



# The Top 4 Priorities for Spokane County GUIDE

This assessment was conducted between September 2022 and May 2023 by Priority Spokane and its 27 member organizations, Spokane Trends, Spokane Regional Health District, and the Junior League of Spokane. Over 1,700 votes were cast for priorities by informed participants in Spokane County.

	Priority	Supporting Data
1	To improve public safety, provide greater access to services/resources for patients with mental health needs.	<a href="#">Adults reporting poor mental health through 2020 show a nearly 50% increase.</a> It is likely that when the 2022 survey is released, the estimate will be higher than 17% of all adults. 5.3.2, <a href="#">SpokaneTrends.org</a>
2	Build out local capacity for childcare to boost the economy.	<a href="#">The number of childcare providers in Spokane County dropped from 277 in 2015 to 245 in 2020</a> despite the need for childcare only growing. <i>ChildCare Aware of Washington</i> , <a href="#">www.childcareawarewa.org</a>
3. TIE	Increase the tree canopy to improve the environment, counteract dangerous heat days, improve air and water quality, etc.	<a href="#">Spokane County has seen a 725% increase in the number of dangerous high heat days since 2000.</a> 4.2.9, <a href="#">SpokaneTrends.org</a>
3. TIE	Promote housing innovations such as shared equity housing, tiny homes, and co-operative living to address housing issues.	<a href="#">The housing affordability index for first time home buyers in Spokane County in 2022 was 51 decreasing from 100.9 in 2017</a> (51=51% able to afford first time home buying). 6.3.6, <a href="#">SpokaneTrends.org</a>

**How should your organization use this information:** Present the results to your staff or invite Priority Spokane to do so. Use the top 4 priorities to guide your planning, funding, and work in Spokane County. If organizations coordinate their efforts and together focus on the same issue(s), we can move the needle in truly addressing community needs. Would you like to partner with us or like more information on this process? Email [PrioritySpokane@outlook.com](mailto:PrioritySpokane@outlook.com)

## Prioritization Criteria (in no particular order)

*An issue that affects the greatest number of residents.*

*An issue that has a disproportionate impact across subpopulations.*

*A condition that is unambiguously below or above where we want it to be.*

*A condition that we want to preserve.*

*An indicator that is predictive of other outcomes and positively impacts several goals.*

*A condition that we, locally, have some opportunity to change.*

*An issue we can impact in 3-5 years.*

**The Process:** Two community assessment meetings were held in each of the six topic areas (Economy, Education, Environment, Health, Housing, and Public Safety). Participants were asked to review local data indicators and identify what information was still needed to make educated recommendations on priorities for Spokane County. The indicators requested, when available, were presented at the second meetings (visit [www.SpokaneTrends.org](http://www.SpokaneTrends.org) to see the data selected). These indicators were used by over 300 participants to make informed recommendations on potential priorities. The public was then invited to review the nominated priorities for each of the six topic areas and vote on their top two to create a top 12 priorities for Spokane County. Additionally, these results were presented at a series of 8 focus groups held with community groups across Spokane County to obtain their feedback (see reverse side). In May of 2023, the community came together to hear pitches from community experts on each of the top 12 priorities and cast their votes for the final top 3 featured in this document. Due to a tie, a top 4 was ultimately chosen.

## Spokane County Needs Assessment 2023: Community Focus Group Results



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** Priority Spokane acknowledges that no one person or organization can speak to the experiences and perspectives of an entire diverse community. We also recognize this is a tiny portion of the many communities and populations residing in Spokane County. Thank you to the individuals and organizations who guided and partnered with us in this process and who shared their below feedback with us. We strive to listen to, include, and partner with diverse communities across our region.

### Yes or no, do you feel these priorities represent important issues for your community?

Green: If more than 75% of participants said YES

Red: If more than 50% said NO

*If no, what's missing?*

Focus Groups- Self-Named	Economy	Education	Environment	Health	Housing	Public Safety
<b>BIPOC</b>	Yes- and improve BIPOC employment opportunities	Yes	Yes	Yes- and assure culturally competent services.	Yes- and provide housing that connects communities	Yes- and address racially biased policing and inequitable incarceration.
<b>Refugee/Immigrant</b>	Yes	Yes- and assure cultural competency	Yes	No- "We need affordable healthcare."	Yes- and provide housing that connects communities	Yes- and assure the safety of immigrant and refugee individuals.
<b>LGBTQIA+</b>	Yes	No- "We need culturally competent & affirming education and resources in schools"	Yes	No- "We need affordable, inclusive, and culturally competent health care."	Yes- and provide housing that connects communities	Yes- and assure the safety of LGBTQIA+ individuals especially trans.
<b>Rural &amp; Elderly (65+)</b>	No- "Focus on rural development"	Yes	Yes	No- "We need greater access to healthcare in rural communities & improved care for elderly."	Yes	No- "Address property crime, violent crime, and increase consequences of crime."
<b>Individuals Thriving with Disabilities</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes- and expand access.	Yes	Yes
<b>Individuals Experiencing Domestic Violence &amp; Women &amp; Families Living in Poverty</b>	Yes	Yes- and focus on early education including pre-K.	Yes	Yes- and affordable healthcare.	Yes	Yes- and prevent domestic violence and child abuse.
<b>Families Experiencing Homelessness</b>	Yes- & improve job access/ transportation	Yes	Yes	Yes- and improve access to healthy food	Yes	Yes
<b>Tribes of Indians in Spokane County</b>	Yes	Yes- and highlight importance of education.	Yes	Yes- and improve and expand access to health resources.	Yes	Yes- and prevent the murder and harm of indigenous women.

This important process is sponsored by Priority Spokane and its members, Spokane Trends, the Junior League of Spokane, and the Spokane Regional Health District. For more information visit [www.PrioritySpokane.org](http://www.PrioritySpokane.org) Are you interested in joining our membership? Contact us for details: [PrioritySpokane@outlook.com](mailto:PrioritySpokane@outlook.com)