Economic Resilience Framework



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DISRUPTION AND PROSPERITY

Like communities and regions around the world, the greater Spokane region continues to deal with the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the onset of the pandemic, workers, customers, and business owners were affected, virtually overnight, by mandated closures, reduced demand for products and services, and an uncertain regulatory environment. Although these events were nearly universal, not everyone was affected equally. Businesses with workers who were able to operate from home avoided some of the threats to wages and health that essential and in-person workers could not. A lack of in-person school and childcare meant that families had to adapt to a new way of working and learning from home, a shift that left many parents scrambling and students struggling to keep up. The pandemic also accelerated many threats that were already apparent, including housing deficits, access to quality childcare, and economic inequality. Although progress is occurring on these issues throughout the region, the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain sectors of the economy and groups of people brought resilience planning efforts to the forefront.

As the COVID-19 pandemic made clear, Greater Spokane's economic prosperity is directly linked to its ability to avoid, withstand, and quickly recover from major disruptions to its economic base. Other disruptions the region continues to grapple with include global supply chain issues related to trade policy and immigration restrictions in place before the onset of COVID-19. The growing importance of broadband access and digital equity are also top issues. Meanwhile as natural disasters become a regular occurrence, the reality of current and impending climate change is both an immediate and a long-term issue. The Spokane region is not unique in facing these challenges; however, the community has come together to focus on business, infrastructure, and talent to address these challenges to build a more resilient economy.

RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE

Within an economic context, recovery is defined as a return to previous conditions following a slow-down in economic activity. This disruption of economic activity can result from causes as varied as the loss of a major employer, a natural disaster, or a health crisis. Resiliency, on the other hand, can be defined as the ability to recover from an economic shock, as well as the ability to withstand or even to avoid the shock altogether. Whether it be natural disasters or economic shocks similar to those experienced at the onset of the

COVID-19 pandemic, Greater Spokane can strengthen its recovery efforts and bolster its long-term resilience through responsive and steady-state initiatives.

Responsive initiatives reinforce and expand capacities for a region to be responsive following a shock. They include activities like establishing strong communication channels to understand business needs after an incident. Meanwhile, steady-state initiatives are long-term strategies to deal with economic disruptions or steer clear of them in the first place. These initiatives can include creating redundancies in broadband networks to protect commerce channels or enhancing job-driven training around skills that are easily transferable across occupations and industries.

FIGURE 1. ECONOMIC RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

RELATIONSHIP TO SELECTED THRIVE SPOKANE STRATEGIES



TALENT

Build a resilient workforce.

Improve job-driven skill sets and reduce barriers to employment (Strategy 1.1)



BUSINESS

Diversify the industry base and promote business continuity.

- Build a responsive and resilient supply chain (Strategy 1.2)
- Invest in downtowns and commercial centers (Strategy 1.3)
- Establish strong communication channels (Strategy 1.4)



INFRASTRUCTURE

Expand strong communication channels and harden infrastructure.

- Ensure redundancy in telecommunications and networks (Strategy 1.5)
- Modernize regional infrastructure systems (Strategy 1.6)

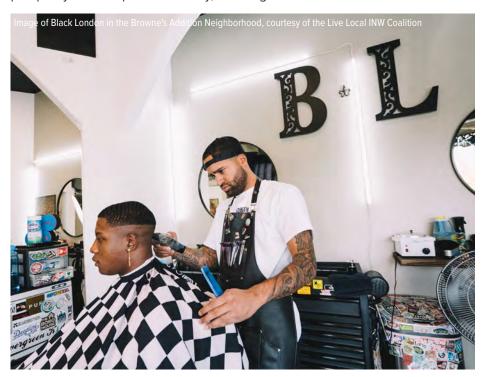
Source: TIP Strategies, Inc.

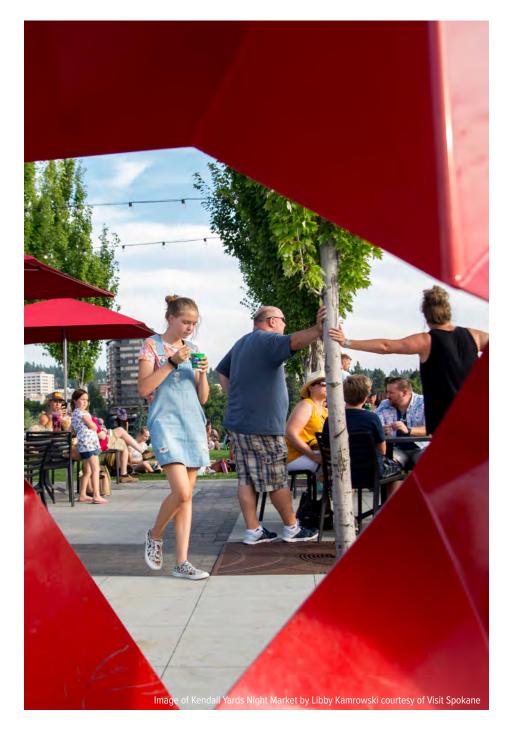
¹ US EDA, Definition of economic resiliency for a CEDS.

A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

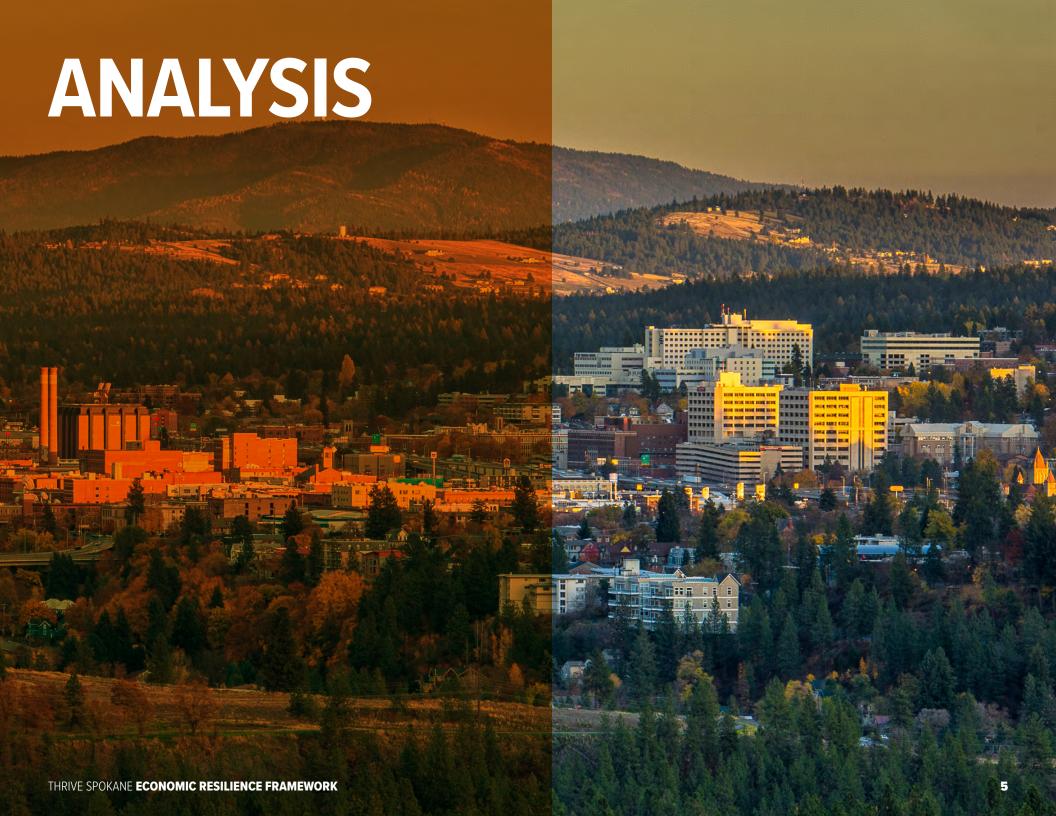
The *Economic Resilience Framework* (Figure 1) outlines a strategy for leveraging assets, addressing challenges, and identifying opportunities for action and investment that will lead to a more flexible, equitable, and adaptable economy. With a pool of available federal funds and emerging technologies, the region is in a prime position to work collectively toward this more resilient future. Creating economic resilience will require building a flexible workforce, supporting business needs, and hardening infrastructure, among other initiatives, all of which can position the Greater Spokane economy for success.

With these objectives in mind, the *Economic Resilience Framework* was created as a complement to the region's comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS), *THRIVE Spokane*. It highlights the first of the four goals outlined in the CEDS (which was published separately) as well as selected strategies and action items from the other goals. Like *THRIVE Spokane*, the *Economic Resilience Framework* represents the shared desire to build a resilient economy better able to withstand economic stresses. Together, these plans represent a collective vision for equitable and sustainable economic prosperity across Spokane County, Washington.









ECONOMIC CONTEXT

As part of the *THRIVE Spokane* planning process that informed this work, Austin-based consulting firm, TIP Strategies, Inc. (TIP), conducted a broad analysis of the economic and social conditions that influence economic vitality and competitiveness. The data used for this background analysis came from the US Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) five-year average sample, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and Emsi. The data was compiled at the start of the project and, at the time, reflected the most recent available. Although there are local sources featuring more recent data, such as Spokane Trends,² for the purposes of this project, it was necessary to use data that can be directly compared to neighboring communities in Idaho, as well as peer communities throughout the US. Data sets were chosen intentionally to ensure that the same methodology was used to create accurate comparisons, as well as offer the ability to track data changes longitudinally. The assembled data exposed trends and patterns that have continued in recent years. These trends and patterns were used as the foundation for data-driven strategies and actions focused on recovery and resilience.

ECONOMIC EXPLORER

Although the CEDS only includes strategies for Spokane County, TIP's economic analysis encompassed Stevens and Pend Oreille Counties in Washington and Kootenai County, Idaho, which are part of the Spokane-Coeur d'Alene combined statistical area (CSA). Due to Spokane's geographic location on the Idaho border and the bistate dynamics, including a cross-border labor shed, it was imperative to understand the characteristics of the other counties in the CSA. The complete analysis, including comparisons to statewide and national data, can be found at thrivespokane.org, a CEDS project website maintained by Greater Spokane, Inc. Key findings from this interactive analysis, summarized here, informed and shaped the direction of the recovery and resilience framework.

Spokane County workers make up the largest labor force in the region.

Although Spokane County's labor force of nearly 250,000 is relatively large, the County's labor force participation rates in 2019 were a bit lacking at 60.8 percent compared to the state and national benchmarks of about 63 percent during that same time period (see Figure 2). County employment has grown

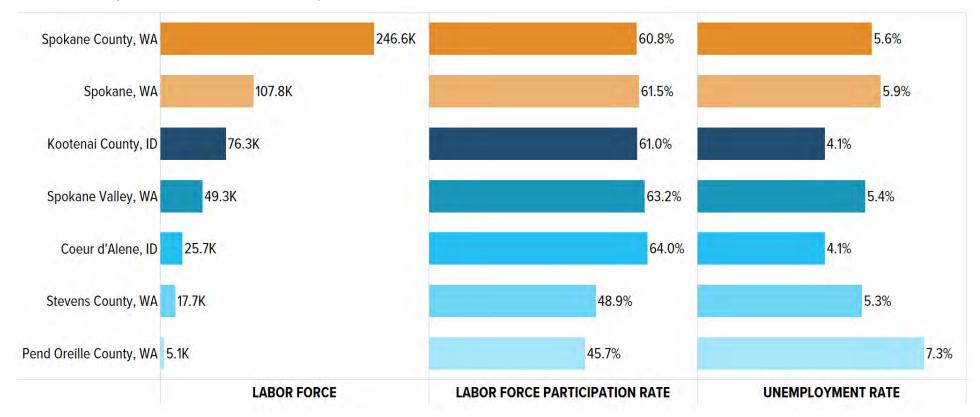
2 <u>SpokaneTrends.org</u> is a collaboration between the City of Spokane and Eastern Washington University, with the support of the Innovia Foundation, to provide relevant community data in a user-friendly format.

consistently since 2011 and surpassed pre-Great Recession (2007–2009) levels in 2016. The COVID-19 recession led to widespread employment contractions, but the effect was relatively smaller in Spokane County (a 3.6 percent decrease) compared to the Great Recession (4.3 percent) and compared to statewide and national declines.



FIGURE 2. LABOR FORCE DETAIL, 2019

LABOR FORCE SIZE, LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE, AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR SELECTED GEOGRAPHIES.



Sources: American Community Survey, 2019 five-year sample; TIP Strategies, Inc.

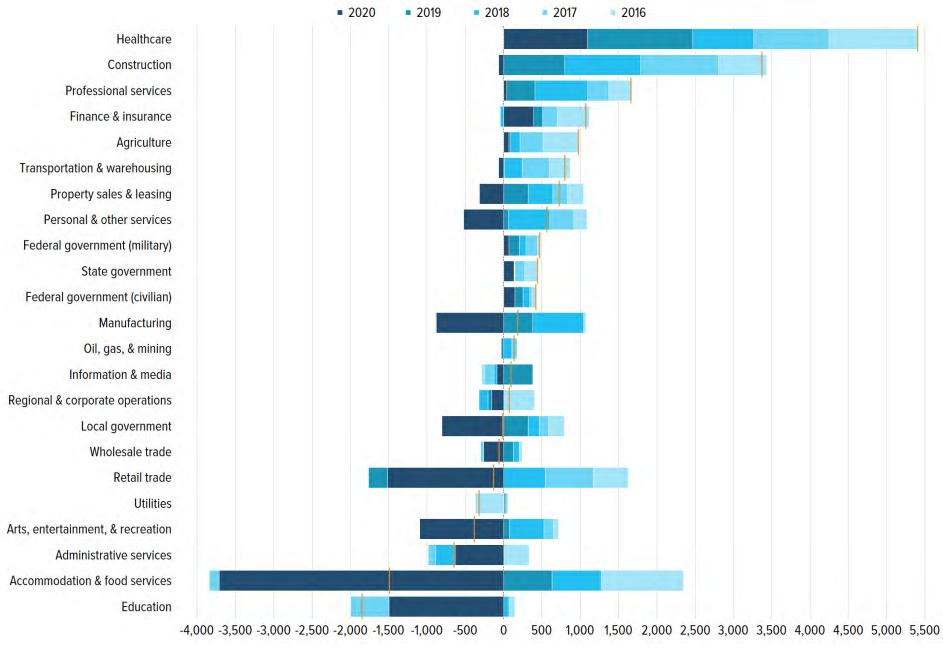
Note: Labor force participation rate (LFPR) is estimated as the quotient of the civilian labor force and the population 16 years and older. The labor force comprises all employed and unemployed persons.

Stable trends point to a strong healthcare sector as manufacturing gradually declines.

Healthcare continues to be the largest employer sector in Spokane County with over 46,000 jobs in 2020—more than 18 percent of total employment. Growth in this sector has been steady over the past 20 years and is on track with state trends and even slightly outpacing national growth. Though the manufacturing sector stabilized after 2008 and has experienced modest gains since 2010, the long-term trend is still downward, declining by more than 21 percent in the past 20 years. The retail, accommodation and food services, and education sectors are all major employers in Spokane County and were steadily rising through the end of 2019. However, these sectors saw substantial losses during the

COVID-19 recession, shedding a combined total of over 6,700 jobs in 2020 (see Figure 3, page 8). Sales workers, food preparation and serving workers, and instructors followed a similar pattern with significant reduction in jobs over the same period. Office and administrative workers—the largest occupational group in the County—also saw losses, but this occupation group appears to be on a longer-term gradual decline, as there are 3,100 fewer of these jobs in the County compared to 2015.

FIGURE 3. NET EMPLOYMENT CHANGE FOR SELECTED PERIOD BY SECTOR, SPOKANE COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Sources: BLS; Emsi 2021.3—Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed; TIP Strategies, Inc. Note: Orange bars indicate the total net change from 2016 to 2020.

OCCUPATIONAL RISK TOOL

With the threat of new COVID-19 variants, the Occupational Risk Tool provides a timely examination of occupations likely to be affected by public health and economic crises. The interactive data visualization, available at thrivespokane.org, explores occupational risk from two sources: the risk to personal health from COVID-19 and the economic risk from job or income loss. The two risk sources are used to plot a position for more than 700 occupations that illustrates the amount of risk to earning and health that residents may experience as a result of their jobs. The information can be mapped by ZIP Code and disaggregated across demographic groups and by individual occupations within major occupational groupings as well as by major industry sectors. While workers continue to face health risks associated with in-person work, communities that understand the pain points of their local labor force will be better equipped to respond effectively to the evolving needs of resident workers.

One in three workers living in the Spokane metro are in jobs with a high risk to earnings and to personal health.

One-third of all workers (33.7 percent, totaling over 266,000) living in the Spokane metropolitan area are in the highest risk quadrant with relatively high risk to personal health and earnings (see Figure 4, page 9). This share is just above the national rate of 31.1 percent and in the middle of the distribution among similar-sized metro areas (those with 100,000 to 500,000 workers). A few of the largest occupations in the highest risk quadrant include food preparation and serving workers, personal care aides, and waiters and waitresses.

Workers in low-wage jobs face disproportionately higher risks to both their earnings and health.

Risk is also disproportionately distributed among low-wage jobs. While 48 percent of jobs in the region pay less than \$20 per hour, these jobs comprise 70 percent of jobs with the highest level of risk to both earnings and personal health. Often, Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) are disproportionately employed in these low-wage jobs. Not only are BIPOC populations more likely to be employed in jobs with greater exposure to risks, but they are also earning less in those jobs.

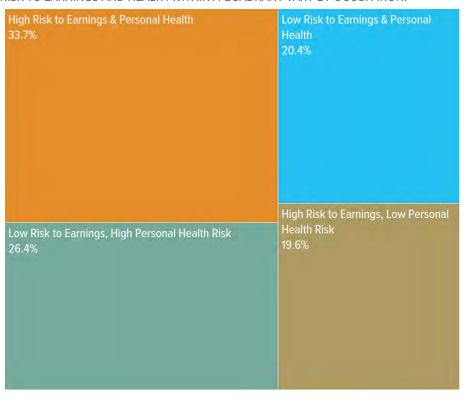
Risk is not evenly distributed throughout the region.

An analysis of occupational risk by ZIP Code shows that some areas of the Spokane metro have higher shares of at-risk workers than other areas (see Figure 5, page 10). More than 20 percent of worker residents in the northern

reaches of Pend Oreille County, as well some areas on the north side of the City of Spokane, may experience high personal health and earnings risks, as these areas have relatively high concentrations of food service, sales, or administrative occupation workers. In contrast, downtown Spokane has the highest share of low-risk resident workers (10.9 percent) in the metro with a relatively large number of lower risk business and management occupations.

FIGURE 4. EMPLOYMENT SHARE BY RISK QUADRANT

SHARE OF RESIDENT WORKERS BY THEIR OCCUPATION'S QUADRANT ON THE RISK PLOT. RISK TO EARNINGS AND HEALTH WITHIN A QUADRANT VARY BY OCCUPATION.



Sources: US Department of Labor Occupational Information Network (0*NET); ACS 2018 five-year sample via Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS); Emsi 2021.2—QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed; Charles S. Gascon and Devin Werner. "COVID-19 and Unemployment Risk: State and MSA [metropolitan statistical area] Differences." Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. (April 3, 2020); TIP Strategies, Inc. Notes: Only detailed occupations with more than 10 resident workers in the region are included. Unemployment is by occupation group (2-digit Standard Occupational Classification, SOC). Selected occupations' "essential" and "salary" indicators have been modified from their initial designations by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

FIGURE 5. OCCUPATIONAL RISK MAP

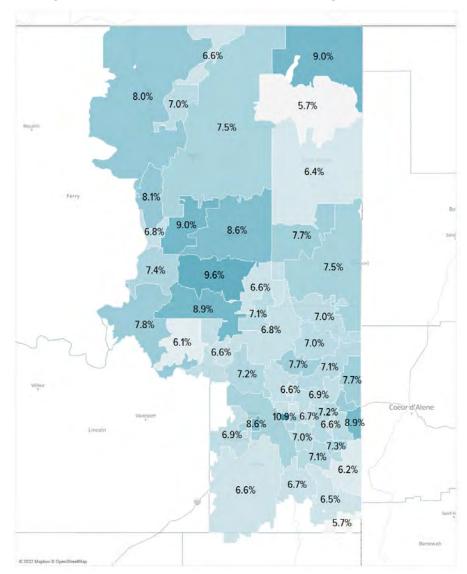
HIGH RISK TO EARNINGS AND PERSONAL HEALTH

Share (percentage) of workers in their resident ZIP Code in occupation with *high risk* to earnings and high risk to health. Darker ZIP Codes have higher shares.

20.7% 18.3% 17.4% 18.5% 24.7% 18.2% 20.4% 17.2% 17.1% 18.8% 19.7% 18.9% 18.7% 16.5% 17.8% 16.9% 17.5% 17.4% 18.6% 17.6% 20.3% 17.4% 17.9% 17.4% 17.3% 16.9% 16.7% 20.8% 18.1% Coeur d'Alene 20.3% 18.0% 20.8% 18.5%16.9% 20.7% 18.7% 17.0% 18.9% 16.9% 18.7% 18.5% 19.2% © 2022 Mapbox © OpenStreet

LOW RISK TO FARNINGS AND PERSONAL HEALTH

Share (percentage) of workers in their resident ZIP Code in occupation with *low risk to earnings and low risk to health*. Darker ZIP Codes have higher shares.



Sources: US Department of Labor (O*NET); ACS 2018 five-year sample via IPUMS; ACS 2019 five-year sample; Emsi 2021.2—QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employee; Gascon and Werner. "COVID-19 and Unemployment Risk"; TIP Strategies, Inc. Notes: Only ZIP Codes with at least 50 total resident workers and at least 1 resident worker matching the selection criteria are shown (PO boxes or other single-address ZIP Codes are also excluded). Only detailed occupations with more than 10 resident workers in the region are included. In risk score calculations, unemployment by occupation group (2-digit SOC) is used, and selected occupations' "essential" and "salary" indicators have been modified from their initial designations by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FIGURE 6. THRIVE SPOKANE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY LEADERS



Steering Committee Members & Thought Leaders



Individual Interviews

ROUNDTABLES



Roundtable Sessions



Roundtable **Participants**

SURVEYS



Survey Instruments

Survey Responses

- Community Vision Survey
- Aerospace Supply Chain Survey
- Health & Life Sciences Supply Chain Survey

- Private Sector
- Tech & Entrepreneurship
- Workforce Development
- Economic Development
- · Professional Services
- DEI
- · Health & Life Sciences
- Small Business
- Nonprofit & Community Development
- Municipal Leaders
- Tourism & Outdoor Recreation
- Downtown Development + Arts & Culture
- Transportation
- Aerospace

To supplement the quantitative analysis, TIP designed a robust community engagement plan for the CEDS in coordination with the THRIVE Spokane Steering Committee members (see Figure 6). The cornerstone for these activities was a series of roundtable discussions. The steering committee helped develop a targeted list of area experts and regional leaders to gather input on challenges and opportunities for the CEDS. Roundtables were organized by topic, including sectorfocused discussions, as well as sessions centered on broad issues and programmatic areas. The roundtable discussions were supplemented with one-on-one interviews to solicit feedback on issues that did not surface in a collective setting.

When asked to identify the greatest challenges facing the region, participants said that economic inequities, finding skilled workers to fill available job openings, and the effects of a changing climate on the region's infrastructure were among the most worrisome challenges. Participants also identified several opportunities for the region's future economic prosperity, coalescing around increased workforce development efforts, supporting existing businesses, and hardening regional infrastructure.

Taken together, insights learned from the quantitative analysis and the qualitative inputs serve as the foundation for the first goal of THRIVE Spokane: Recovery and Resilience. The strategies and actions outlined in the next section aim to target efforts that prepare the region to avoid, withstand, and recover from economic shocks and natural disasters.

ROBUST MARKETING CAMPAIGN



MEDIA KIT

- Logos
- Social Media Graphics
- Press Release
- Print Articles
- Outreach Resources



PROJECT WEBSITE

- Economic Explorer
- Presentations
- Feedback Opportunities

Source: TIP Strategies, Inc.





GOAL 1. RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE

Target efforts that prepare the region to avoid, withstand, and recover from economic shocks and natural disasters.



Through the CEDS process, the Spokane community identified resilience as a top priority making it the first goal of *THRIVE Spokane*. The strategies and actions outlined here can help strengthen regional recovery efforts and bolster long term resilience in the face of future disruptions. Relevant strategies from other goals of the CEDS have worked in. To facilitate coordination, the CEDS numbering was retained in this document. Each of the six are flagged to show the relationship to the three primary areas outlined in the framework: infrastructure, talent, and business.

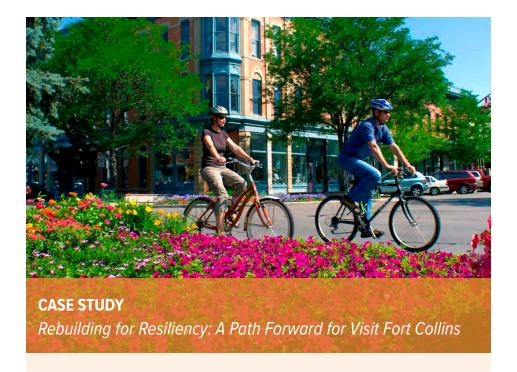
STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- 1.1 Support a resilient local workforce by improving job-driven skill sets and reducing barriers to employment. TALENT
 - 1.1.1. Engage business associations to inform the workforce system of emerging hiring trends, to address skill and opportunity shortages, and prepare workers for high-growth, high-demand jobs of the future.
 - Uplift BIPOC workers by connecting them with clear career pathways that offer workers earn-and-learn initiatives, like stipends, paid work experience, internships, or on-the-job training.
 - 1.1.2. Work with the Spokane Workforce Council to expand skill training opportunities to focus on transferable workforce skills so that workers can better shift between jobs or industries.

Example: In Clark County, Washington, the region's associate development organization, the Columbia River Economic Development Council (CREDC), and Workforce Southwest Washington (WSW) are closely aligned partners. In addition to being colocated in one office, staff from both organizations come together for an annual retreat to develop cohesive strategic work plans. Joint business visits are also conducted for nearly every business recruitment and expansion meeting. Furthermore, the executive director of WSW has a permanent board seat on CREDC's board and vis-à-vis. WSW is also a top-level investor in CREDC.

- 1.1.3. Expand wraparound investments to reduce barriers to employment, such as efficient routes to connect workers to employment centers, development of a diverse set of attainable housing options, broadband expansion to help remote workers complete their work effectively, or business support for early learning programs to extend childcare hours.
- 1.2 Focus on upstream opportunities to build a responsive and resilient supply chain to support the region's target sectors. BUSINESS

- **1.2.1.** Identify opportunities to nearshore or localize suppliers to shorten supply chains and reduce risk.
 - Include questions about existing business vendors and suppliers during BRE visits and events to uncover supply chain recruitment opportunities.
- 1.2.2. Coordinate local supply chain networking events to connect manufacturers, including raw materials suppliers, across the region. Ensure BIPOC businesses have the support and resources needed to attend these events.
 - Devote resources to and build capacity of an ecosystem of support by and for BIPOC business owners, including community development financial institutions (CDFIs) and early stage business funding.
 - Promote and adopt practices around procurement localization and diversification, including unbundling contracts and the development of a diverse/small business supplier database.
- 1.3 Invest in the development of downtowns and commercial centers throughout Spokane County through small business support, residential expansion, and storefront revitalization. BUSINESS
 - **1.3.1.** Support the modernization and increase the competitiveness of aging downtown commercial buildings, especially in historically underserved areas.
 - **1.3.2.** Identify municipal/County-controlled land in downtown and urban areas for residential housing and in-fill opportunities.
 - Pursue the redevelopment of large surface parking lots with mixed-income, mixed-use developments.
 - **1.3.3.** Prioritize downtown investments and revitalization efforts that support local businesses, including basic infrastructure and nonmotorized transportation routes.
 - Identify and prioritize infrastructure investments and projects to enhance existing developments and stimulate new projects, especially in underserved and rural communities.
- 1.4 Establish strong communication channels to understand business community needs and to promote business continuity and preparedness. BUSINESS



Location: Fort Collins, Colorado

More Information: Rebuilding For Resiliency

In response to the drastic decline of tourism activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Visit Fort Collins (VFC), the city's official destination marketer, created Rebuilding For Resiliency: A Path Forward for Visit Fort Collins, a strategic recovery plan. The plan's recovery strategies fall into four main categories: securing competitive funding, refocusing its marketing campaign on leisure activities and youth sports, developing community connections, and leveraging brand promise. Each strategy defines the recovery challenge, response action, task timing, and necessary community partners to ensure a quick return to pre-pandemic growth trajectories while also contributing to the city's overall recovery and economy. Through the report's implementation, a tourism improvement district (TID) was created to fund marketing and sales support for hotels within the district through the addition of a lodging tax. The new fee is projected to raise \$800,000 a year, in addition to lodging tax revenue. The city is paid 2 percent of the revenue each year for collecting the fee, while VFC receives 70 percent. The remaining funds are directed toward the city's Fort Fund arts and culture grants.

- 1.4.1. Leverage the region's business support organization network to establish a process for regular communication with businesses to understand their priority issues and needs.
 - Prioritize sustainable funding for coalitions, including the Business Equity Coalition of the Inland Northwest and the Multi-Ethnic Development Council, that are accountable to the communities they serve in addressing DEI issues, building trust, creating strong communication channels, and fostering collaboration across Spokane County.
- **1.4.2.** Host workshops to ensure that businesses understand their vulnerabilities in the face of disruptions.
- 1.4.3. Provide tools to help businesses overcome their vulnerabilities and to ensure they have processes in place, such as succession planning, e-commerce sales expansion, continuity plans, and digital literacy, to continue critical operations in the event of an unplanned disruption or disaster.
 - Support digital literacy programs in low-income communities by improving access to broadband-ready devices and services for residents and businesses, with an emphasis on programs led by members of those populations and communities.
- **1.5** Promote technology resilience by ensuring redundancy in telecommunications and networks. INFRASTRUCTURE
 - **1.5.1.** Coordinate with telecommunications providers to resolve weak service zones to ensure residents can easily access information and resources.
 - Target broadband expansion efforts in neighborhoods with weak service zones and support publicly owned infrastructure.
 - **1.5.2.** Work with municipalities to expand redundancies to ensure there are no single points of failure and to protect public safety in the event of natural or human-influenced disasters.
 - 1.5.3. Encourage rapid deployment of telecommunications and network lines across Spokane County, especially in major employment areas and commercial corridors.
 - Facilitate the rapid deployment of telecommunications and broadband networks in growing commercial centers to meet business needs, including small industrial parks.

- 1.6 Address climate resilience by modernizing infrastructure systems to withstand disruption, improve efficiency, and enhance connectivity.
 INFRASTRUCTURE
 - **1.6.1.** Launch a feasibility study for hardening infrastructure systems most vulnerable to changes in climate and weather patterns, such as wildfires, severe storms, and flooding.
 - Apply community wealth building initiatives to ensure neighborhoods with limited resources have equal access to system modernization and improvements.³
 - 1.6.2. Support existing work to bury electric lines to mitigate potential impacts of severe weather events.
 - 1.6.3. Continue to invest in and expand sustainable infrastructure, such as permeable pavement and flow-through planters, to mitigate stormwater impacts on sewer systems.



^{3.} Johanna Bozuwa. "Building Resiliency through Green Infrastructure: A Community Wealth Building Approach." Democracy Collaborative. (February 28, 2019).





mage of Spokane International Airport courtesy of Visit Spokane

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

	NAME	DESCRIPTION	LINK
GENERAL	Restore Your Economy (IEDC* & EDA)	Website and planning materials with resiliency strategies and best practices.	restoreyoureconomy.org
	US Climate Resilience Toolkit	Actionable steps, case studies, and tools to reduce climate-related risks and build resilience for businesses and communities.	toolkit.climate.gov
	Risk Factor	Online mapping tool designed to show property flooding and wildfire risks due to a changing climate.	<u>riskfactor.com</u>
TALENT	Rework Community Insights Monitor	Information about industries and occupations most prevalent within a regional economy, how many jobs are accessible to workers without a bachelor's degree, and available education or training programs.	www.atlantafed.org/cweo/data-tools/rework- community-insights-monitor
	Invest Atlanta	ONE ATL is an example of a best practice for an economic mobility, recovery, and resiliency plan.	www.investatlanta.com/economicmobility
BUSINESS	Small Business Anti-Displacement Toolkit	Tools to protect small businesses against displacement.	antidisplacement.org/toolkit/
	US Small Business Administration Recovery Hub	Resources to sustain small businesses when economic shocks or natural disasters occur.	www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance/ recovery-hub
	American Red Cross Ready Rating	Program that helps businesses, schools, and organizations become prepared for disasters and other emergencies.	readyrating.org
INFRASTRUCTURE	Greensburg Sustainable Comprehensive Plan	An example of a best practice for incorporating green infrastructure and renewable energy resources.	www.greensburgks.org
	Center for Climate and Energy Solutions	Resources for cities on resilience planning, including best practices for hardening infrastructure.	c2es.org



