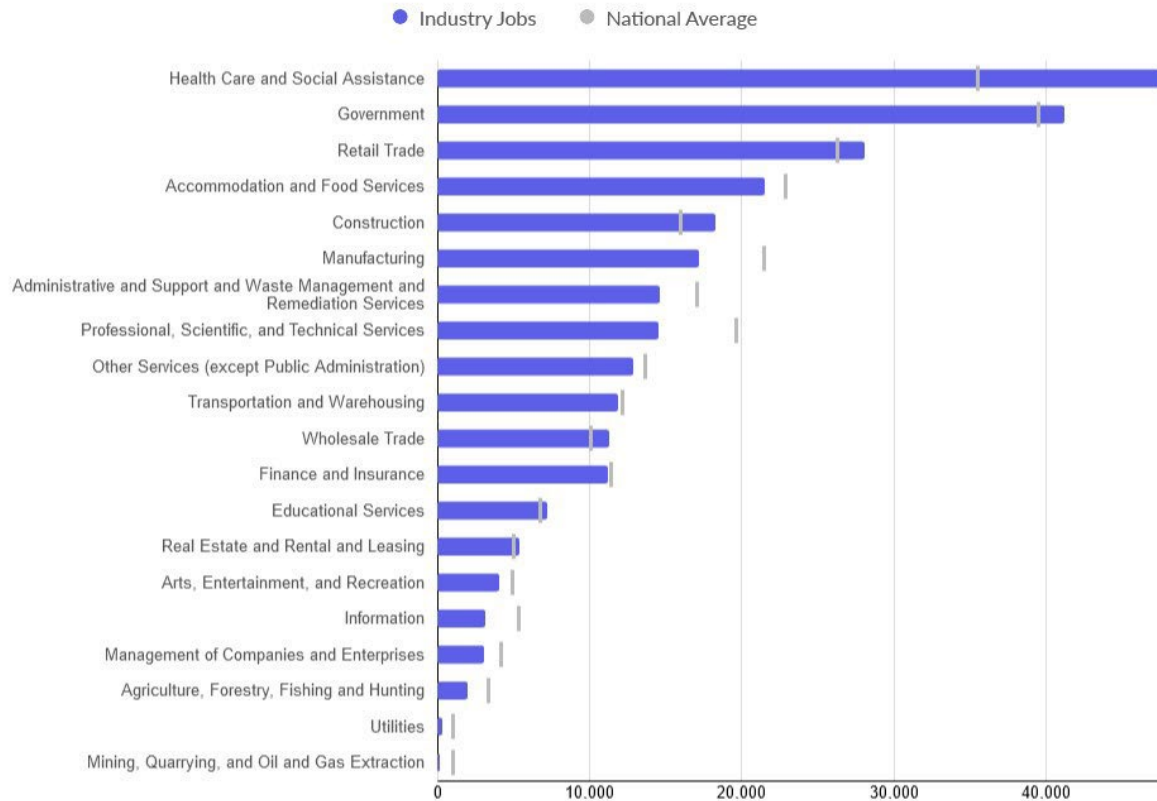
This graph was downloaded on 4/7/2025 from www.spokanetrends.org

Labor Market

Spokane County is the largest labor market in Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho. Total employment in Spokane County has increased by 17,006 jobs (6.6%) from 2018 to 2023. Over the next five years, another 15,000 new jobs are projected to be created in Spokane County.⁶

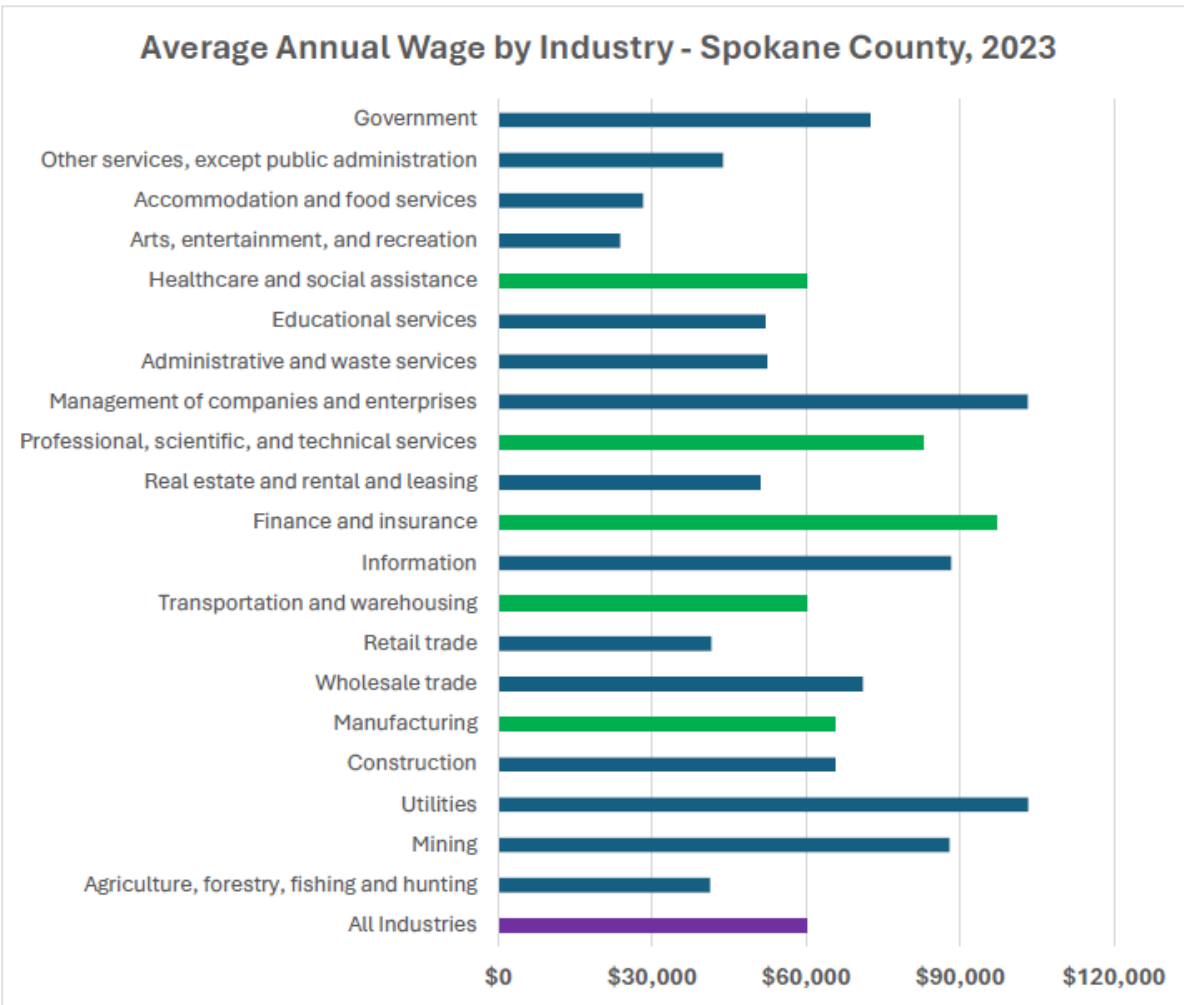
⁶ Local Integrated Workforce Plan Program Years 2024-2028, Spokane Workforce Council, 2023

Largest Industries



The largest industries are Health Care and Social Assistance, Government, Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Service, and Construction.

The average annual wage by industry in Spokane County in 2023 is included in the graph below.



Employment Security Department DATA

Workforce Demographics

Spokane has the largest job base between Seattle and Minneapolis. Spokane's population is growing faster than the national average. The primary driver of Spokane's population increase is net in-migration, with more people moving into Spokane than leaving. Since 2020, Spokane County has grown by 15,261 people, with 14,684 of that growth attributed to net in-migration, and the remaining 577 due to natural change (difference between births and deaths). The City of Spokane is the largest municipality in Spokane County and is the second largest city in Washington State. The Office of Financial Management projects High, Mid, and Low growth scenarios for counties across Washington state. Spokane County will

likely follow the Mid growth scenario, which will push the county population beyond 600,000 sometime between 2030 and 2035.⁷

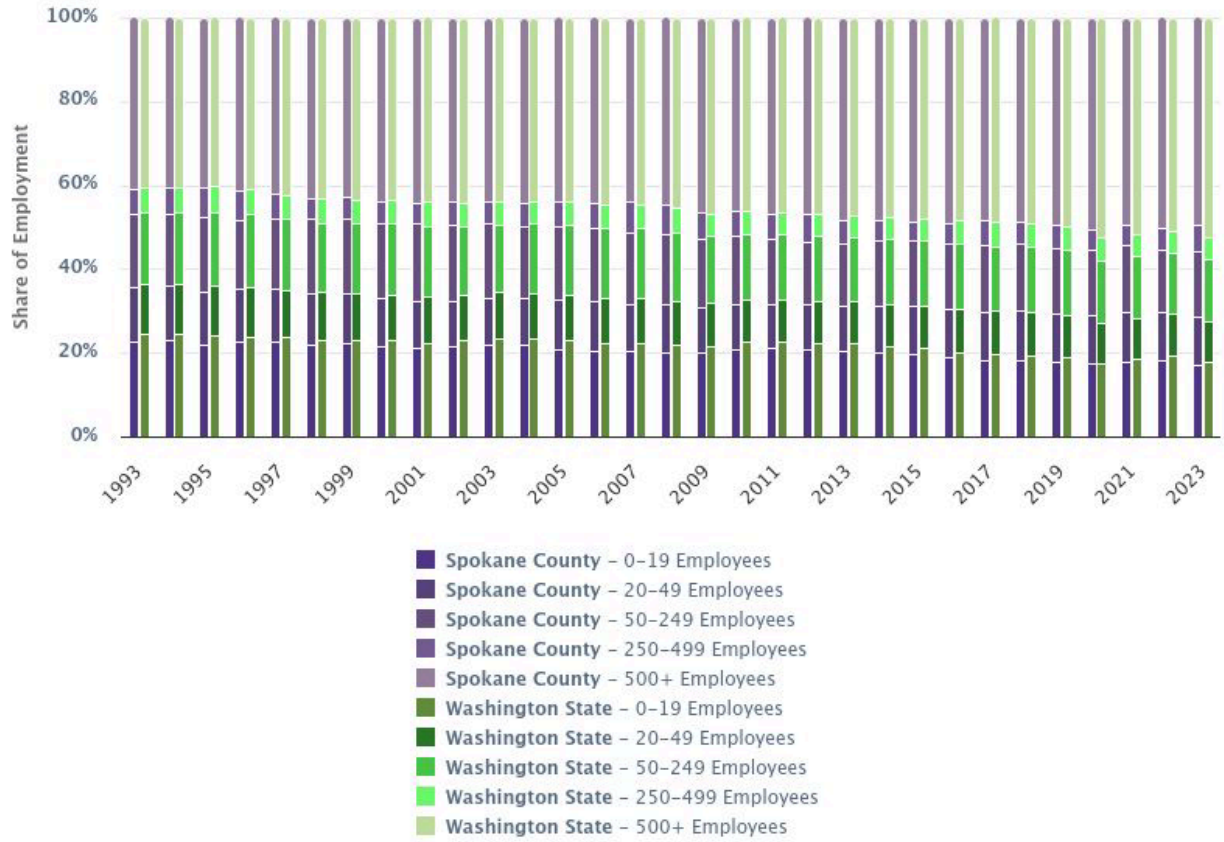
Spokane County in 2023:

- Total employed: 249,694
- Total civilian labor force and labor force participation rate of population ages 16+: 264,059
- Net jobs created: 3,779 (2022-2023)
- Total share of People of Color (POC) owned business (2021): 1,034
- Employment by POC firms (2021): 14,755

A breakdown of employment by business size and total employment by race and ethnicity are illustrated in the graphs below.

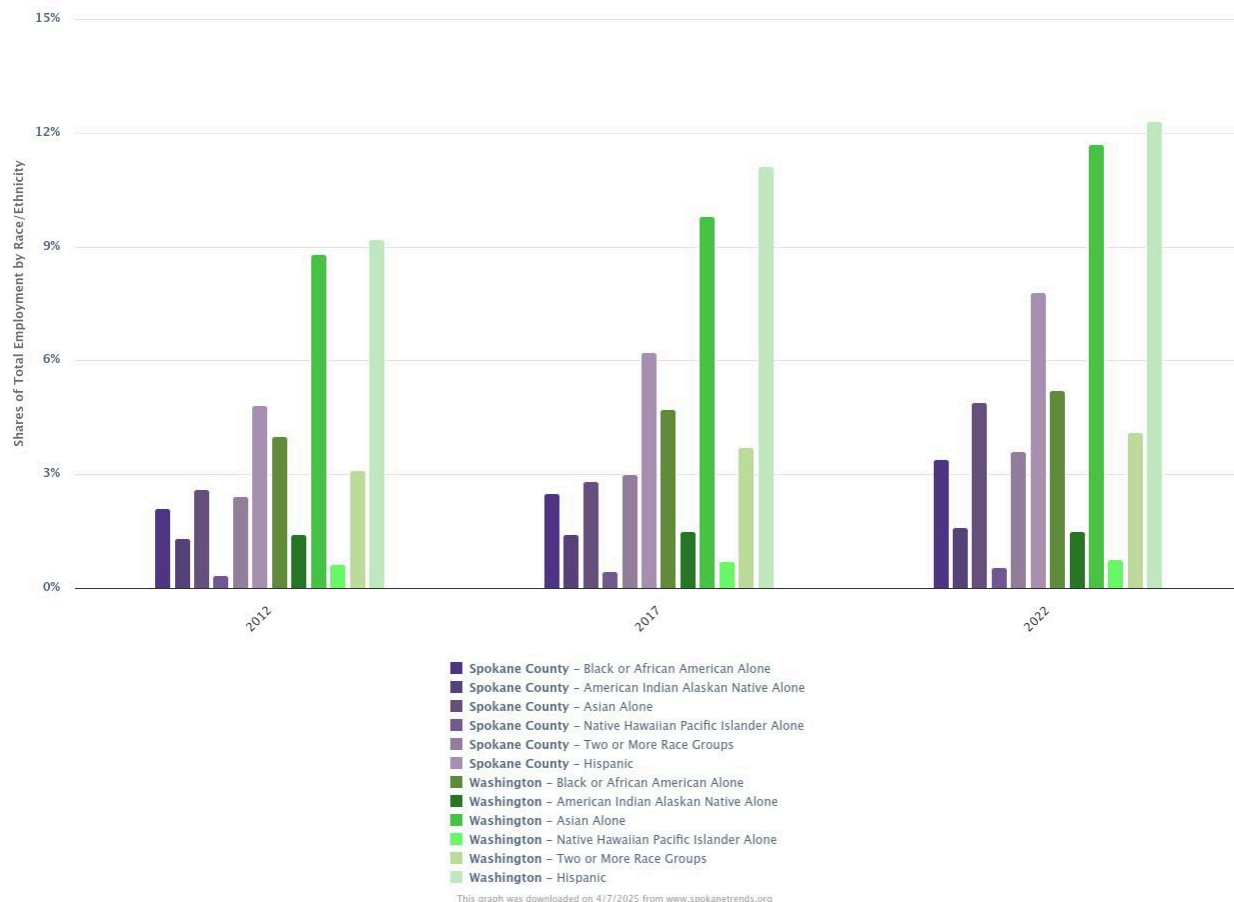
⁷ *Local Integrated Workforce Plan Program Years 2024-2028*, Spokane Workforce Council, 2023

2.4.12 Share of Employment by Firm Size



This graph was downloaded on 4/7/2025 from www.spokanetrends.org

2.6.5 Shares of Total Employment by Race & Ethnicity



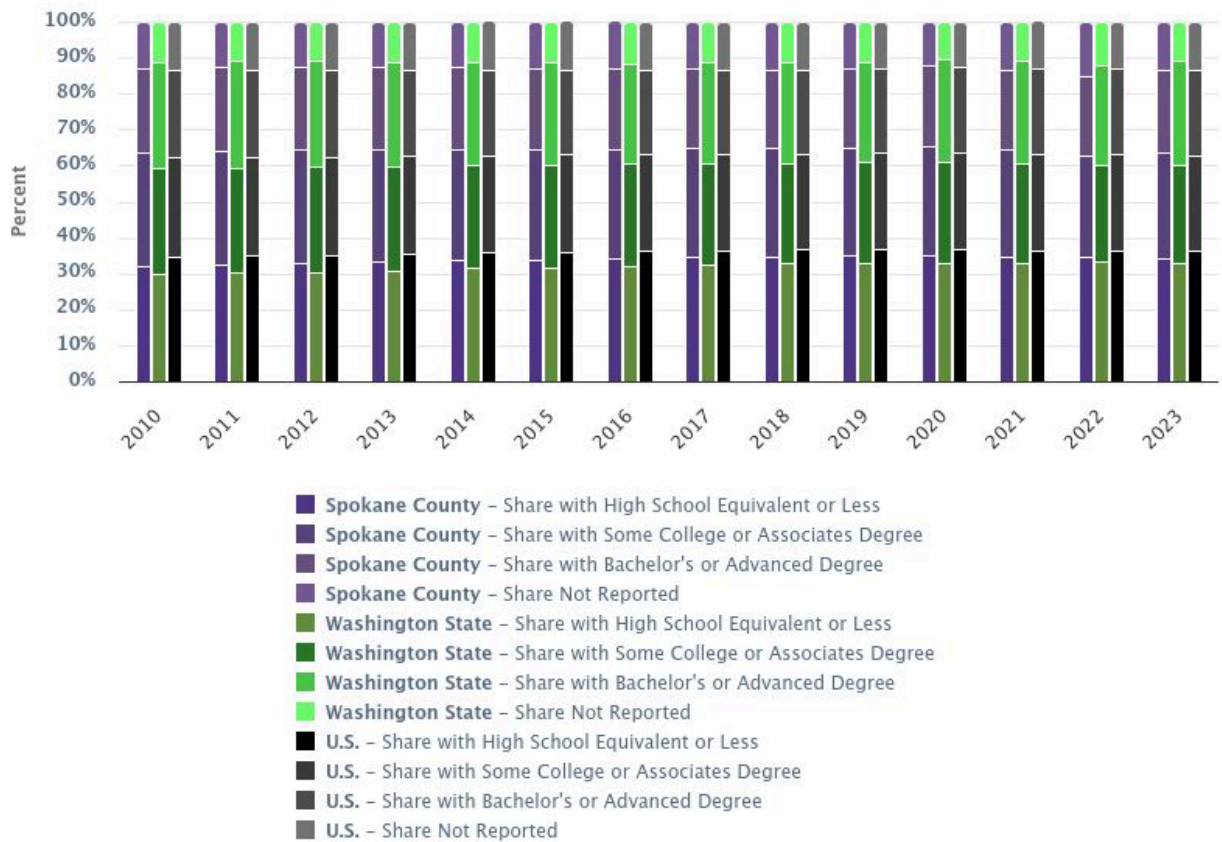
Education

For this section, the research team reviewed data related to education and employment. The graphs below illustrate the following:

- Share of jobs by educational attainment
- Percentage of the Spokane County population over age 25 with a high school diploma, GED, or less
- Percentage of the Spokane County population over age 25 with at least some college or an associate's degree
- Percentage of the Spokane County population over age 25 with at least a bachelor's degree
- Percentage of the Spokane County population over age 25

In addition, the total number of students enrolled in community college for the purpose of workforce training, rate per 1,000 adults aged 18-64 was 1,773 (2023-2024).⁸

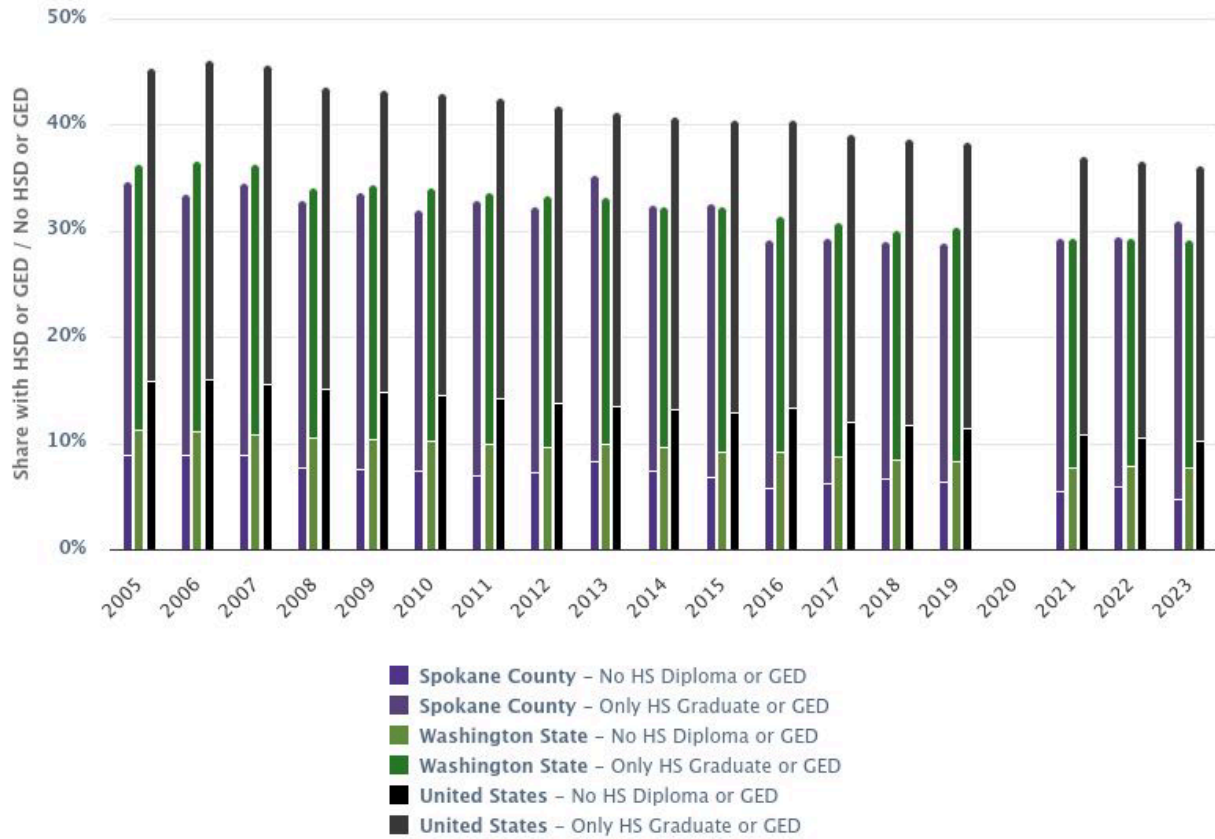
2.4.8 Share of Jobs by Educational Attainment



This graph was downloaded on 4/7/2025 from www.spokanetrends.org

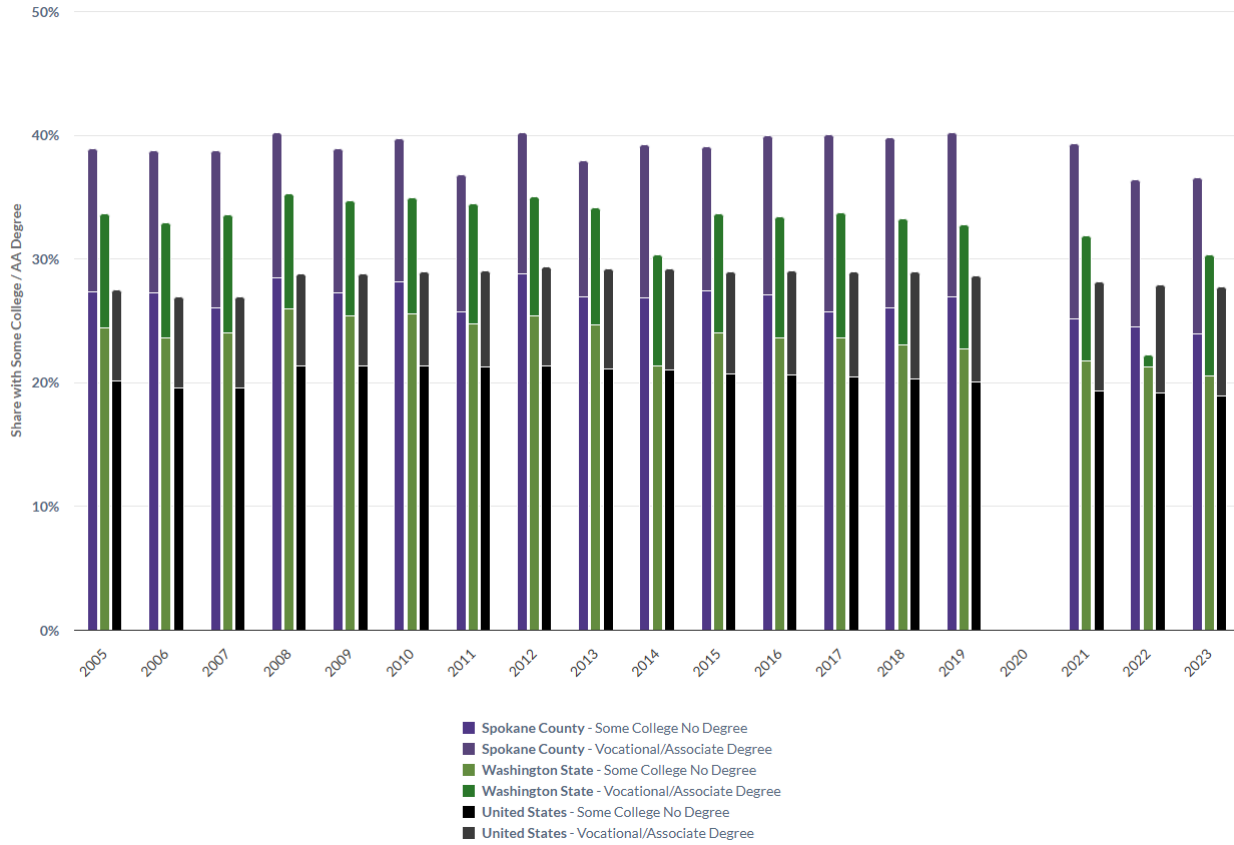
⁸ Community Indicators of Spokane Initiative, <https://spokanetrends.org/index.cfm>, 2024

3.6.1 Share of the Population Ages 25+ with a High School Diploma, GED or Less

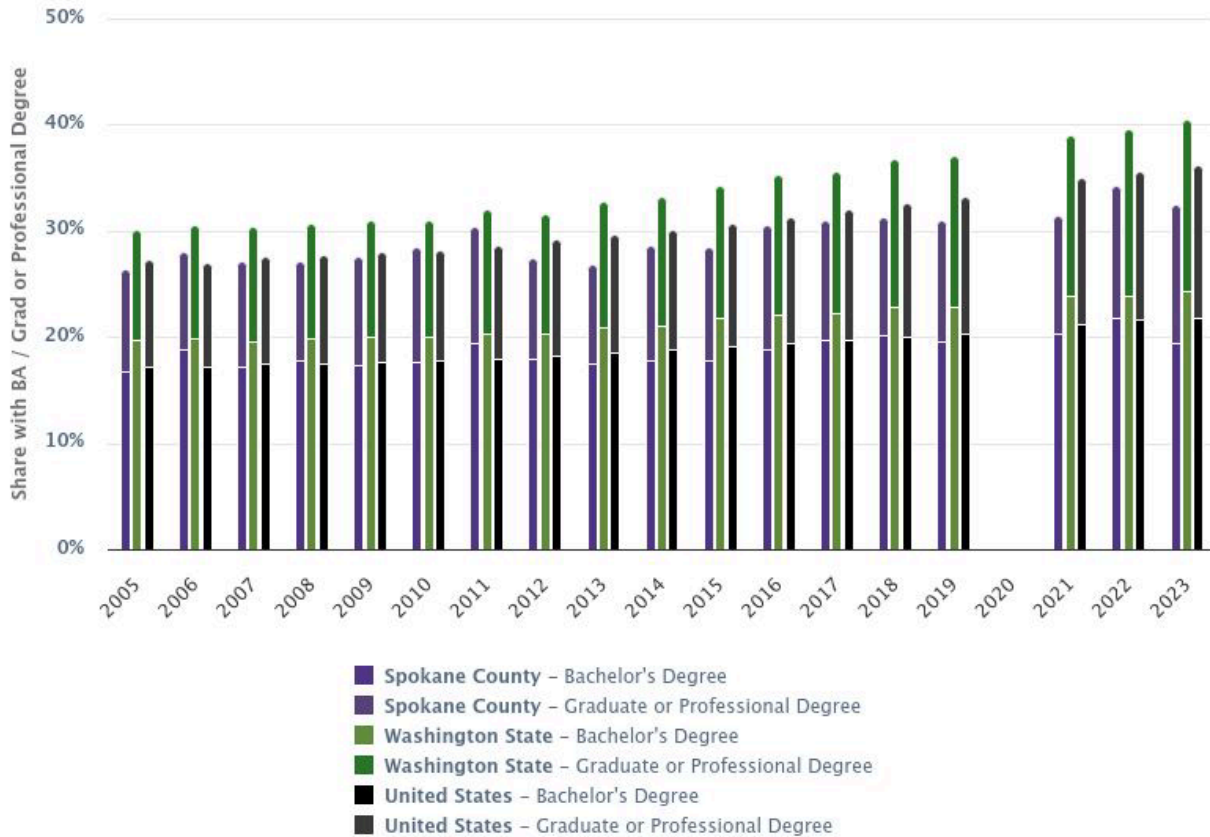


This graph was downloaded on 4/7/2025 from www.spokanetrends.org

3.6.2 Share of the Population Ages 25+ with at Least Some College or an Associate's Degree



3.6.3 Share of the Population Ages 25+ with at Least a Bachelor's Degree



Skills and Knowledge to Meet Regional Demand

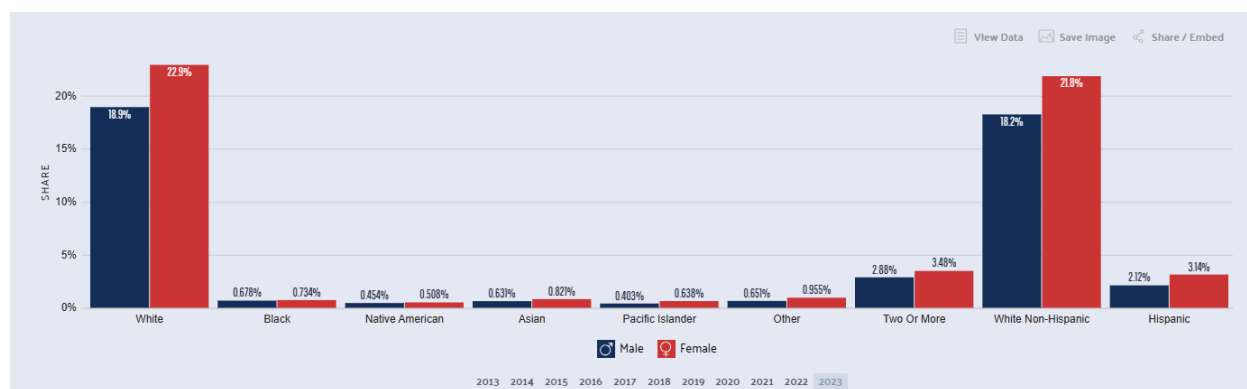
The Spokane Workforce Council identifies occupations, skills, and certifications that are the most in-demand more accurately from local employers. The five top industries in demand are Health Care and Social Assistance, Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services, Retail Trade, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, and Educational Services.

Top Industries

Industry	Total/Unique (Jan 2023 - Dec 2023)	Posting Intensity	Median Posting Duration
Health Care and Social Assistance	43,640 / 12,517	3 : 1	28 days
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	26,200 / 9,021	3 : 1	25 days
Retail Trade	32,066 / 8,992	4 : 1	31 days
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	11,238 / 4,869	2 : 1	28 days
Educational Services	12,462 / 4,693	3 : 1	27 days
Manufacturing	11,735 / 4,300	3 : 1	29 days
Accommodation and Food Services	13,615 / 3,570	4 : 1	29 days
Wholesale Trade	9,645 / 2,866	3 : 1	28 days
Finance and Insurance	7,833 / 2,695	3 : 1	29 days
Construction	6,218 / 2,348	3 : 1	28 days

Poverty

In Spokane County, 12.2% of the population lives below the poverty line (the national average is 12.4%). Poverty in Spokane County disproportionately affects women, with the largest two demographics living in poverty being women ages 18-24 and then women ages 25 - 34.⁹



⁹ Data from the Census Bureau [ACS 5-year Estimate](#).

Specific to the UD, residents of two of the Census Block Groups within the district are among the most disadvantaged communities in Spokane. In Block Group 45002, 68% are low-income, 17% are people of color, and 22% are unemployed. In Block Group 35004, 94% are low-income, 29% are people of color, and 49% are unemployed.¹⁰

For additional context, the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed – otherwise known as Working Poor) Household Survival Budget is the bare minimum cost of household basics necessary to live and work in the current economy. With income above the FPL, ALICE households earn too much to qualify as “poor” but are still unable to cover basic household expenses. The chart below shows the Spokane County Household Survival Budget compared with Benton and Pierce Counties, as well as the Federal Poverty Level.

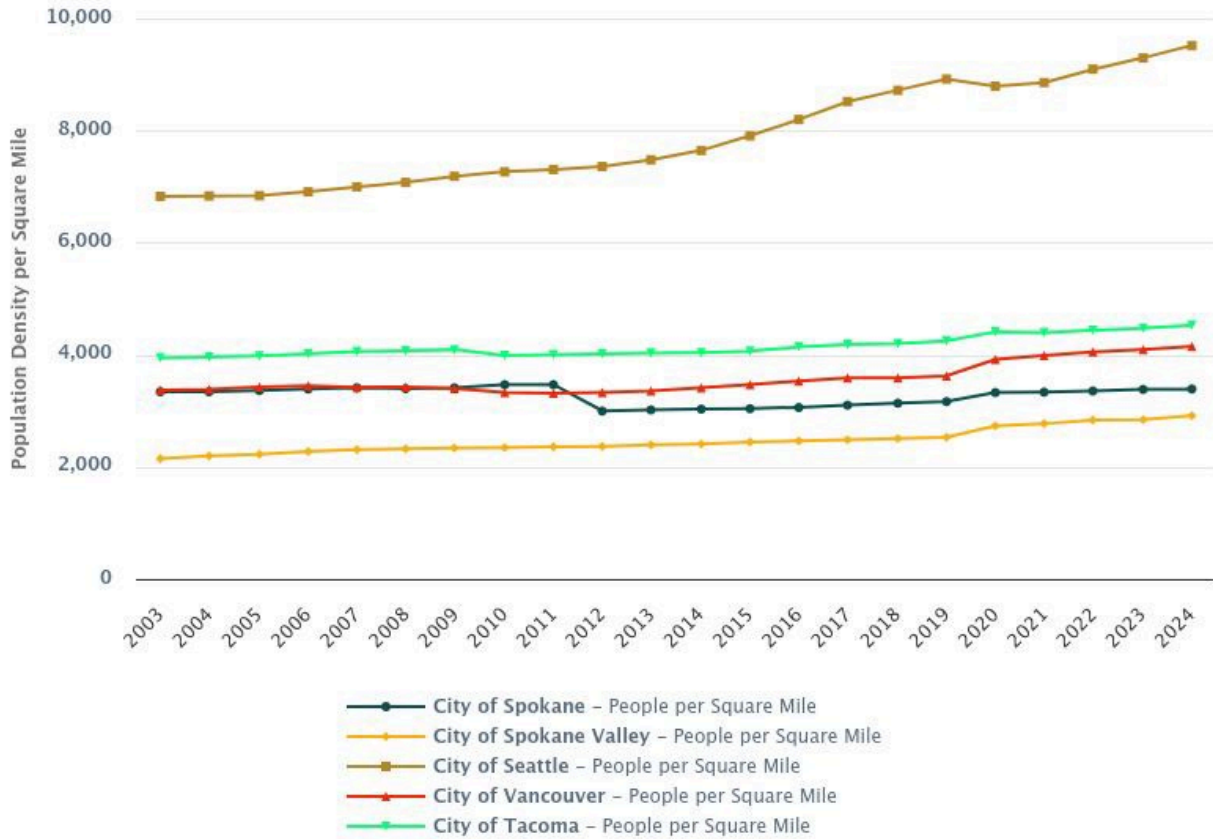


¹⁰ Data from EJSscreen.

Land Use

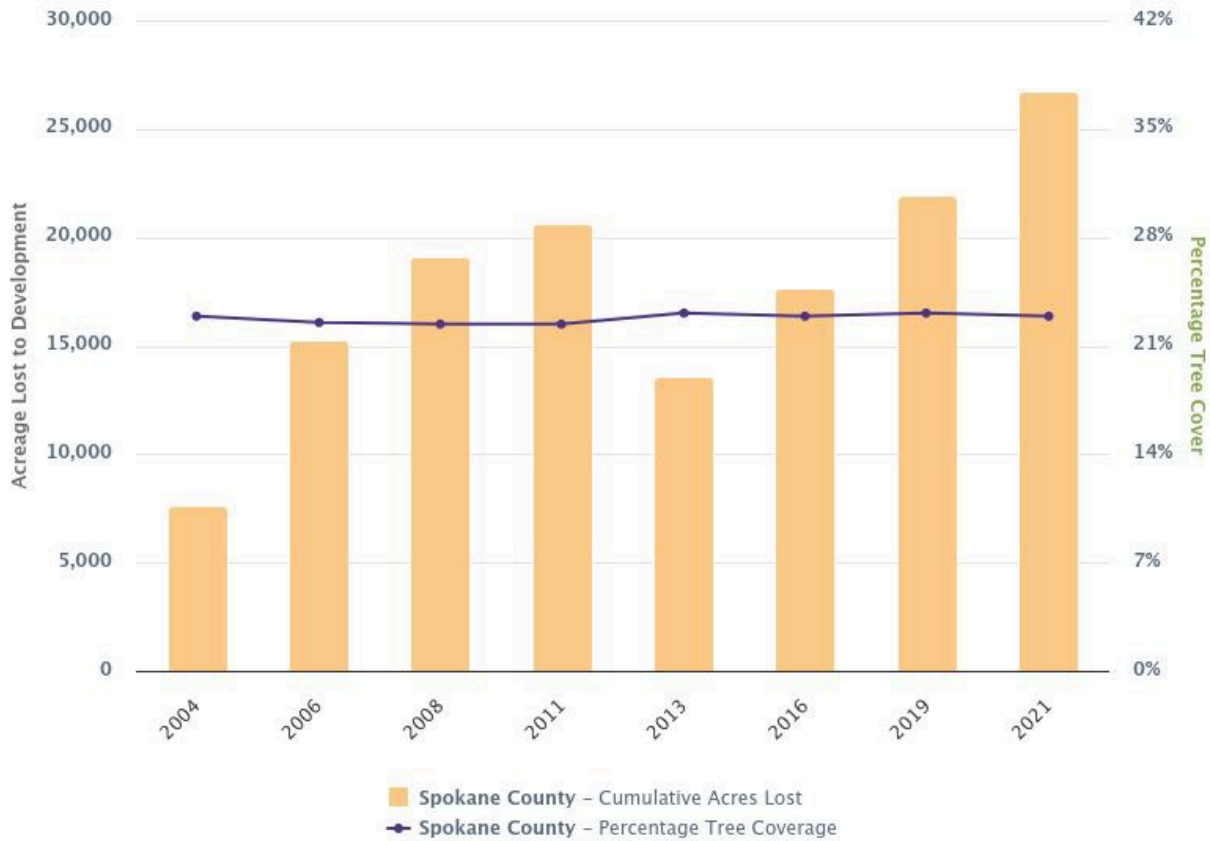
Because climate resilience is a priority that guides the UD's conceptual plan, the research team included data points related to climate change in this summary. The graphs below illustrate data related to population density and acreage lost to development.

4.3.1 Population Density: Population per Square Mile



This graph was downloaded on 4/7/2025 from www.spokanetrends.org

4.3.3 Tree Canopy Percentage & Cumulative Acreage Lost to Development



This graph was downloaded on 4/7/2025 from www.spokanetrends.org

U Pulse Small Business Survey

In 2023, the UDPDA launched a small business survey seeking input from business owners in the University District. The purpose was to learn more about small business needs, challenges, and opportunities in the area. The survey had 87 responses, and d&b Creative team has included summary data for applicable questions below.

- Is your business BIPOC or woman-owned?
 - Yes: 31
 - No: 56
- How many employees does your business have?
 - <10: 23
 - 11-50: 27
 - 51-100: 11

- 101-500: 7
- Are there any areas of your business or the surrounding neighborhood that you think could benefit from urban or business renewal?
 - Better lighting: 64 (62%)
 - Public art installation: 45 (52%)
 - Street trees or landscaping installations: 45 (52%)
 - Enhanced storefronts or facades: 44 (51%)
 - Improved signage: 36 (41%)
 - Improved sidewalks or bike storage: 23 (27%)
- Does your business have any needs that might be met by small-scale manufacturing?
 - Yes: 51 (59%)
- Would your business prefer equipment, signage, tools, parts, prototyping, and other products that were locally produced vs. imported?
 - Yes: 73 (84%)
- Would you or your business have any interest in collaborating with a local makerspace on a small-scale manufacturing project?
 - Yes: 60 (69%)

Based on the results of this survey, most small businesses in the University District who responded would be interested in locally produced products and collaborating with a local makerspace.

Appendix D: Stakeholder Engagement Plan

As part of the University District Public Development Authority (UDPDA) Incubation Village Market Needs and Assessment, the d&b Creative team interviewed 27 community leaders in the following areas:

- Organizations supporting small businesses and maker spaces
- Local incubators and maker spaces

This stakeholder engagement plan summarizes the feedback received in the interviews and incorporates communications and outreach best practices for building trust and moving toward accomplishing the project goal of developing a community-focused incubator village and maker space.

Background

In 2009, the University District Revitalization Area (UDRA) was created by [City of Spokane Ordinance C-34470](#) as a special funding district to revitalize the area east of downtown Spokane. Led by Mithun, the University District (UD) recently completed “*You Belong in the UD! Next Generation Conceptual Plan 2065*”, a 40-year plan to create a thriving, prosperous district for all. The plan is guided by two priorities: climate resilience and racial-social equity.¹¹ To accomplish these goals, the plan calls for collective action with “coordinated improvements, investments, programs, and actions of the strong institutions, businesses, community organizations, and people who call the UD home.”¹²

Three concepts drive the plan’s recommendations: Reveal and Learn, Rewild, and Rise Together. Spokane’s future incubation village falls under the third concept of Rise Together. According to the plan, “Business incubators, R&D workforce, and social programs increase opportunities

“We need community during the dark times. This space would help fill that need.”

L.M., Asians for Community Liberation

¹¹ *You Belong in the UD! Next Generation Conceptual Plan 2065*, University District, 2024, p.8

¹² *ibid*

and support essential needs and services. While the plan envisions growth and development, it is paired with an approach and strategies to support the people, organizations, and businesses of the UD and reduce displacement.¹³ The incubation village will support the creation of a destination within the UD and support local food manufacturing, maker spaces, and the creative economy.

The UD has worked to ensure that community engagement is a key strategy for accomplishing the organization's goals. Not only were open houses and focus groups held, but also the organization incorporated interviews with community-based organizations and small businesses into the Incubation Village Market Needs and Assessment.

"The space shouldn't only benefit people with the most privilege."

R.L., Re-imagine Spokane

Audience

Spokane is a diverse community with close-knit silos that possess a shared, and at times, complex history. Interviewees shared stories of old conflicts, funding challenges, and community members who are understandably possessive of limited resources. To move the project forward, the UD will need to bring together this diverse community while understanding and navigating this complexity.

Based on the team's interviews and research, d&b Creative has identified the following stakeholder groups for the purposes of this plan:

- Community organizations serving small businesses
- Community organizations serving artists and makers
- Community organizations serving vulnerable populations
- Potential funders
- Organizations working in the food service industry
- Spokane Public Schools and Community Colleges of Spokane
- The City of Spokane and Spokane County Libraries

¹³ ibid

As the project progresses, more stakeholder groups may be added to the list. It is important to note that organizations working in the food service industry are an important and separate group. The team heard from interviewees that entrepreneurs in the restaurant and food truck space are often grouped in with other small businesses, but they have unique needs regarding space, regulations, and funding that require specialized support.

Engagement Plan Goals

The d&b Creative team developed the following goals for engaging stakeholders:

- Collaborate with stakeholders as trusted messengers for their community
- Establish and maintain forward momentum for the project
- Identify an organization that will manage the space, including ongoing operations

Strategies

One of the key strategies for engaging community leaders and maintaining momentum on the project will be to conduct a series of round-table discussions. Many interviewees expressed an interest in continuing the conversation and their involvement with each implementation stage of the project. The interviews began to build excitement for the project, and continued conversations can help build on that excitement and support community buy-in and promotional efforts. Through the round table process, the UD can also identify an organization to manage the space and a champion (or champions) to be spokespeople in the community.

As part of the stakeholder engagement process, d&b Creative also recommends developing a stakeholder work plan for the project with low-barrier benchmarks, goals, and clear assignments. There should also be a plan for conflict resolution to address conflicts that have the potential to arise during the development process. Know that the conflicts that arise may be due to long-standing unresolved issues between community members and leaders.

We also recommend that funding be available to organizations to help with the development of the project, and that they are not expected to work for free. Along with

“When we started a similar space in Michigan, we needed a charismatic spokesperson to build excitement. We also knew that we wouldn’t see success overnight. This project is long-term.”

J.P., Community
Colleges of Spokane

funding to organizations, there should be an advertising budget to develop a clear story and raise awareness about the project with materials to distribute, including:

- Social media graphics and content
- Email marketing
- Printed handouts (flyers, postcards, etc.)
- Promotional merchandise (magnets, tees, stickers, etc.)

These materials would ideally include multiple languages and imagery, highlighting the services offered in the space beyond just vending opportunities. They would highlight all the value to the community, including:

- Free or low-cost space
- Shared workspaces
- Services and equipment that support a variety of businesses
- Classes/education for businesses and community members
- Benefits for all generations
- Data from sales and activities will be shared early and often
- Networking
- This is a long-term project; success will come, but it will not be overnight

In addition to the benefits, materials, and talking points, one should not avoid difficult questions regarding housing, food, poverty, and safety. These are themes that came up most often throughout the interview process. While the project is exciting and elicited hope from interviewees, it should be clearly communicated how the project will support the most vulnerable and marginalized in the community.

Conclusion

Through the feasibility study and previous conversations with stakeholders, the UD has already started to build momentum for the incubator village and maker space. Nearly all interviewees within the study expressed enthusiasm for the project. By establishing a series of round tables, setting clear expectations, developing a work plan, and creating materials that communicate the benefits, the UD can continue to engage community leaders and organizations, increasing opportunities and supporting essential services.



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