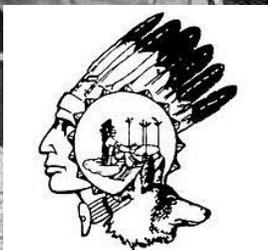


# COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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2020-2024

Spokane Tribe of Indians



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# Executive Summary

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a planning tool created by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to facilitate regional economic development and make regions eligible for EDA funding opportunities. The development of a CEDS establishes an actionable plan for economic development and ensures the Spokane Tribe will be competitive when applying for EDA funding. Funding through the EDA can include planning, infrastructure projects, and programs to promote economic development for the Tribe.

This CEDS includes background information and demographics about the Spokane Tribe, regional challenges and opportunities, community participation, and future economic direction with an action plan. The Spokane Tribe formed a CEDS Committee via resolution in 2005 and implemented the first CEDS plan in 2008. This 2020-2024 CEDS is a new document that will guide the Spokane Tribe's economic direction for the next five years. The priority goals of the Tribe are related to workforce development, hospitality, tourism, broadband, and entrepreneurship in the next five years. The Spokane Tribe also incorporates smart growth principles in all economic development to promote sustainable communities and development.

This document is a blueprint to achieve true economic sovereignty. This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) outlines economic development goals and objectives for the Spokane Tribe of Indians. The Tribe intends to deploy multiple economic development tools to accomplish a variety of aggressive objectives. The Tribe has set the vision for the contents of this plan and recognizes implementation thereof requires strong strategic partnerships with public and private actors. Upon successful implementation of this plan, leveraging resources from outside third parties will be a choice rather than a necessity.

## VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to achieve true sovereignty by attaining self-sufficiency. We will preserve and enhance our traditional values by living and teaching the inherent principles of respect, honor, and integrity as embodied in our language and life-ways. We will develop strong leadership through education, accountability, experience, and positive reinforcement.

*“We were placed here by the Creator since the beginning of time and we will always be here.”*



# Introduction

## The CEDS Process

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) process encourages regional partnerships and economic growth for urban centers and rural lands. A comprehensive approach to economic development includes creating jobs, fostering stable and diverse communities, and enhancing the quality of life for residents. A CEDS plan aims to assist the Tribe in establishing regional priorities for both projects and investments and is a requirement for federal funding. The Spokane Tribe is involved in regional coordination through Tri-County Economic Development District and participates in their CEDS planning process as well.

In 2005, the Spokane Tribe of Indians approved its first CEDS and created a committee to foster conversation about Tribal priorities and regional partnerships. Since the first CEDS, the Spokane Tribe has evolved in its economic direction and goals. This five-year CEDS for 2020-2024 prioritizes workforce development, hospitality, tourism, broadband, and entrepreneurship. The Spokane Tribe intends to achieve true sovereignty by attaining self-sufficiency through the goals and action plan outlined in this document.

## Spokane Tribal Lands

### HISTORY

The traditional Spokane homelands extended along the Spokane River from present day City of Spokane east to the Idaho border, west to the confluence of the Spokane and Columbia Rivers, and south to Cow Creek near present-day Ritzville. The Spokane River has been and continues to be the central location for the Spokane Tribe. The sqesciṇi (Lower Spokane) occupied the area around the mouth of the river and upstream to Tum-Tum. Their camps centered around the Little Falls of the Spokane River. The snx<sup>w</sup>meneʔ (Middle Spokane) occupied the area around Spokane Falls, Hangman or Latah Creek and other areas. Their territory bordered the Coeur d'Alene to the south, and extended east to Idaho. The sntuʔtʔulix<sup>w</sup> (Upper Spokane) lived primarily along the Little Spokane River. They occupied the region from the mouth of Hangman or Latah Creek to the village of Tum-Tum, and east to Lake Coeur d'Alene.

In January 1881, President Rutherford B. Hayes formally declared the Spokane Indian Reservation the new and smaller home of the Spokane Indians. The three bands of Indians were split up and some found new homes, which are now known as the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation, the Flathead Indian Reservation, and the Colville Indian Reservation. Today the Spokane Indian Reservation is 160,000 acres in size.



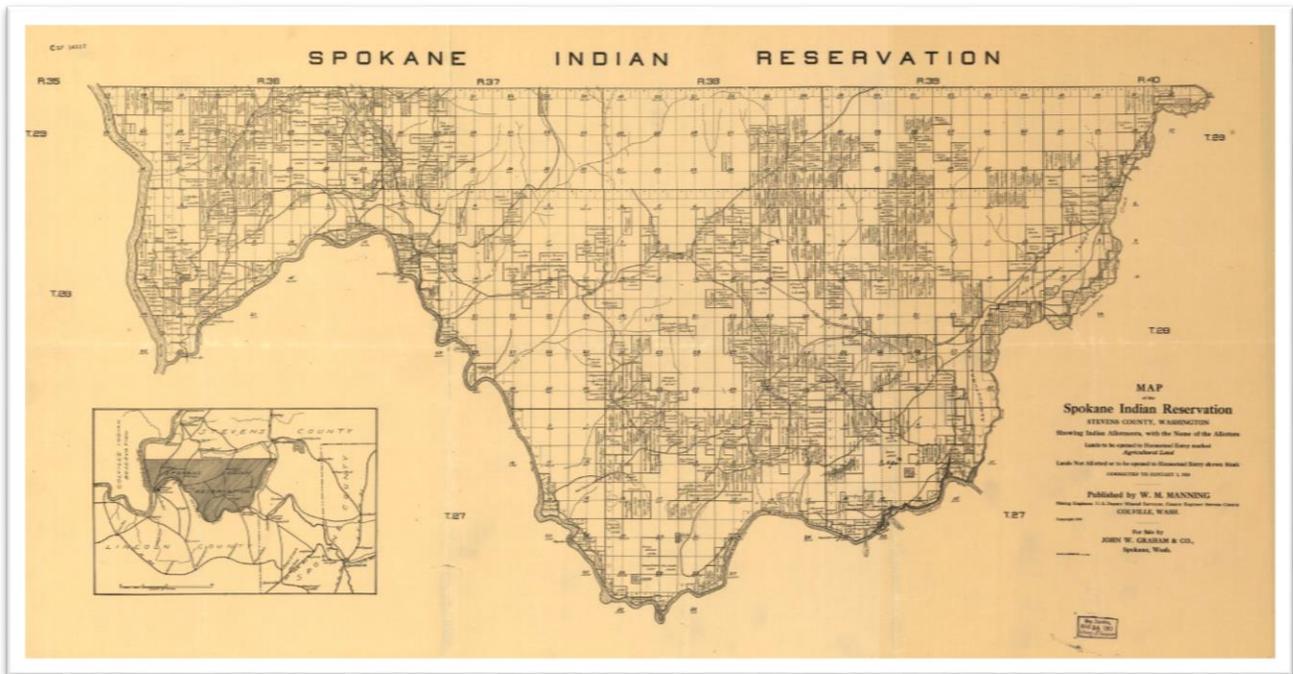
The traditional economy of the Spokane Tribe was highly dependent on hunting and gathering for subsistence and trade. The interstate economy stretched from the Cascade Mountains in Western Washington, north to Canada, and east into Montana. The creation of the reservation displaced the Tribal bands from a regional economy. Due to the Donation Land Claim Act of 1850 and Homestead Act of 1860, the best agricultural lands were given to settlers leaving Tribal members with unproductive allotments. Failed federal policy to create an agricultural economy in the early years forced the Tribe to seek logging as an alternative. By the 1880's, the Tribe's traditional economy was eliminated due to the depletion of salmon by the lower Columbia canneries and buffalo in Montana. The Dead and Down Act of 1889 restricted the Tribe from participating in the thriving timber industry while the rest of the region was commercially harvesting to support the railroad industry and construction of the City of Spokane.

The discovery of two uranium mines in 1954, Sherwood and Midnite, provided the Tribe with short-term economic relief until all mining came to an end in 1985. Shortly thereafter, the Tribe sought out other economic solutions to address the decline in revenue by developing a bingo hall off-reservation on Tribal trust land in Chewelah and then a casino in 1993. In 1994, the Tribe established the Two Rivers Casino on-reservation, which has expanded to include an RV Park and Marina. Although, Two Rivers Casino is no longer in operations due to State Gaming Compact restrictions and costs. Gaming is under the management of the TBC. The Tribe expanded their portfolio in 2005 to 2007 to include the establishment of two gas station/convenience stores in the City of Airway Heights and Chewelah. A Tribally owned Arby's restaurant was added to the Airway Heights location in 2012. In 2018, the Spokane Tribe Casino opened in Airway Heights, which has opened new development opportunities for the Spokane Tribe Economic Project site.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

The Spokane Indian Reservation consists of 160,000 acres of rural fee simple, Tribal, and individual trust land in rural northeast Washington. Lake Roosevelt, the Spokane River, and Tshimakain Creek are the major bodies of water that make up three reservation boundaries. The primary Reservation is geographically isolated. It is forty miles to the nearest interstate highway (I-90), and approximately one-hour's drive to the City of Spokane which is the nearest market center providing retail, health care, education, and employment opportunities for many Tribal members. Geographic isolation creates distance friction for Tribal members living on the Reservation and is often a limiting factor toward economic and educational advancement. The reservation is a food desert with limited commerce to support the community and sprawling developments. Due to the rocky mountainous terrain, there are limited suitable lands for development.





*Figure 1. Historical Spokane Indian Reservation*

Wellpinit, West End, and Ford are the main developed areas. They emerged as many other historical towns for government and religious purposes. Wellpinit is at the center of the reservation and is home to Tribal government. It was the location of BIA headquarters and now the remains of an administrative support office. The majority of public facilities serving the reservation community including Tribal government, public programs, and other services are located here. The diversity of land ownership here in the town center makes coordinated development difficult, but there are empty parcels and abandoned buildings that provide mixed-use development opportunities. The geography of this area is fairly flat.

West End is now home to about 91 residences. This area however is farther isolated from the limited services offered on the reservation and access ways to the nearest towns. On the eastern boundary of the reservation, five housing clusters near the town of Ford, an area that is close the old Spokane Indian Mission; providing access to State Route 231. The discussions surrounding the Ford area provide for economic development opportunities due to location.



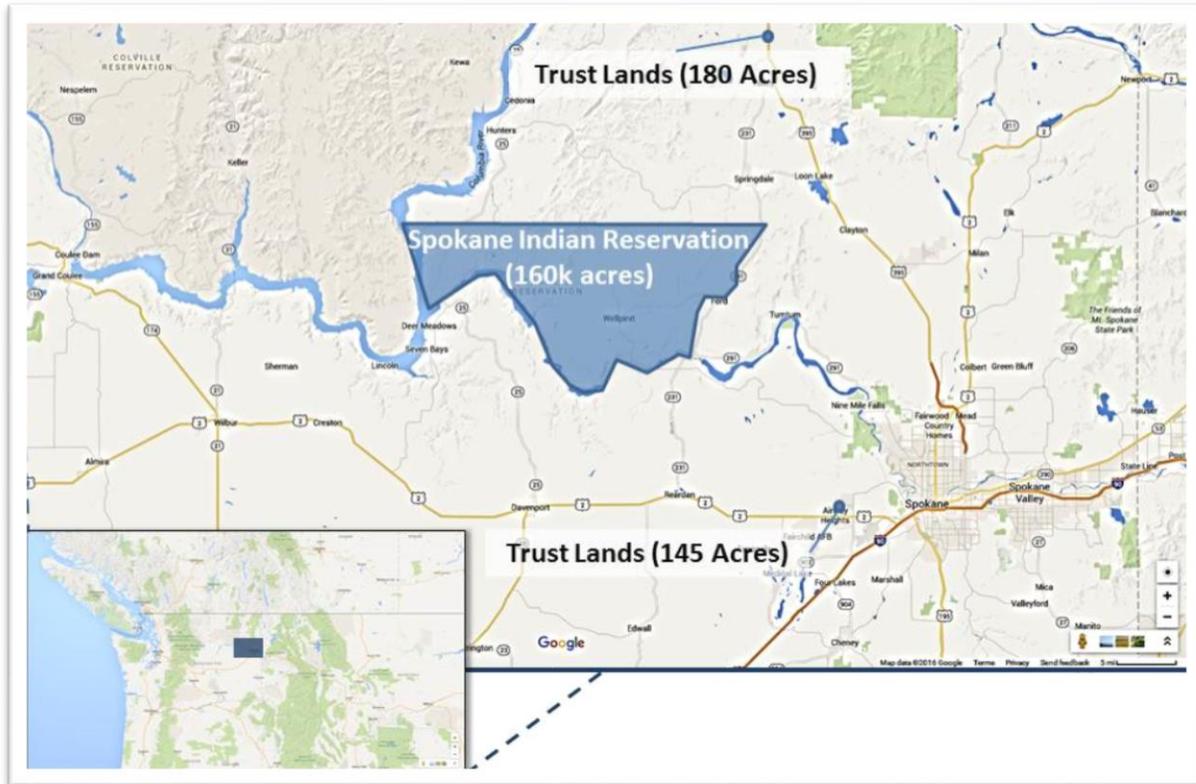


Figure 2. Spokane Indian Reservation and Trust Lands

The Reservation's natural resources include timber and uranium. The Spokane Tribe, however, no longer seeks partnerships to extract uranium due to a dubious history with the Tribe. In fact, there is a large, open pit, EPA Superfund site located on the Reservation in an effort to clean up the ills of uranium mining. The Superfund began remediation activities in May 2016, and will take approximately 10-years to finish. Although the Tribe is eager to clean the Superfund site, heavy-equipment and increased traffic to and from Spokane is expected to stress Tribal infrastructure for many years.

The Tribe is also active with developments on off-Reservation-lands held in trust by the federal government on behalf of the Spokane Tribe, which include 180 square acres near Chewelah, WA, and another 145 square acres in Airway Heights, WA. The Tribe also owns 155 square acres in fee parcels within Spokane County directly adjacent to the Tribe's trust parcels in Airway Heights.

### LAND USE AND OWNERSHIP

Land use decisions can have a serious impact on human health. By building with people as the first priority instead of giving priority to automobiles, there is a reduction in pollution from cars which in turn reduces the probability of people developing asthma and other lung disorders. Creating a community with walking areas in mind cuts down on the number of pedestrian injuries and fatalities.



Ground water and surface water are also affected by land uses. Water systems can be polluted by spills from industrial uses, septic systems located too close to shallow aquifers, and even road oil washing into streams. Thinking about the effect that a use can have, and locating it in an appropriate place can protect human health as well as wildlife by protecting sources of water systems. Land use choices affect health in many ways and it is important to consider them before development occurs.

In 2015, through community surveys in the creation of the Tribe's Sustainable Community Master Plan (SCMP), land use survey results showed that 88% of respondents believe land should be preserved for cultural uses such as hunting, fishing, and food gathering. Additionally, cultural values were identified as the number one focus for economic development. The Tribe considers the activities of people on the land to support healthy ecosystems for people, as well as plants and animals. The decisions people make about how to use the land can have long lasting impacts and it becomes difficult and costly to return land to original conditions once it gets developed. It is important for the future of the Tribe to carefully plan the uses of the land to reduce negative effects on the environment and preserve the Spokane Indian Reservation for generations to come.

Land use controls within the Spokane Tribe's jurisdictional boundaries are primarily outlined by the federal government. For instance, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Environmental Protection Act drive land use processes on Tribal lands. The Tribe has expressed interest in implementing their own land use regulations but the process is still down the road. Correspondingly, the Tribe strives to maintain constructive relationships with local jurisdictions, such as the City of Airway Heights, the City of Chewelah, Stevens County, the City of Spokane, and Washington State.

Reservation land ownership is a complex system with multiple layers of property rights, and ownership restrictions. The complex land ownership patterns on the reservation can be a barrier to concentrating developments. It is often difficult and expensive to acquire fee-simple land in developed areas of the reservation. Wellpinit is a prime example as the center of the reservation that is constrained for growth due to the land ownership patterns. This is a high activity demand area. By developing the Wellpinit Core Revitalization Phase (WCRP) Plan with an emphasis on sustainable development, land use has been redefined through cost effective Smart Growth strategies such as infill and mixed-use. Moreover, financing for individual housing construction is limited to special government programs. Property held in trust cannot usually take advantage of regular lending practices to finance construction. These restrictions 'complicate' home construction and ownership. There is a heavy reliance on the public housing authority to provide rental and affordable housing.

### **PROMISE ZONE AND OPPORTUNITY ZONE FEDERAL DESIGNATIONS**

In June 2016, President Obama designated the Spokane Tribe and all her lands a Promise Zone. There are only 22 designated Promise Zones in the nation – four Tribal, four rural, and 14 urban regions.



The designation provides federal preference for a multitude of programs and generally heightens awareness of the designee’s local challenges and how they intend to cure them. The goals and objectives identified within this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy align with those identified within the Spokane Tribe’s Promise Zone Plan. These goals include creating quality employment opportunities by establishing Tribal corporations that are able to compete at the national and international level; spurring economic development by leveraging private sector investments; improving educational opportunities by increasing enrollment, funding, and degree opportunities at the Spokane Tribal College; reducing violent crime by revising outdated Tribal laws and implementing a community policing strategy; and increase access to quality affordable housing with the implementation of the Wellpinit Core Revitalization plan. The benefits of Promise Zone designation include preference for certain competitive federal grant programs and technical assistance from participating federal agencies, tax incentives, a federal liaison, and five Americorps VISTA members.

In addition to Promise Zone designation, the Spokane Tribe is also a selected Opportunity Zone. This designation will allow the Tribe more tax advantages and incentives on the reservation and allotments.

## Demographics

### POPULATION ESTIMATES

Population is a primary indicator of how the development of growth and services should be managed. Historical population data is a useful tool in projecting the demand on these activities and the goals for economic development.

The Spokane Tribe pre-Columbian population is estimated as having been anywhere from 2,000 to 6,000 individuals. The Spokane lived in small villages made up of bands, which were grouped into three divisions along the Spokane River. Today, the majority of Spokane Tribal members reside on the Spokane Indian Reservation or larger Spokane area. Historically, Native American populations have been severely undercounted and data is limited in Indian Country; as a result, data presented from the Census Bureau will have a margin of error.

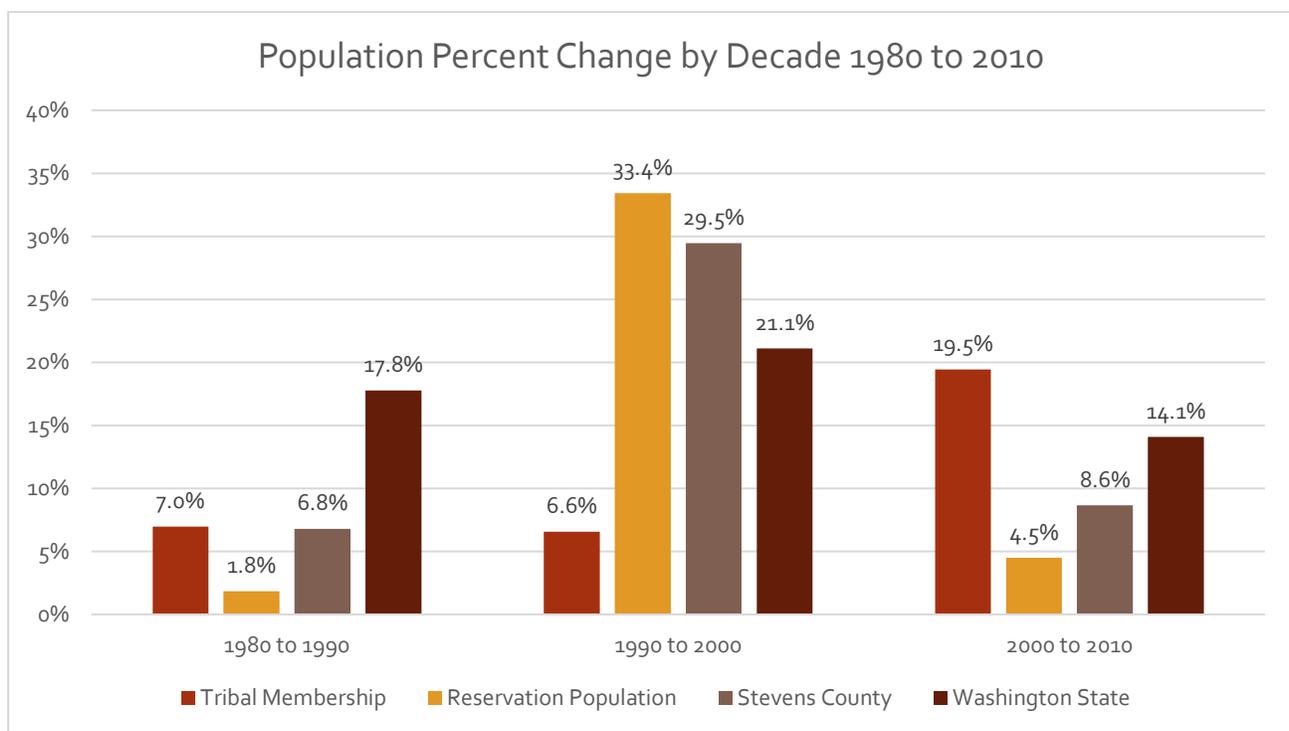
Table 1 displays the decennial populations for the Spokane Tribal membership and Spokane Indian Reservation. In 2010, approximately 79.3% of the population identified as American Indian and/or Alaskan Native. As of the 2010 Decennial Census, the reservation population was estimated at 2,094 while the Tribe estimated 2,696 enrolled Tribal members. From 2000 to 2010 the reservation



population has increased by 90 individuals (Table 1). In 2019, total Tribal enrollment numbered 2,907, alluding to increased growth rates.

*Table 1. Total Population 1980-2010*

Year	Tribal Membership	Reservation Population	Washington State
1980	1,980	1,475	4,132,156
1990	2,118	1,502	4,866,692
2000	2,257	2,004	5,894,121
2010	2,696	2,094	6,724,540



*Figure 3. Population Percent Change by Decade 1980 to 2010*

The growth of the reservation population and Tribal membership has not been consistent in a 30-year span (Figure 3). From 1980 to 1990 the reservation population grew less than 2% but from 1990 to 2000 the population grew by 33%, then decreased again in growth from 2000 to 2010 by 4.5%. However, the growth trends are comparative to surrounding Stevens County and Washington State. As a result of this inconsistent growth, predicting how much the reservation will grow and how to plan for economic development accordingly is tricky at best. The Tribe is addressing this by focusing on off-reservation assets such as the Spokane Tribe Economic Project in Airway Heights and Mistequa



Development in Chewelah with the intent of returning the revenue to the reservation for projects and programs.

The age and gender distribution on the reservation is categorized as an expansive population pyramid, indicating there are high fertility rates with lower life expectancies because there is a higher population of youth and lower population of elders (Figure 4). The reservation population is fast-growing with each cohort increasing in size each year.

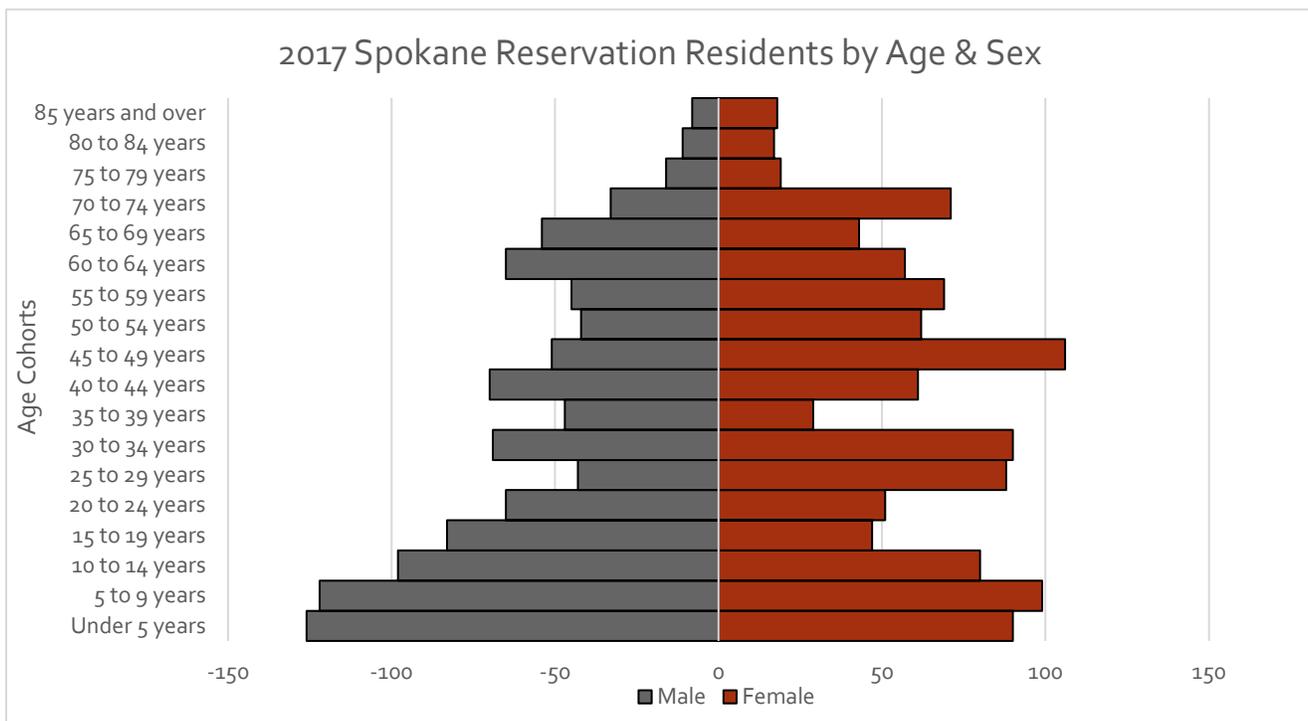
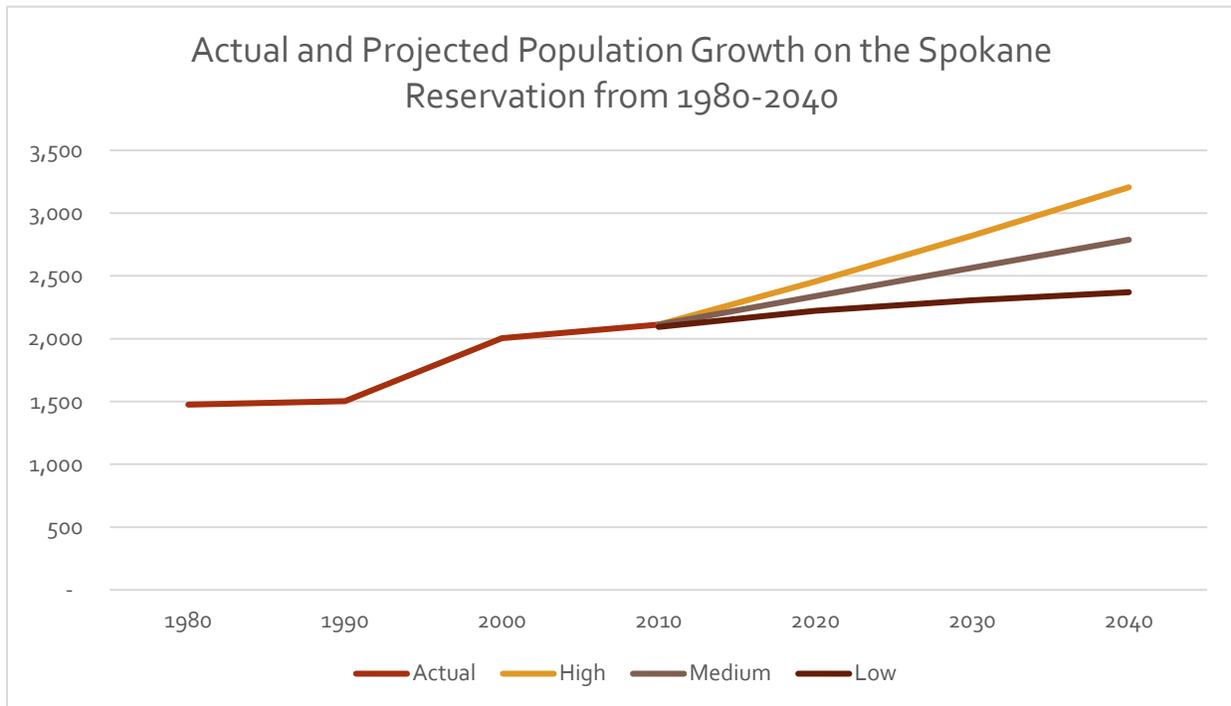


Figure 4. Population Pyramid



## FUTURE PROJECTIONS

Pulled from the Washington State Office of Financial Management there are low, medium, and high projections to indicate the future population growth of the Spokane Reservation. At most, the population is estimated to grow to 3,200 individuals, which is an increase of about 1,100 people. The Spokane Tribe also anticipates Tribal members returning to the reservation as more housing choices become available through the Wellpinit Core Revitalization and other plans.



*Figure 5. Actual and Future Projections of Population*

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The economic growth and potential of the Spokane Indian Reservation can be measured by analyzing indicators such as educational attainment, median household income, poverty, and unemployment rates.

The educational attainment of adults ages 18-24 reveals reservation residents are significantly less likely to pursue education beyond high school than Stevens County residents or statewide, and no residents in this age group have attained a Bachelor's degree or higher (Figure 6). Additionally, only 2% of adults over the age of 25 have a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to Stevens County at 6% (Figure 7). Tribal members living on-reservation are less likely to pursue higher education due to proximity of accredited higher education institutes and minimal broadband access. One of the



Spokane Tribe’s Promise Zone goal is to improve educational opportunities in an effort to diminish poverty on the reservation.

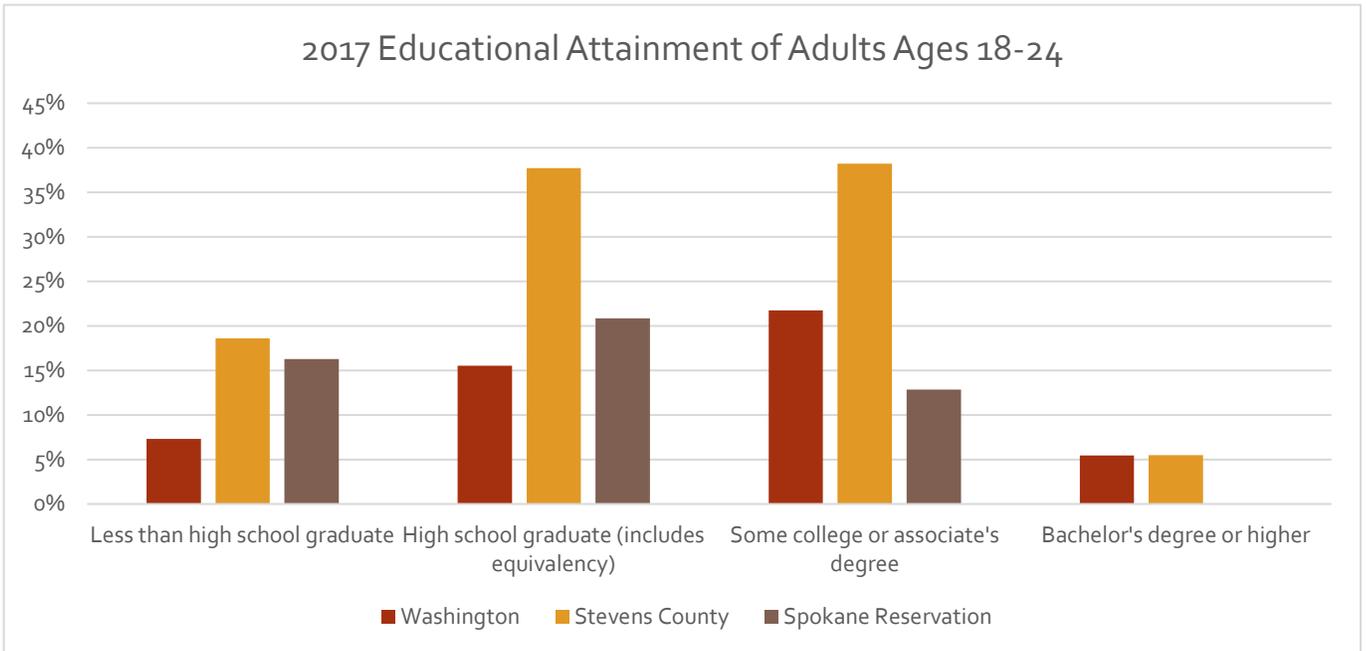


Figure 6. Educational Attainment Ages 18-24

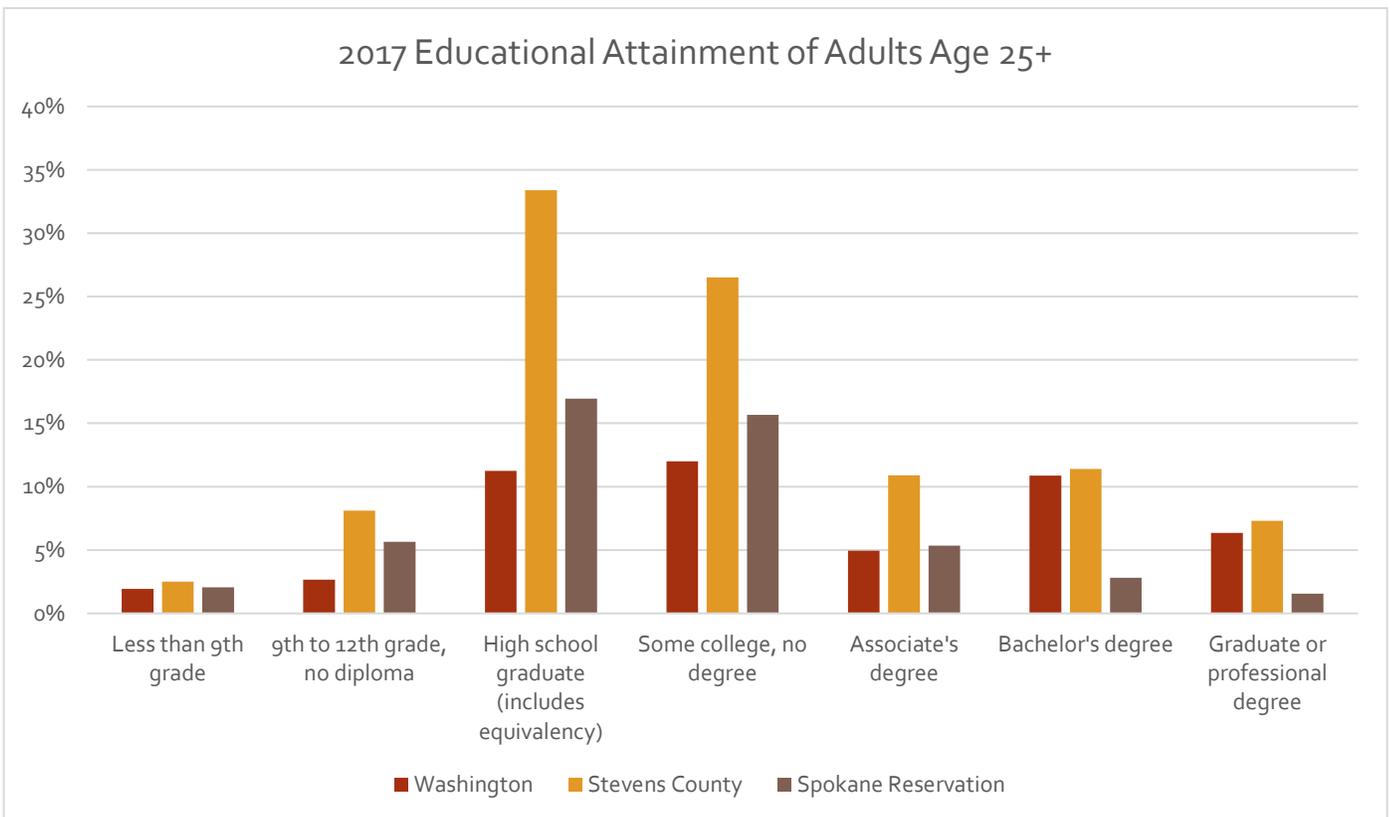


Figure 7. Educational Attainment Ages 25+



The low amount of higher education attainment also directly translates to lower median income levels for households in the reservation. The majority of reservation residents make less than \$50,000 a year (Figure 8). Most household incomes for Washington State are between \$100,000 to \$150,000, while in Stevens County it is \$50,000 to \$75,000, and on the reservation most households (18%) are between \$15,000 to \$25,000. The federal poverty level is at \$25,000, which means 38% of all residents on the reservation fall below the poverty level.

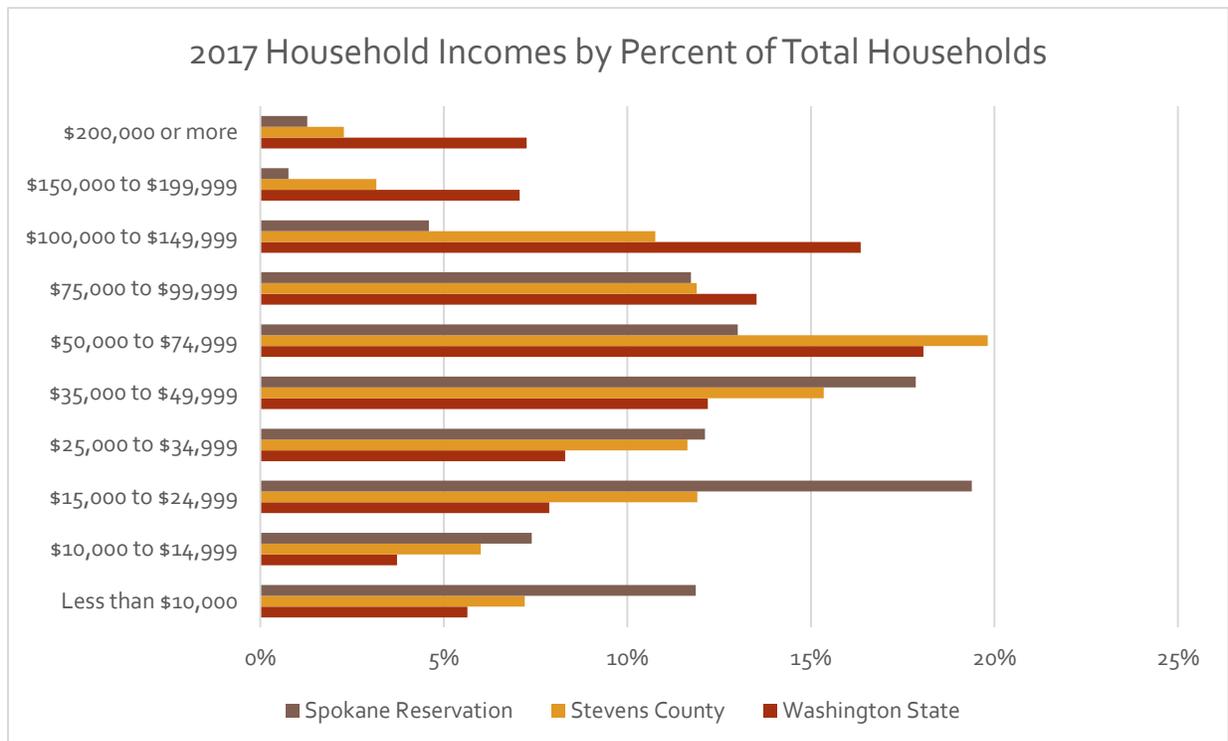


Figure 8. Household Income



## POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

The 2013 BIA Labor Market Information on the Indian Labor Force reported a 51% unemployment rate in Indian Country. Since 1981, the BIA has documented unemployment rates among the Tribal membership averaging between 43% and 77%. The Spokane Reservation's unemployment rate in 2010 was 16.5% but has since gone up to 25.8% (2015). The poverty rate of the Spokane Reservation is 23.8% compared to Washington State's at 8.2%. The U.S. Census reports median household income at 44% below the state average. As shown in Table 2, unemployment rates on the reservation are triple that of national and state averages, and poverty rates are nearly triple the state average.

*Table 2. Unemployment and Poverty Rates*

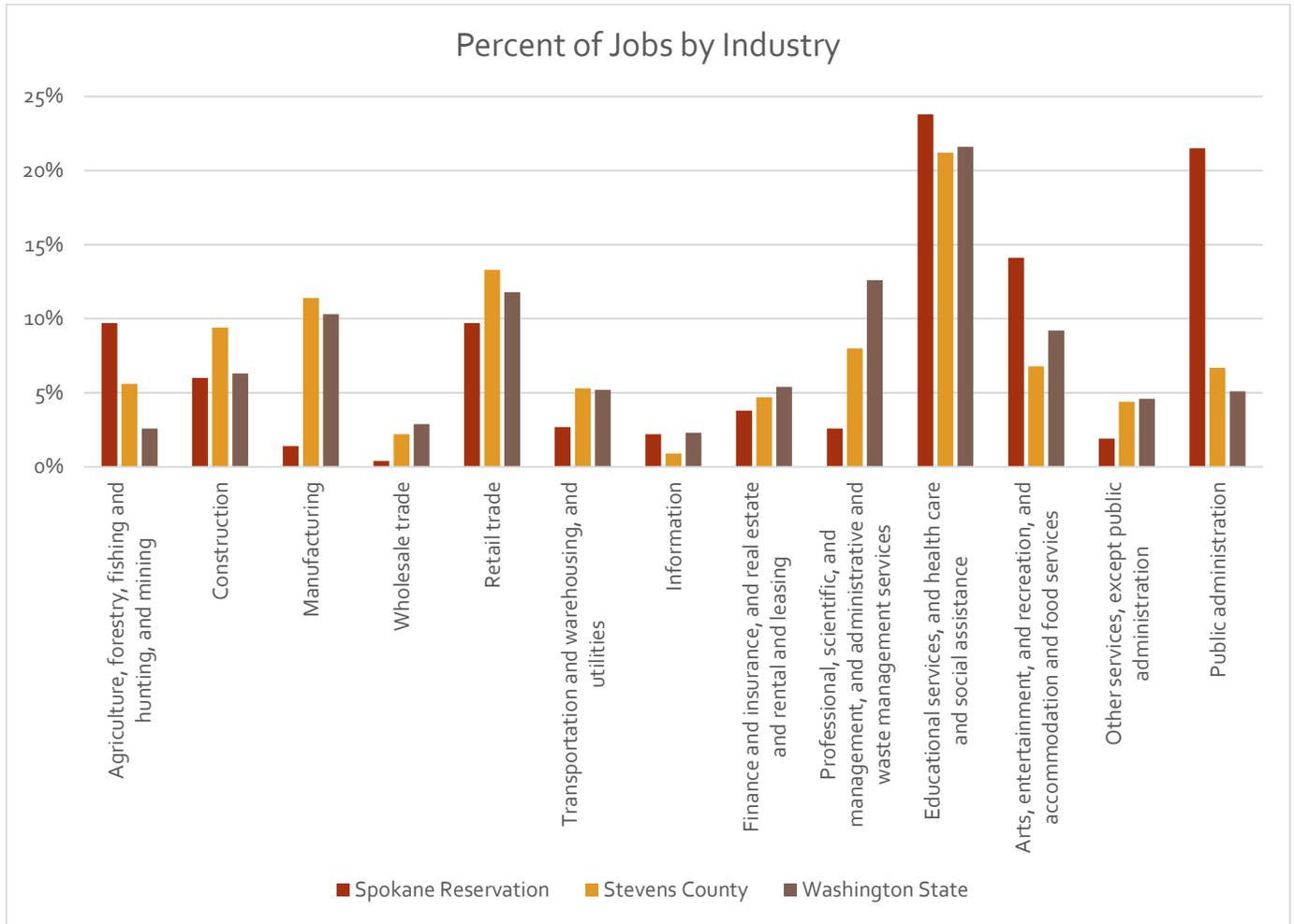
	<b>Spokane Reservation</b>	<b>Stevens County</b>	<b>Washington State</b>	<b>Nationwide</b>
Unemployment Rate	16.5%	5.8%	4.9%	5.1%
Poverty Rate	23.8%	11.0%	8.2%	10.1%
Percent Minority	85.9%	10.6%	22.7%	27.6%
Median Household Income	\$32,096	\$42,845	\$57,244	\$51,914

## INDUSTRY

Tribal government is the largest employer on the reservation. Its payroll consists of 376 individuals. This number grows to about 670 employees in the summer with seasonal workers and summer youth employees. WSD, IHS, and SIHA are the next largest employers.

There is limited commerce on the reservation. Less than .01% of the enrolled population pursues private small business development. These businesses consist of Kurt's Korner gas station/convenience store, Ford cigarette store, Pappy's Korner store, McCoy's Marina, and limited seasonal firework stands during the 4th of July and New Year's. Lately, there has been an increase in mobile food vendors setting up businesses in the middle of Wellpinit. They require little utilities for operations support and costs to government for infrastructure developments. The Tribe needs to empower the community to create local commerce to meet the needs of the community, market the low business license fees, and no sales tax incentives.





*Figure 9. Percent of Jobs by Industry*

It is vitally important to the health of the reservation economy to expand jobs beyond the government sector. The unemployment rate on the reservation is very high and the population is growing. Government sector jobs are already not keeping pace with the need, and as the population grows the situation will become worse. Diversifying the economy by supporting local small business is an important strategy that the Tribe and the community will both benefit from. The current pattern creates dependency and a burden on Tribal government. It disempowers the community in becoming self-sufficient. The destruction of reservation lands and negative impacts to the health of the environment and community are the results of these unsustainable practices.



# Economic Development

## INTRODUCTION

Historically, due to the physical geography of the Reservation being primarily rugged timberlands, timber extraction and forest management provided revenue to the Tribe. Additionally, under the guise of Sovereign Power, Inc. (a Tribal corporation), solar and biomass energy production programs are being developed. In the summer of 2019, the Children of the Sun Solar Initiative (COSSI) project installed the first phase of solar panels on major administrative buildings in Wellpinit. Future phases will include installation on homes.

Aside from extracting timber resources, another source of revenue is gaming. However, where once the Tribe maintained control of the local gaming market, in the late 1990s, a neighboring Tribe constructed a gaming facility nearer to the City of Spokane than the Spokane Tribe's two facilities and thereby usurped the bulk of the region's gaming market, leaving the Spokane Tribe with a significantly decreased source of gaming revenue. Presently, the Tribe's gaming facilities are located near the City of Chewelah, which is an hour north of Spokane and in the City of Airway Heights. The gaming facilities of Chewelah Casino and Two Rivers Casino did not provide significant revenue due to their locations and small size. Since the last CEDS, the Two Rivers Casino has been shut down due to inability to conform with Washington State Gaming Compacts. The casino in Airway Heights, known as the Spokane Tribe Casino opened in the winter of 2018 and is a new source of revenue for the Tribe. The next phase of the STC is underway with a grand opening anticipated in the next 2-5 years.

## INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

The Tribe's infrastructural assets are best characterized as just the opposite – liabilities. The primary road that spans the reservation is a Stevens County road (Ford-Wellpinit Road); therefore, the Tribe does not have direct jurisdictional control of it. Yet, the Tribe still is expected to maintain its roads, especially in the winter. The Tribe is actively working on regional coordination with Stevens County and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to maximize maintenance dollars and improve existing infrastructure. An example of this is the Safe Routes to School sidewalk funded by WSDOT to improve walking conditions for students at Wellpinit Elementary and Wellpinit Middle-High schools.

Most homes utilize on-site septic and well-water. The Reservation's well-water has high levels of naturally occurring radio-active uranium. Therefore, managing water quality on a home to home basis demands a constant vigil. At this time, houses are not metered and shut-off valves are far and few between. Both of the Tribe's public water systems do not meet demand. At times, water actually runs dry within the community of Wellpinit. In the fall of 2019, the Tribe took its first step in



expanding the capacity of the main water line through connection and piping improvements. Wellpinit also struggles with its sewage treatment facility, which is a lagoon that overflows from time to time polluting the surrounding area.

The core of Wellpinit has experienced multiple power outages and water shortages in the past few years due to inadequacies in the well-pump and natural occurrences such as wind or snow. When there is a water shortage Tribal Administration is often shutdown to ensure there is enough water for residents. The shutdown of administrative services costs the Tribe significant dollars and greatly inconveniences Tribal members relying on services such as TANF, the IHS Clinic, or Tribal Credit.

## **REGIONAL ECONOMY**

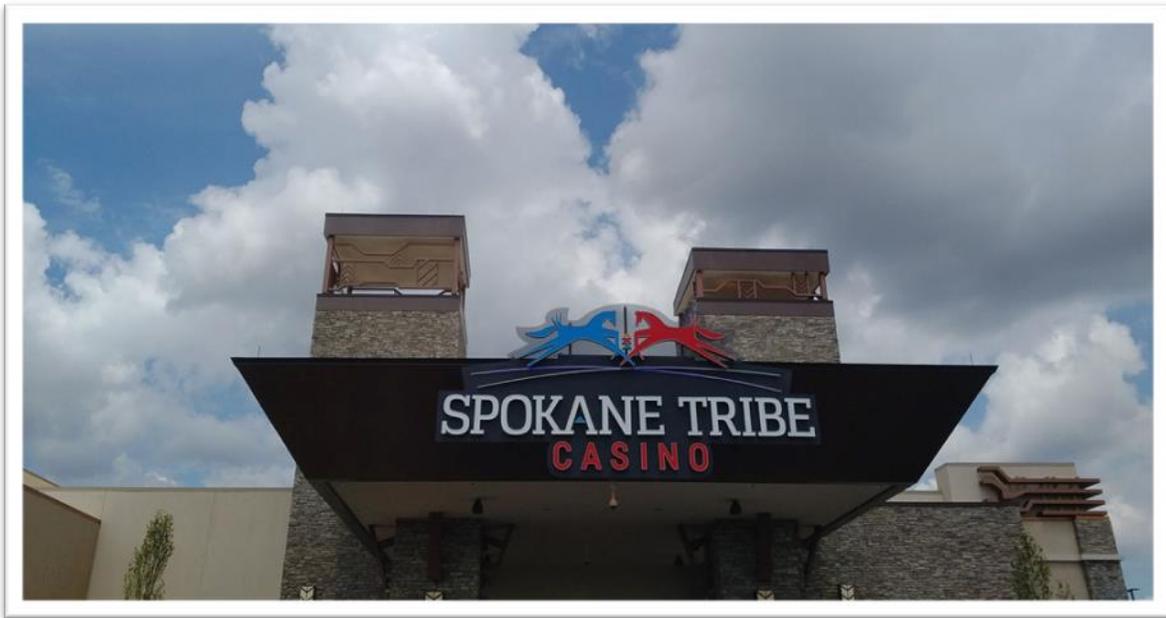
The Spokane Tribe is an active player within the regional economy. Spokane Tribal Enterprises owns and operates four C-stores dispersed throughout the region providing fuel and quick-stop retail services. Known as Spoko Fuels, the C-stores are generally successful and provide a source of revenue to the Tribe.

The Spokane Tribe actively engages with the Upper Columbia United Tribes' efforts to reintroduce salmon and other indigenous anadromous fish species to the upper reaches of the Columbia River. The Columbia River is the pulse that drives all manner of economic activity within Washington State and Oregon. In 2021, the United States' Columbia River Treaty with Canada expires and will be eligible for renewal. The Spokane Tribe is engaged in the process to renegotiate the treaty to include opportunities for indigenous fish reintroduction.

The Tribe initiated and is leading a discussion on the deployment of broadband connectivity to the Reservation and to the rural reaches of northeast Washington. Partners in this exercise include Stevens County, the City of Chewelah, the City of Colville, and the Deer Park Chamber of Commerce.

In the City of Airway Heights, the Tribe is beginning the next phases for the Spokane Tribe Casino that opened in early 2018. Planning for future phases of this development is a significant objective within this CEDS plan. A land use feasibility analysis was completed for fee parcels located directly adjacent to the casino-resort (trust) parcels. Through the completion of appropriate land use processes and analysis, the Tribe will utilize their fee parcels to develop a green industrial park serving a variety of uses and employ a significant number of individuals.





*Figure 10. Spokane Tribe Casino*

### **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

The Tribe's largest employer can generally be characterized as governmental. Approximately 450 individuals are employed by the Tribe performing tasks from governmental administration to working in one of the two casinos to working in one of the Tribe's four C-stores. The Tribe hires with Spokane native preference, the vast majority of Tribal employees are Spokanes.

The Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance (TERO) Office administers workforce development in the skilled trades revolving around construction activities. Presently, many TERO employees are working for Newmont Mining to remediate the EPA Superfund Site, otherwise known as Midnite Mine, located on the Spokane Indian Reservation. At full steam, the Midnite Mine Superfund Site is expected to employ about 125 individuals.

On a project by project basis, the Tribe also engages with the appropriate technical advisory experts to educate and develop the workforce. For instance, the Tribe is nurturing an active relationship with Whole Foods Corporation – the upscale grocery chain that specializes in fresh, locally sourced foods – to improve the Reservation's only grocery store by training store employees on best practices in grocery retail.

Finally, large scale, native preference employment opportunities are presently being developed by the Spokane Tribe that have the potential to provide a significant number of primary jobs to the metropolitan region. Said opportunities shall be identified within the goals and objectives portion of this economic development strategy.





There are new development opportunities for the Spokane Tribe to pursue including broadband, alternative energy, workforce training, primary jobs, and community wealth building. Additionally, there are opportunities to bring underdeveloped properties to fruition by leveraging economic competitive advantages at Two Rivers, Chewelah, STEP, and the West Plains.

## SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is a compilation of a region's strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats. The intent of identifying strengths and weaknesses is to reflect the current economic condition of the Spokane Tribe. The purpose of identifying opportunities shows economic improvement while factoring threats that are often external.

### Strengths

- Strong Tribal Programs
- Two Gaming Facilities
- Proximity to the Spokane River (Two Rivers Marina)
- Promise Zone Designation
- Opportunity Zone Designation
- Strong regional partnerships and involvement
- Follows smart growth and sustainability principles
- Strong agriculture, forestry, and logging industries

### Weaknesses

- Lack of diverse career and job opportunities
- Limited transportation network
- High unemployment
- Lack of adequate broadband
- Generational poverty
- Undeveloped properties
- Inadequate infrastructure
- Unequal distribution of services, concentrated in Wellpinit

### Opportunities

- Increase broadband infrastructure and connectivity
- Improve infrastructure and prioritize green infrastructure projects
- Create and promote new industries
- Increase tourism and hospitality industries



- New and continued partnerships with jurisdictions in Eastern Washington
- City of Chewelah’s Creative District
- Land acquisition and fee-to-trust land opportunities

### Threats

- Decline in external funding opportunities
- Competing regional entities that don’t support development efforts
- Overreliance on limited industries
- Multi-jurisdictional authority on reservation lands
- Increased natural hazards/disasters due to climate change
- Low reservation retention of educated tribal members
- Limited housing availability and options

## Issues and Challenges

### HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY

The majority of households on the reservation spend well above 45% of their income on housing and travel expenses due to its rural location and lack of retail services. That does not leave much income left for other essential needs such as utilities, groceries, and healthcare. There are multiple solutions to this challenge including building affordable homes, provide more services on the reservation to reduce travel costs, increase alternative transportation options, and create new job opportunities with higher pay. These are all approaches included in this CEDS as goals the Spokane Tribe wants to prioritize in the next five years.

### INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

The lack of sufficient water and wastewater facilities on the reservation hamper local economic development activities. There is also no broadband, retail, or office space to support small business or local entrepreneurs. This greatly reduces educational, business, and entrepreneurial opportunities for residents. Additionally, insufficient infrastructure limits the capacity of new construction.

Recently, the Spokane Tribe has completed the Wellpinit watermain project and remote monitoring to replace and update large portions of the watermain. Next steps for infrastructure include rehabilitating the wastewater lagoons and installing a community drainfield.

### WORKFORCE

There is a demand for Tribal members to meet the changing needs of the Tribe. The Tribe enforces the Tribal Employment Right’s Ordinance to provide equal employment opportunities for skilled



workers. The primary industries at the Spokane Tribe are limited to government service, agriculture, forestry, mining (remediation of the mine), and retail (limited to Spoko Fuel and Trading Post).

### **PAST UNSUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Tribe has relied on the natural resource industries of logging and uranium mining to provide funding for public programs and services. These industries have not been able to provide long-term economic solutions on their own. All uranium mining has come to an end. Sherwood Mine has been remediated while Midnite Mine has been classified as a superfund site and scheduled for cleanup beginning in 2015.

## Opportunities and Strategies

### **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

Based on community input in the SCMP, there is a need for increased training and education leading to job placement and job growth. According to the 2010 American Community Survey (ACS), 40.3% of the reservation population continued onto higher education. Overall, 18% of the population received a degree and 2.7% had attained a graduate or doctoral degree. There are many community members with degrees and work experience who are skilled workers but are underutilized. A “Talent Development Pipeline Study” will need to be conducted to determine employment gaps and coordinate pathways for training and education. Strategic investment in human capital is necessary with new or expanding economic development opportunities. This includes programs focused on training and building capacity based on the current needs of the community as well as future demands. With new opportunities, the need for a higher skilled and a specialized labor force will arise to meet the labor force of future Tribal needs.

### **ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Small business training and support for entrepreneurs within the Tribal community presents another opportunity to support local economic growth. Specialized programs supporting the needs of Indian entrepreneurs have been shown to successfully encourage job creation and economic progress which could provide the means to create a local sustainable economy while also reducing economic “leakage.” The Spokane Tribe’s credit department does not have the capacity to support entrepreneurs and their business loans. As a solution, the Tribe partnered with the Colville Tribe and their Northwest Native Development Fund to educate and train aspiring entrepreneurs. There are opportunities for the Colville and Spokane Tribes to continue to work together and expand this program. Additionally, the Tribe should expand and promote other partnership with groups such as the Northwest Area Foundation who work with Native American communities towards poverty reduction and sustainability. Due to a lack of available funding, we send all entrepreneurs to the Tri-County Economic Development loan fund.



## **REDUCE POVERTY THROUGH SOCIAL EQUITY**

The Spokane Tribe aims to promote traditional Tribal values of caring for the people. Social equity implies fair access to livelihood, education, and resources; full participation in the political and cultural life of the community; and self-determination in meeting fundamental needs.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Recognizing limitations of the environment and a growing population, many community members have expressed a desire to seek more sustainable forms of economic development. This is reflected in the community's stated goals. Western economic development initiatives have traditionally focused on a single bottom-line: profitability. For true sustainability, that which considers social and natural consequences, more is needed. Many have begun to see that a 'triple-bottom-line' approach will provide a much more holistic outcome. The triple bottom is a measurement tool. "Triple bottom line economic development is defined as programs, policies, or activities designed to create or retain jobs and wealth that contribute to community well-being and sustainability over time." It seeks to align and make a positive impact to the "three strands of the braid," including: people/equity, planet/environment, and prosperity/economy. The Spokane Tribe already follows the triple bottom line approach through practicing smart growth principles in their planning processes. The Sustainable Community Master Plan is a document that focuses on improving the quality of life for residents on the reservation for seven generations to come.

## **IMPROVE LOCAL BUSINESS**

Identify and create economic zones within destination centers which include improving walkability, redevelopment and reuse of existing facilities with access to infrastructure and services. A business incubator would help support these activities. Business incubators are programs designed to accelerate the successful development of entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support resources and services.

## **TOURISM**

Tourism opportunities exist on and off the reservation. Two Rivers offers on-reservation tourism activities which include a Casino and RV Park & Marina. This area offers more opportunities for cultural and eco-tourism. The 300 plus acres of trust land properties off-reservation, in the cities of Chewelah and Airway Heights, can provide diverse mixed-use activities.

The Tribe has a wealth of natural resources that can be an integral part of eco-tourism activity. This type of economic development activity is sustainable and reduces impacts to the environment. The Tribe's culture can add value to this type of tourism to attract visitors. Cluster industries such as food, entertainment, and retail are small business possibilities to support this large economic development activity. Globally, indigenous peoples are looking to tap into tourism as a means to create jobs, express their culture, and become self-sufficient nations. In 2010 the World Travel and Tourism



Council (WTTC) estimated that as a whole, the tourism industry makes up for nearly 10% of the world's Gross Domestic Product. Tourism also created 1 in 12 jobs and is projected to grow 4% by 2022. 18 For indigenous peoples, developing a tourist industry can become a driver for sustainable economic development. Indigenous tourism offers international travelers looking to experience a region for its culture, landscape, and entertainment the opportunity to enjoy and learn the native peoples' histories and culture, and some tourists leave with a greater appreciation and understanding of the culture. This is not to say that indigenous tourism can only be done with an "indigenous" theme, many simply offer tourism opportunities that are more mainstream and have no cultural aspects attached to them. A tourist attraction can be any overlapping themes and the amount of indigenous culture incorporated can be solely determined by the host community.

### **BROADBAND**

The development of these communication technologies will have a positive impact on the community. Broadband internet on the reservation will allow residents to pursue educational opportunities and home-based businesses without having to leave the reservation. It will also provide a way for Tribal businesses to advertise and interact with customers and business partners. More and more, the expectation for people is to have some sort of computer access for day to day activities. Not having this access is going to become an increasing detriment to the people on the reservation as the rest of the world becomes more connected.

## Strategic Direction

The Spokane Tribe's strategic direction includes 8 major goals that encompass projects and opportunities related to hospitality, retail development, energy, core revitalization, infrastructure, and regional partnerships. The Tribe, via the comprehensive plan, will continue to establish business opportunities to support community and surrounding areas in the region. The Spokane Tribe will continue to collaborate with local and regional partners to achieve economic development goals. The strategic direction for the Spokane Tribe was driven by efforts of the CEDS Committee, leadership, Sustainable Community Master Plan and coordination with regional partner's comprehensive plans.





Figure 12. SCMP Community Input Word Cloud

## Goals and Objectives

### **GOAL 1. Leverage the Tribe's Promise Zone and Opportunity Zone designations.**

The Spokane Tribe was selected as a Promise Zone and Opportunity Zone in recognition of our pride in our community's future. The Promise Zone Status, in particular, was awarded to only 22 communities. The Tribe's Promise Zone goals are to create quality jobs, expand educational opportunities, boost innovation, reduce crime, and increase affordable housing.

**Objective 1.** Implement all economic development goals as outlined in the Promise Zone Plan, all of which align with the goals below.

**Milestone 1.** Create/retain jobs through STEP and Mistequa Village Development

**Objective 2.** Actively engage with federal partners to maximize impact of Promise Zone and Opportunity Zone designations.

**Milestone 1.** Achieve EDA funding for Mistequa Village Development

**Milestone 2.** Develop and implement funding strategy

**Objective 3.** Create an Opportunity Zone Strategy

**Milestone 1.** Recruit private sector investment in Opportunity Zone

**Objective 4.** Commit Tribal funds to leverage Promise and Opportunity Zone.

**Milestone 1.** Allocate budgets for projects and programs pertaining to Promise and Opportunity Zone.



## **GOAL 2. Attract primary jobs to the “STEP Fee Parcels.”**

The Spokane Tribe owns eight fee-simple parcels that total 155 acres located adjacent to the Tribe’s “STEP” project. The STEP project is a casino-resort development located on 145 acres of trust lands.

**Objective 1.** Continue to fund site planning and design

**Milestone 1.** Complete site design

**Objective 2.** Continue to work with strategic partners to plan for and construct sustainable manufacturing facilities within the green industrial park.

**Milestone 1.** Complete Green Industrial Park Business Plan

**Milestone 2.** Identify funding stack for initial buildout

**Objective 3.** Develop a U.S. Foreign Trade Zone via the U.S. Department of Commerce to stimulate international investing.

**Milestone 1.** Create U.S. Foreign Trade Zone guidelines



*Figure 13. Spokane Tribe Casino Entrance*

## **GOAL 3. Create the Misteqa Village Development in Chewelah, WA on the Tribe’s trust parcels.**

The Misteqa Village Development includes a new hotel development, new casino, and retail buildout on 80-acres in Chewelah, Washington. The land is in trust and is currently home to the Chewelah Casino owned by the Tribe.

**Objective 1.** Continue to work in partnership with the City of Chewelah as the Tribe develops its Chewelah trust parcels.

**Milestone 1.** Participate in Chewelah’s Chamber of Commerce, The Chewelah Creative District (CCD), and Chewelah Area Recreation Planning Effort (CARPE)

**Objective 2.** Construct a hotel.

**Milestone 1.** Finalize hotel design

**Milestone 2.** Obtain financing and federal funding

**Milestone 3.** Complete construction and grand opening



**Objective 3.** Secure private development partnerships to bring opportunities to Chewelah.

**Milestone 1.** Complete Environmental Review for retail buildout

**Milestone 2.** Continue site planning for retail buildout

**Milestone 3.** Complete a Market Analysis



*Figure 14. Mistequa Hotel Concept*

**GOAL 4. Create a Development Plan for the Two Rivers Resort.**

Located at the intersection of the Columbia and Spokane rivers, Two Rivers Resort is an underutilized 391 acres that has the potential to attract significant tourist activity.

**Objective 1.** Consensus build around a site plan and vision for Two Rivers Resort.

**Milestone 1.** Conduct stakeholder meetings to update site plan

**Milestone 2.** Commit funding to complete initial site plans

**Objective 2:** Organize financing and development plans.

**Milestone 1.** Identify funding stack for buildout

**Milestone 2.** Complete site plan and Environmental Reviews

**GOAL 5. Plan, design, and construct future phases of STEP.**

Spokane Tribe Economic Project (STEP) is located on 145 acres of trust lands within the City of Airway Heights. The first phase of a large-scale casino resort development has commenced. Future phases must now be planned.

**Objective 1.** Partner with a retail industry expert (commercial broker) to establish relationships with potential large-scale retailers for the site.

**Milestone 1.** Identify retail industry expert



**Milestone 2.** Complete a business plan

**Objective 2.** Complete hotel design.

**Milestone 1.** Decide the hotel ownership or leasehold

**Objective 3.** Fund potential future phases of STEP

**Milestone 1.** Create a funding strategy for future phases

**Objective 4.** Construct improvements

**Milestone 1.** Finalize design for STEP

**Milestone 2.** Identify funding stacks

**Milestone 3.** Complete construction

#### **GOAL 6. Revitalize the Tribe's administrative seat.**

Wellpinit is a prime example as the center of the reservation that is constrained for growth due to the land ownership patterns. This is a high activity demand area. By developing the Wellpinit Core Revitalization Phase (WCRP) Plan with an emphasis on sustainable development, land use has been redefined through cost effective Smart Growth strategies such as infill and mixed-use.

**Objective 1.** Design and construct a wastewater treatment facility that can provide capacity for residential and commercial growth.

**Milestone 1.** Complete wastewater treatment facility design and Environmental Review

**Milestone 2.** Identify and secure funding

**Milestone 3.** Complete construction

**Objective 2.** Complete improvements to the Wellpinit Community Water System, which currently does not meet capacity.

**Milestone 1.** Complete water system buildout as identified in WCRP Phase Plan

**Milestone 2.** Fund water system improvements through partnerships with IHS and other federal agencies

**Objective 3.** Design and construct complete streets throughout Wellpinit.

**Milestone 1.** Identify transportation projects to be funded during 5-year CEDS period in Wellpinit

**Objective 4.** Construct new Trading Post and mixed-use building

**Milestone 1.** Complete design

**Milestone 2.** Identify funding through new market tax credits and federal resources

**Objective 5.** Implement the Wellpinit Core Revitalization Phase Plan.

**Milestone 1.** Complete projects through 2024 as identified in Phase Plan.

**Milestone 2.** Update Phase Plan

#### **GOAL 7. Increase high-speed broadband connectivity for the Spokane Indian Reservation and northeast Washington.**

Broadband connectivity on the reservation will allow residents to pursue educational opportunities and home-based businesses without having to leave the reservation. It will also provide a way for



Tribal businesses to advertise and interact with customers and business partners. Broadband is also particularly vital for rural areas where there are transportation challenges.

**Objective 1.** Design the broadband network.

**Milestone 1.** Complete system design.

**Objective 2.** Pursue funding mechanisms

**Milestone 1.** Identify funding stacks such as USDA’s Community Connect and ReConnect programs

**Milestone 2.** Identify private partnerships.

**Objective 3.** Continue to work with regional partners and Spokane Tribe’s Telecommunication Exchange (STTX)

**Milestone 1.** Continue to support and participate in Stevens County and Spokane Tribe Broadband Action Team (BAT)

**Objective 4.** Build the network.

**Milestone 1.** Establish business partnerships

**Milestone 2.** Secure Federal Communications Commission (FCC) permits.

## **GOAL 8**

**Engage with regional stakeholders in their continuous CEDS efforts to better leverage economic opportunities for the Tribe.**

The Spokane Tribe is an active player within the regional economy. Spokane Tribal Enterprises owns and operates four C-stores dispersed throughout the region providing fuel and quick-stop retail services. Known as Spoko Fuels, the C-stores are generally successful and provide a source of revenue to the Tribe.

**Objective 1.** Identify existing CEDS plans in the region and collaborate with jurisdictions in eastern Washington.

**Milestone 1.** Participate in the Tri-Economic County Development District CEDS Committee.

**Milestone 2.** Coordinate CEDS updates with regional input and stakeholder engagement.



# Action Plan

A detailed plan of action will be undertaken from the goals & objectives. The list below outlines each goal's expected cost, activity leaders, strategic partners, expected funding sources, and implementation timeframes.

1. Leverage the Tribe's Promise Zone and Opportunity Zone designations

Cost: basic administrative expenses.

Leader: Spokane Tribe.

Partners: federal government and private foundations.

Funding sources: Spokane Tribe of Indians, public & private investors.

Timeframe: 10 years.

2. Attract primary jobs to the "STEP Fee Parcels."

Cost: ≈ \$200,000,000.

Leader: Spokane Tribe.

Partners: Economic Development Administration, City of Airway Heights, and numerous parties from the private sector. The Spokane Tribe is at various stages of relationship building with private investors to create primary jobs.

Funding sources: Spokane Tribe of Indians, Economic Development Administration, US Department of Commerce, City of Airways Heights, and private industry.

Timeframe: Land use planning and diligence has commenced.

3. Construct a hotel in Chewelah, Washington.

Cost: ≈ \$12,000,000.

Leader: Spokane Tribe.

Partners: City of Chewelah and a private sector developer. The Spokane Tribe is presently in negotiation with a private developer to construct a hotel and complimentary retail "parcels" on the Tribe's Chewelah trust parcels.

Funding sources: Spokane Tribe of Indians, private industry.

Timeframe: land use planning and diligence has commenced. Construction is expected to occur in 2020-2021.





*Figure 15. Two Rivers Marina*

4. Two Rivers Improvement. Cost:  $\approx$  \$25,000,000. Leader: Spokane Tribe. Partners: Spokane Tribal Enterprises, private industry, possibly USDA. Funding sources: Spokane Tribe of Indians, private industry. Timeframe: Feasibility study and site planning expected to commence within two to five years.
5. Future Phases of STEP Cost:  $\approx$  \$360,000,000. Leader: Spokane Tribe. Partners: numerous parties from the private sector. The first phase of STEP was completed in January of 2018 and is bringing in cash flow for the Tribe. Phase 2 planning has begun with financing discussions happening with various sources. Funding sources: Spokane Tribe of Indians. Timeframe: The next phase, pursuant to this CEDS plan, is retail and hotel attraction.
6. Revitalize the Tribe's administrative seat – Wellpinit, WA. Cost:  $\approx$  \$30,000,000. Leader: Spokane Tribe of Indians. Partners: Bureau of Indians Affairs, Indian Health Services, USDA, Northwest Area Foundation, Minnesota Housing Partnership, Eastern Washington University, and Sovereign Power. Funding sources: Spokane Tribe of Indians, private foundations, possibly USDA, possibly Indian Health Services, and/or possibly the State of Washington. Timeframe: The first sidewalk was completed in 2019 which included a mile long pedestrian-bike path connecting Wellpinit Core to the Middle-High School campus. In addition, a new Trading Post



and a biomass plant are planned for 2020. Total buildout for the Wellpinit Core Revitalization will be roughly 10 years.

7. Increase high-speed broadband connectivity for the Spokane Indian Reservation and the whole of northeast Washington. Cost:  $\approx$  \$10,000,000. Leader: Spokane Tribe of Indians. Partners: USDA, Tri County Economic Development District, Stevens County, City of Colville, City of Chewelah, and numerous parties from the private sector. Funding sources: Spokane Tribe of Indians, USDA, possibly private foundations. Timeframe: Total buildout is expected within five years.



# Evaluation Framework

The Spokane Tribe anticipates measuring the activities drawn from the objectives in the Strategic Direction. The completion of each activity will primarily be determined quantitatively through number of jobs created, number of dollars earned or received, and number of individuals trained (Table 3).

*Table 3. Economic Objectives Measurement*

Activities from Objectives	Measures
Promise Zone Plan and Opportunity Zone Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Total amount of federal dollars and private foundational dollars received.</li> <li>▪ Engagement with the private market for contracts to serve the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provision of alternative energy;</li> <li>○ Provision of broadband;</li> <li>○ Provision of HVAC equipment; and</li> <li>○ Construction services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of workers trained.</li> <li>▪ Number of workers employed.</li> <li>▪ Leveraging private sector investment in workforce development.</li> <li>▪ Number of jobs retained as a result of local investments</li> <li>▪ Establish an Education Department</li> </ul>
Hospitality Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Finalized site plans at the following locations:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ STEP</li> <li>○ Two Rivers; and</li> <li>○ Chewelah</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Spokane Tribal Economic Project (STEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of private and public sector developmental partnerships</li> <li>▪ Number of workers trained and employed</li> <li>▪ Net revenue</li> <li>▪ Plan and construct Spokane Tribe Casino Phase Two expansion</li> <li>▪ Traffic Impact Mitigation project planning and construction</li> <li>▪ Plan and develop West Plains fee parcels</li> <li>▪ Convert West Plains fee parcels to trust status</li> </ul>
Mistequa Village Development Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Construct a hotel on site</li> <li>▪ Design and construct waste water capacity improvements</li> <li>▪ Design and construct new casino on site</li> <li>▪ Acquire Chewelah Auto Museum for conversion to an existing land use consistent business</li> </ul>
Wellpinit Revitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Finalize plans to increase capacity for the water system and water treatment (sewer) system.</li> <li>▪ Implement the Wellpinit Core Revitalization Phase Plan</li> </ul>
Broadband Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop a Tribal Utility</li> <li>▪ Develop and grow Tribal Telecommunication Company</li> <li>▪ Provide Reservation Residential Broadband Service</li> <li>▪ Total speed of service</li> <li>▪ System Infrastructure Design and Buildout</li> </ul>
Culture & Ecotourism Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of regional stakeholder partnerships</li> <li>▪ Salmon reintroduced to the Columbia River</li> <li>▪ Ecotourism feasibility study for Two Rivers location</li> </ul>



# Economic Resilience

The Spokane Tribe of Indian's main economic deficiency is limited local financial resources, the Tribe relies heavily on outside funding sources which hinders economic sovereignty. Furthermore, the reservation is located so far from the primary market in the City of Spokane there is an overall lack of business opportunities. There is also a deficiency in broadband availability on the reservation, which is addressed as part of the Action Plan in Strategic Direction. Many of these economic weak spots are addressed in the Spokane Tribe of Indian's primary planning document, the SCMP, and have been incorporated in the Issues and Challenges section of this CEDS.

As a way to combat the reservation's economic challenges the Spokane Tribe of Indians has drawn its attention to Tribal parcels in Airway Heights, Washington, due to being centrally located within metro Spokane's primary market. The Tribe has already engaged in numerous regional partnerships at all levels of government to move toward development of said properties. The federal government by means of the Economic Development Administration and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington State departments of Commerce and Transportation, the City of Airway Heights, and the private sector are all active partners in the land use planning of the Tribe's acreage.

The Tribe has numerous private investment opportunities that will generate primary jobs for the Tribe and for the region. These jobs will help break generational poverty and, when combined with workforce development initiatives, Tribal citizens will have the appropriate training and education to attain the new jobs being created in Airway Heights.

On a broader scale, the Spokane Tribe has engaged with FEMA to write and implement an emergency management plan (EMP) in tune with best practices and, on the coattails of an EMP, the Tribe intends to write a FEMA approved emergency mitigation plan. Both plans will outline roles and responsibilities during an emergency and after an emergency, respectively. The plans will also clearly identify regional emergency management partners and information networks, such as county sheriff departments, and municipal services.

The Spokane Tribe has multiple opportunities on the Spokane Indian Reservation and at its trust parcels to pursue economic ventures that will improve the quality of life for residents. This CEDS is a multi-faceted approach to addressing the cyclical poverty that Native Americans experience by empowering the people that belong to the Spokane Tribe. Through the primary ventures of workforce development, educational opportunities, and trainings the Tribe is lifting up its people and thus improving the entire Tribe. The vision of the Spokane Tribe is clear: to leverage its sovereign status to maintain economic resiliency as a nation.



