



# PlanSpokane Community Climate Policy Survey Results and Analysis

Climate Planning Phase 2 Engagement

September 26, 2025



**PLAN****SPOKANE**  
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The City of Spokane is embarking on a transformative journey to support community resiliency to growing climate hazards. Mandated by the Washington State Growth Management Act and due in 2026, the City is undertaking a major update to its Comprehensive Plan. This foundational document guides policy for Spokane for twenty years at a time, with the current update looking towards 2046. The [PlanSpokane 2046](#) effort presents a unique opportunity to not only meet climate requirements of [House Bill 1181](#), but also to integrate community resiliency into every aspect of Spokane's future.

An earlier stage of the Climate Planning efforts focused on understanding climate hazards and impacts within the local context of Spokane. Local, state, and national data points identified the relevant science and statistical trends. The lived experience was then captured by the [Community Climate Planning Survey](#), which ran from December 6, 2024 through January 31, 2025.

With an understanding of how Spokane community members are impacted, the next step is identifying policies to support local climate resiliency. To that end, the Community Climate Policy Survey (Policy Survey) was launched July 21, 2025 and ran through August 31, 2025. The survey heard from **1,419 community members** with a 100% completion rate who shared topics of interest, types of policies desired, policy rating, and how they wanted policies to be prioritized.

The Policy Survey built upon prior community feedback by condensing topics and themes heard during earlier engagement efforts. By reporting back what was heard, the intent is to ensure forward momentum that values the time and effort taken by Spokane community members while also benefitting from the localized knowledge and experiences.

The following report discusses results and trends identified through the Policy Survey that will support future work in developing policies that support the local community.



*The WA Department of Commerce climate planning grant is supported with funding from Washington's Climate Commitment Act. The CCA supports Washington's climate action efforts by putting cap-and-invest dollars to work reducing climate pollution, creating jobs, and improving public health. [Information about the CCA is available on their website.](#)*

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## Topics of Importance

Survey respondents were asked to identify topics related to climate and resiliency that are important to them. This information will help inform the focus and distribution of future policy recommendations to ensure community priorities are addressed.

### What climate and resiliency topics are important to you?

Community members were asked to rank key climate and resiliency topics in order of importance. While many if not most topics are interrelated, this question forced ranking to identify the aspects of local resiliency that are most significant. Survey respondents were asked to rank topics from 1 to 11 in importance. Those topics were: water; energy; food systems; transportation; human health; natural resources; ecological health; cultural resources; waste management; greenhouse gas emissions; and none (in case none of the topics were important to the respondent). **Water** was collectively ranked the highest, followed by **human health** and **food systems**. When it comes to the topics ranked first in importance, **water** once again the top choice, followed by **human health** and **greenhouse gas reduction**. Of note, Greenhouse Gas Reduction had the third most rankings of 1 while also having the second most 11 rankings. 8.53% of survey respondents ranked “none” of the topics as being of significant importance, while 71.91% ranked the **none** option last; these numbers were left off the below table for graph readability.

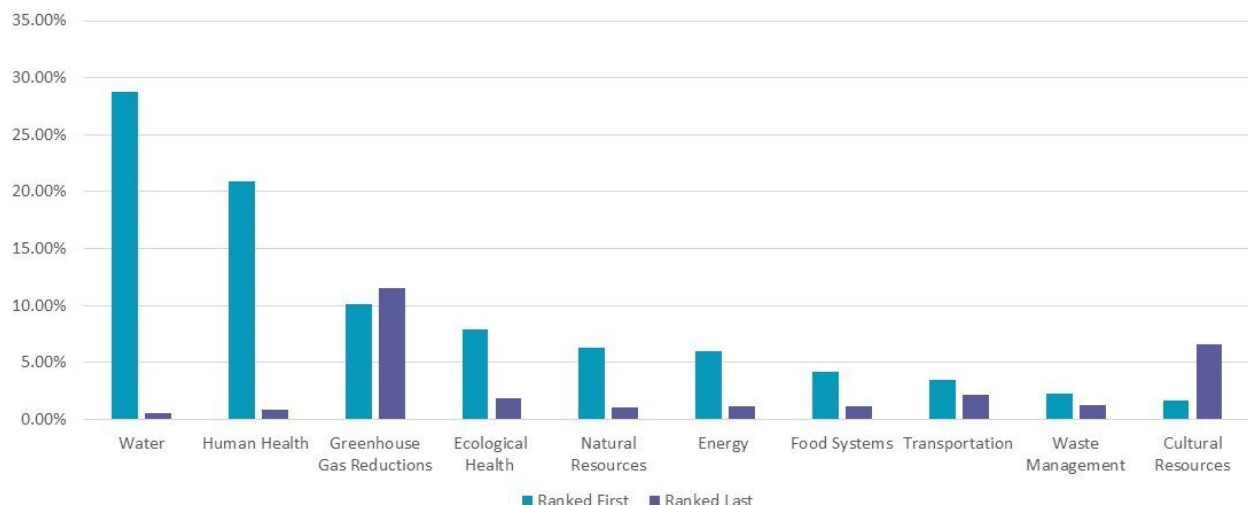


Figure 1 Graph illustrating the number of respondents who ranked topics first and last. Source: 2025 City of Spokane Community Climate Policy Survey.

### Are there any other climate and resiliency topics that are important to you?

To capture any additional ideas not already identified, survey respondents were asked to identify any other climate and resiliency topics of importance. Many responses indicated the interconnection between all of the topics and the difficulty to select. Recurring themes from the

open-ended responses include **economic health** and **costs**; **disaster preparedness**; **air and light pollution**; **wildfire** and **smoke**; **heat island reduction** and **tree coverage**; **community and traffic safety**; **social health**; **education**; **circular economy**; **social equity**, **accessibility**, and **environmental justice**; **housing**, **land use**, and the **reduction of sprawl**; **wildlife** and **biodiversity**; **infrastructure**; **city growth**; **collaboration** between agencies and regions; **government role** within resiliency work; **artificial intelligence**; and **land conservation**.

Some survey respondents had **no topics of concern**, either from the prior ranked list or otherwise.

## Policy Considerations

Policies in the Comprehensive Plan direct City priorities, programs, and regulations that then influence future growth and City actions. Types of policies can vary from incentives to requirements and everything in between.



### Level of support for policies

Survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for potential types of policies that could ultimately address their topics of importance. The options included financial or other incentives; regulations; education and outreach; partnerships and collaboration; and public investment and infrastructure. All policy recommendations had a significantly higher percentage of strongly support and somewhat support than strongly oppose or somewhat oppose. **Public investment and infrastructure** had the highest percentage of *strongly support* responses, followed by **financial and other incentives**. **Regulations** had the highest percentage of *strongly oppose* responses, followed by **education and outreach**.

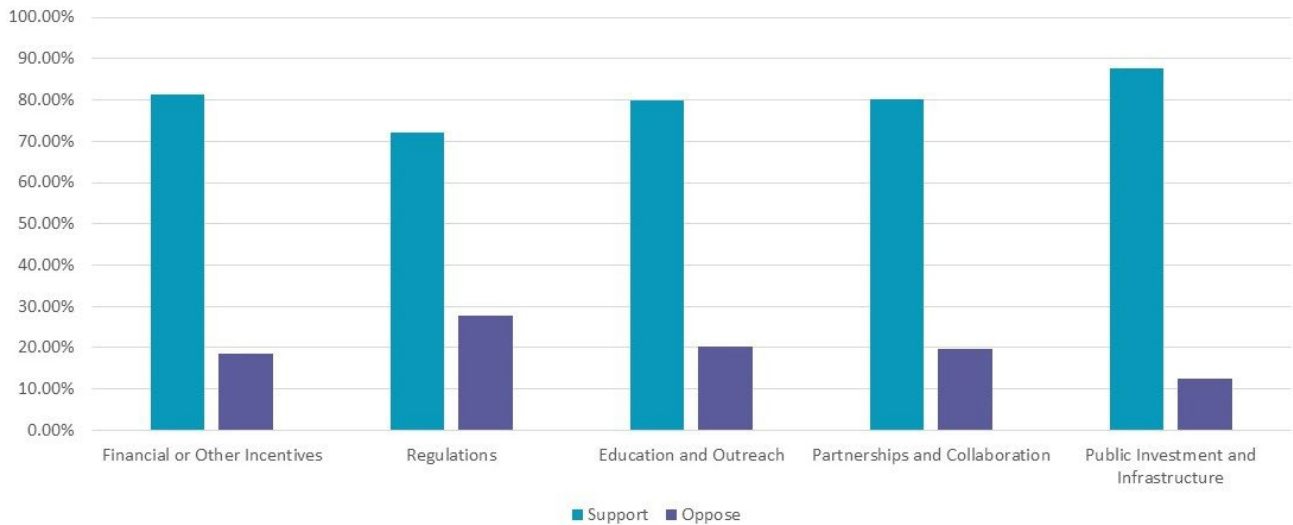


Figure 2 Graph illustrating the number of respondents who selected strongly support/somewhat support and strongly oppose/somewhat oppose. Source: 2025 City of Spokane Community Climate Policy Survey.

## Policy Rating

Planning staff developed draft policies that reflected key discussions heard during earlier community engagement. Survey respondents were presented with the topic or concern the policy was intended to address as well as the policy language and asked to rate from 1 to 5 how well the policy addressed the issue. In general, a rating of 3 or more is considered generally acceptable, with room for improvement. All draft policies received a score of 3.6 or better.

Topic or Concern	Draft Policy Language	Rating
<b>Tree canopy</b>	Identify and implement programs and regulations to increase tree canopy cover, prioritizing overburdened communities.	4.0
<b>Cost of weatherization and other upgrades to support household resiliency</b>	Provide residents with incentives or other resources to offset potential cost increases associated with resilient home upgrades, such as improved weatherization.	3.9
<b>Food and local food production</b>	Promote the development of home and community gardens, farmers' or public markets, and other small-scale collaborative initiatives to provide residents with a diverse choice of locally sourced food products.	3.8



<b>Food waste</b>	Support the reduction of edible food waste by encouraging the donation of foods through food waste pickup programs and community education.	3.7
<b>Water usage of city-owned and private properties</b>	Identify incentives and regulations that decrease municipal, household, commercial, industrial, and agricultural water use.	3.6
<b>Extreme weather and environmental contamination as a threat to cultural traditions and ecological knowledge</b>	Coordinate with Tribal governments and Native community-based organizations to prioritize Native-led strategies that build resiliency for cultural sites and practices, food systems, cultural infrastructure, and wellbeing in climate planning.	3.6

The loss of traditional foods, medicines, and sacred sites due to extreme weather and environmental contamination came directly from the Tribal Engagement Workgroup during earlier engagement. **Of survey respondents who self-identified as Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native, the average rating for the policy around Tribal and Native community coordination received an average rating of 3.7.**

### Are there any future actions missing that you want the City to consider?

Survey respondents were asked to identify any other future actions they wanted the City to consider that were missing from the provided topics and draft policies. There were a wide range of suggested actions, including the desire for no future actions related to climate and resiliency, which can be summarized in the following themes:

#### Lead by Example

Survey respondents recommended establishing pilot programs and implementing resiliency policies at City-owned and community-focused facilities and properties.

- Reduce water use and install native, drought tolerant landscaping.
- Implement robust composting and recycling at City buildings, libraries, community centers, and schools.
- Create an online portal that shares goals, policies, and ways to increase personal and local resilience, while including monitoring of programs and program transparency.
- Create eco-cleanup teams to monitor and clean up waste and other pollutants near waterways, wildlife corridors, and cultural/historical sites.
- Investigate and prepare for technological innovation (cool pavement programs, energy production, etc.).

## Water Conservation and Waste Management

Water conservation was a key concern, ranging from water use and river and aquifer protection. Waste management and reduction was similarly identified.

- Greater focus on commercial water conservation, rather than residential, as well as excessive or misdirected watering.
- Expand and improve water-wise landscaping programs.
- Remove the cost for the green composting bin.
- Establish a workplace and commercial composting pilot program.
- Incentive water collection and establish a residential rain barrel program.
- Ensure long-term aquifer protection and PFAS monitoring and prevention.
- Ensure public events are climate-friendly, including with waste management.
- Provide access to recycling and composting in public rights-of-way and parks.
- Ensure snow removal processes prevent street pollution from getting into the river and other natural waterways.

## Community Collaboration and Engagement

Community collaboration, engagement, and education was identified as a desired way to support local resiliency.

- Increase collaboration between education institutions, Tribal governments, and local businesses.
- Create an ongoing public information campaign to support local resiliency.
- Support community resources sharing (trading/borrowing).
- Establish volunteer programs for litter and pollution cleanup, local ecological restoration, and disaster-prevention drills.
- Support workforce development for climate and environmental jobs.
- Establish public/private partnerships for solar and other resiliency projects.

## Urban Green Spaces

Expansion and access to green spaces and the natural environment within city limits was identified as a community priority.

- Incorporate community gardens on more publicly owned properties.
- Reduce pavement and amount of parking lots to reduce heat island effect.
- Ensure clean public spaces and access to water and restrooms to support enjoyment of parks and other areas within the city.
- Support planting and maintenance of street trees while providing assistance with dead tree removal.
- Rewild greenspaces and plant edible foods in public spaces.
- Focus on invasive species and dry grasses removal.



- Guide long-term habitat restoration within city limits.

### Active Transportation

Improvement of the existing transportation system as well as support to expand access to active transportation was a common theme from survey respondents.

- Improve crosswalks and lighting for greater pedestrian safety.
- Expand electric vehicle (EV) charging station locations.
- Increase traffic and community safety to support different modes of transportation.
- Consider light rail or similar transportation infrastructure.
- Increase access and service for bus routes within all neighborhoods.
- Reduce vehicle idling and single-car occupancy car dependency.
- Expand bike sharing and rentals throughout all neighborhoods.

### Disaster Preparedness

A number of survey respondents discussed disaster preparedness and the need to respond to extreme weather events.

- Support fire risk management.
- Language access of alerts and messages during extreme weather events.
- Create wildfire community drill programs.
- Establish resiliency hubs and programs to distribute resources during extreme weather.

### Equal Access

Survey respondents wanted all benefits, incentives, and any other improvements created through the climate and resilience policies to be accessible to all Spokane community members.

- Ensure any incentives can also be applied to renters and higher intensity residential development, not just property owners and single-unit homes.
- Complete accessibility audits to ensure all community members benefit from infrastructure investments.
- Provide rebates and grants to support climate resiliency for all incomes.
- Support social needs beyond climate resiliency while implementing climate-related policies.

### Sustainable Development

Additional considerations related to growth, future development, and City policies were identified by survey respondents.

- Limit sprawl, focusing on infill development.
- Centralize services within neighborhoods for easier access.
- Deconstruction of all building demolitions.
- Retrofit historic and other existing buildings for climate resilience.

- Support greater access to farmers markets and local regenerative farming practices while preserving existing local agricultural lands.
- Require native and drought tolerant landscaping for all new development and protect mature trees during construction.
- Support affordable housing and climate-friendly housing projects.

## Prioritization

### What factors should be weighted when choosing policies to implement?

Community members were asked to rank different ways to weigh policies to help prioritize implementation. While there may be overlap between some of the factors, many if not most topics are interrelated, this question forced ranking to identify local priorities. Survey respondents were asked to rank factors from 1 to 10 in priority. Those factors were: cost considerations; timeframe to implement; estimated emissions reduction; community health benefits; promotes equity and environmental justice; co-benefits (actions that improve multiple aspects of Spokane's community); feasibility, support, and readiness; action prioritizes overburdened communities; reduction of environmental harm; and none (in case none of the factors were important to the respondent).

**Reduction of environmental harm** was collectively ranked the highest, followed by a tie between **community health benefits, co-benefits, and feasibility, support, and readiness**, and then **cost considerations**. When it comes to the topics ranked first the most, **cost considerations** received the most votes, followed by **reduction of environmental harm** and **co-benefits**. 6.7% of survey respondents ranked "none" of the factors as important to consider, while 70.91% ranked the **none** option last; these numbers were left off the below table for graph readability.

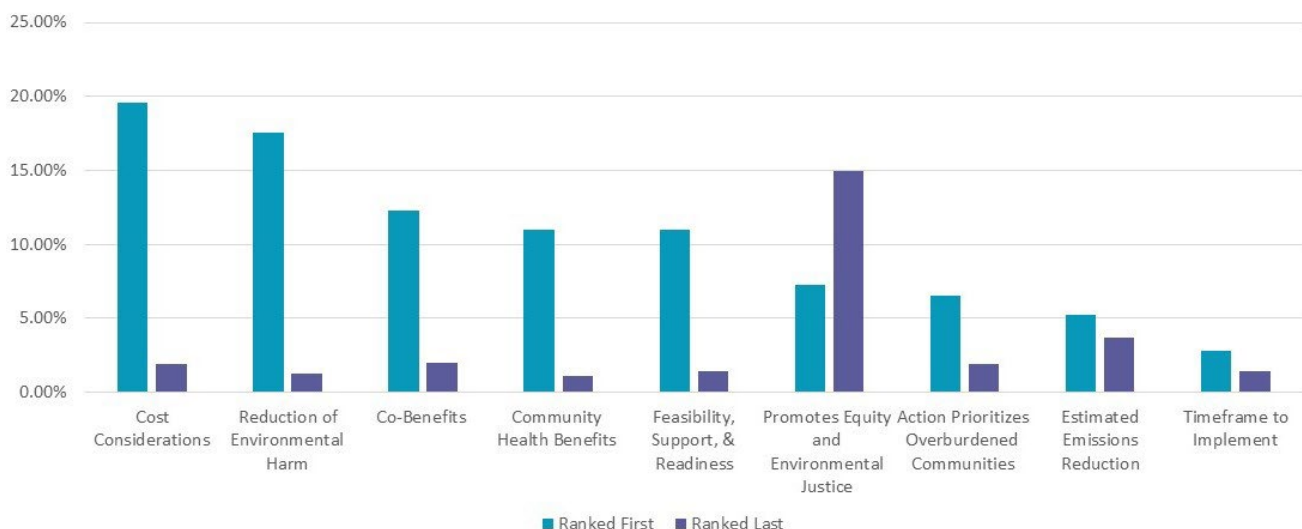


Figure 3 Graph illustrating the number of respondents who ranked prioritization factors first and last. Source: 2025 City of Spokane Community Climate Policy Survey.

## What else should be considered when prioritizing policies?

To capture any additional prioritization elements, survey respondents were asked if there was anything else that should be considered. A number of responses noted that prioritizations were dependent on the type of policy being considered. Recurring themes from the open-ended responses include **community support**; impact on the **economy and property taxes**; **urgency** of need; **measurability** of outcomes; **scale of impact**; **scientific and Tribal support**; **transparency** of action and **ease of public understanding**; **impact on safety, accessibility, and livability**; impact fairness or geographic **distribution of benefits**; and **efficiency**. It was also noted that policies should be **flexible**, being able to respond to evolving needs or technological advancements. The **longevity of the outcome** – rather than focusing on large, short-term changes – was also highlighted.

## Who Responded?

All demographic related questions were optional and not completed by all survey takers. Despite not having information for all respondents, the collected information provides a general understanding of who completed the survey. Knowing who was reached through the survey allows for more accurate analysis and better-informed conclusions by:

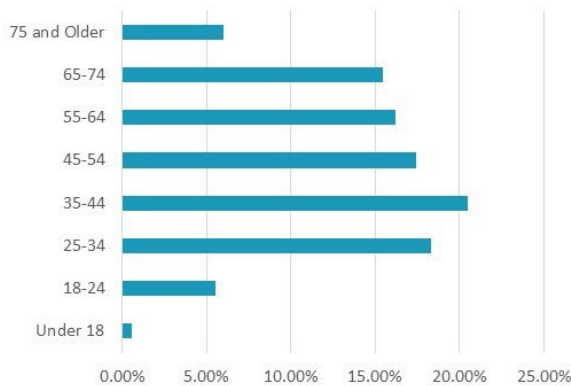
- **Understanding Different Needs:** Identify patterns and trends within specific age, income, or other groups
- **Improving Decision-Making:** Support targeted strategies based on the characteristics of different respondents
- **Ensuring Representation:** Ensure the survey is inclusive and representatives of various segments in the population - who is missing?

It is worth noting that the Policy Survey asked less identifying questions than the Community Climate Planning Survey (Community Survey). This is because the first survey focused on respondents' lived experiences, while this survey focused on future policy. However, policy direction can be dependent on ones' lived experience, with a number of demographic questions found to provide relevant perspective.

## What are your household age groups?

There was a range of age groups who completed the survey, including youth under 18. However, the most responses came from the age groups of 35-44, 25-34, and 45-54. This varies from the Community Survey, where 65-74 went from the third highest response rate to the fifth highest in the Policy Survey. People were also asked if there were children under 18 years of age in their immediate household. 30.54% of survey respondents said "Yes", similar to prior responses.

### What is your age group?



### Do you have children under 18 in your immediate household?

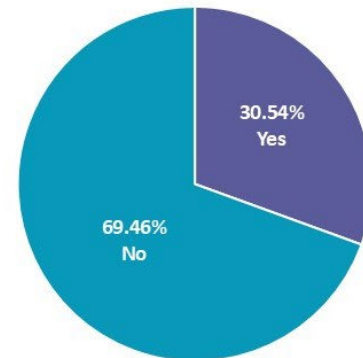


Figure 4 Graphs illustrating household age groups of survey respondents.  
Source: 2025 City of Spokane Community Climate Policy Survey.

### What is your race and ethnicity?

Of those who provided their race and ethnicity, a higher percentage of survey takers are members of vulnerable populations identified in the [Spokane Climate Impacts and Climate Justice Memo](#) than the City of Spokane population as a whole. For instance, 1.9% of the City of Spokane's population is Black or African American, compared to 3.99% of survey respondents. All response rates other than White or Caucasian increased from those of the Community Survey.

	Survey Responses	Spokane Population *
Black or African American	3.99%	1.9%
American Indian, Native American, or Alaska Native	4.80%	1.1%
Asian or Asian American	3.62%	2.2%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1.63%	0.6%
White or Caucasian	72.65%	84.8%
Other	4.21%	9.4% **
Prefer Not to Say	14.71%	

\* Demographic data is from American Community Survey (ACS), 2023 update

\*\*Data point is a combination of Other and Two or More Races to better reflect the survey question structure

## What is your household size?

There were a range of household sizes indicated by survey responses. Approximately 14% were one-person households, while 40.5% were two-person. Approximately 45.5% of respondents were in households of 3 or more.

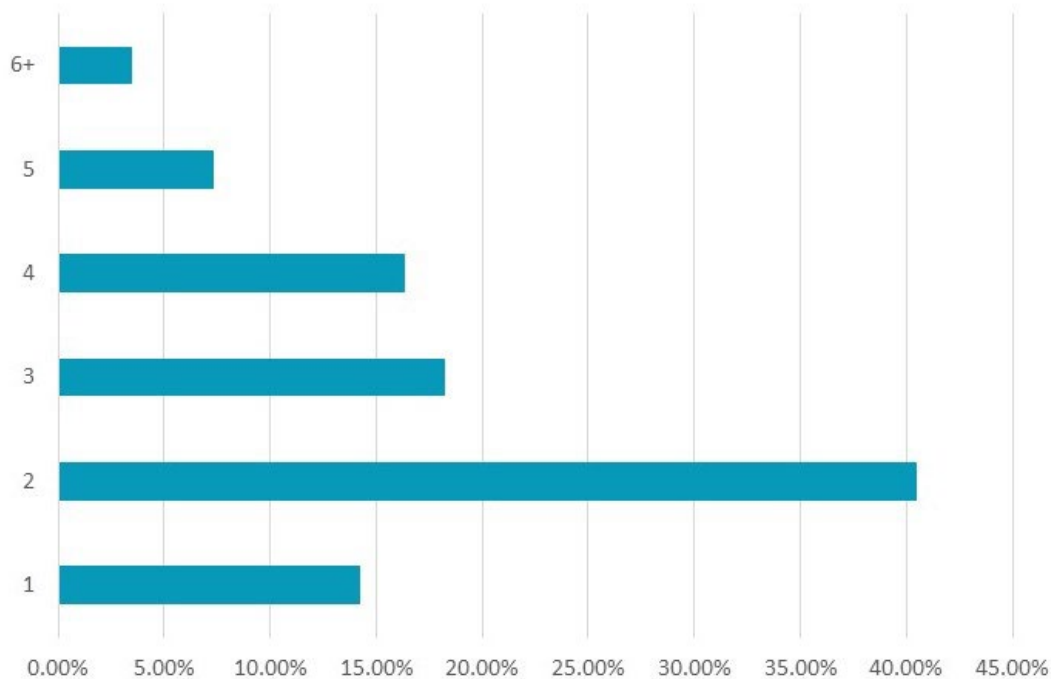


Figure 5 Graph illustrating indicated household size of survey respondents. Source: 2025 City of Spokane Community Climate Policy Survey.

## What is your household income?

To understand the potential ability to respond to or be resilient from climate hazards, or the potential impact of certain policies, survey respondents were asked for their approximate household income. The estimated median household income for the City of Spokane, based on 2024 inflation-adjusted dollars from the United States Census Bureau, is \$78,783, +/- \$5,004 (increased from the estimated 2023 income of \$65,745). Approximately 36.5% of survey respondents indicated a household income less than the estimated median household income.

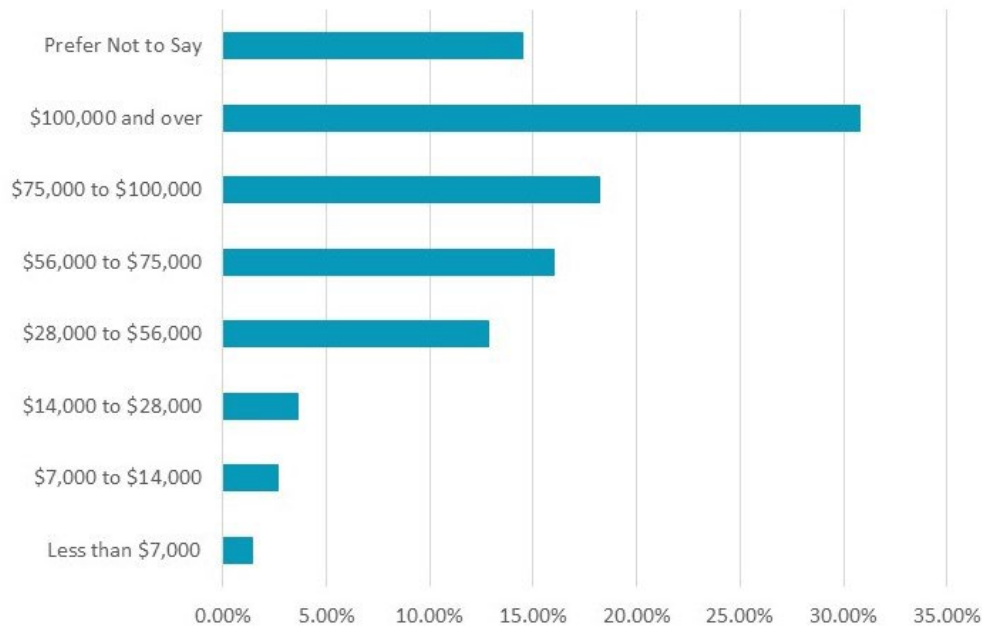


Figure 6 Graph illustrating indicated incomes of survey respondents. Source: 2025 City of Spokane Community Climate Policy Survey.

## Next Steps

The Community Climate Policy Survey kicked off discussion around policy to address the identified climate hazards experienced by the community. The engagement will continue throughout 2025 and 2026 and will be jointly considered along with data and scientific analysis throughout the Climate Planning effort, ultimately resulting in proposed climate and resiliency focused policies to be incorporated into the City of Spokane Comprehensive Plan. The public is encouraged to stay engaged and keep an eye out for future opportunities to have their voice heard.



- **Stay Informed:** Follow the City of Spokane on social media and [sign up for email updates](#) to stay up-to-date on the latest developments in our climate planning efforts. You can also find more information on the project webpage at [my.spokanecity.org/climateplanning](https://my.spokanecity.org/climateplanning).
- **Attend Events:** Look out for upcoming community workshops and events to chat, share information, and have your thoughts on climate planning heard.
- **Participate in Engage Spokane:** Community members can weigh in on Spokane's climate and resiliency planning efforts through [Engage Spokane](#), an online community space to offer input and help shape the future of our thriving city.



- **Share Your Voice:** Your input is crucial in shaping our city's response to growing climate hazards. Join us for community workshops, town hall meetings, and online surveys to share your ideas, concerns, and priorities. You can also directly email the Climate Planning project team at [climateplanning@spokanecity.org](mailto:climateplanning@spokanecity.org).

## Appendix A – Survey Analytics

Analytics of survey responses and outreach efforts are documented to provide insight into how the survey was taken and shared.

### SurveyMonkey Analytics

The Community Climate Policy Survey used SurveyMonkey to create and distribute the survey to the community. With a total of **1,419**, the **survey completion rate was 100%**. This means everyone who started the survey submitted their responses. The first full week of August saw the most survey responses in one week, corresponding with the start of larger community distribution.

The survey was provided in **six languages**: English, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, Marshallese, and Vietnamese. One response was submitted through the Spanish survey, and two were submitted through the Russian survey. While not a high rate of responses, translation of the survey provided an opportunity for more community members to learn about the survey and Climate Planning efforts.

### Digital Media Analytics

The City of Spokane leveraged its digital media to promote the Community Climate Planning Survey. A blog post and a news release advertising the survey were published. A total of **seven City newsletters** from various Departments and including the citywide Community Update newsletter reached over **80,000 unique emails** and resulted in **over 700 individual “clicks”** to learn more about the survey. Collectively, through the various City social media channels, the survey was **seen over 50,000 times**. The most popular post had **over 9,000 views** alone, with **149 individual link clicks**.

### Community Distribution

A focused effort to distribute the Community Climate Planning Survey outside of typical platforms was undertaken. A digital media kit with graphics and newsletter and social media copy was sent out to City departments and community partners. These partnerships helped amplify the survey with their audience through newsletters and social media posts.

Non-digital efforts included physically posting flyers at Spokane libraries, throughout City Hall, and general community boards throughout the city. Survey flyers were available at the City Council Legislative Session sign up table and City staff promoted the survey during a tabling event outside City Council Chambers before the August 25, 2025 legislative session. The survey was also

advertised during numerous Plan Commission and Climate Resiliency & Sustainability Board meetings.

### **Commute Smart Northwest**

Commute Smart Northwest, an employer-based program meeting the Commute Trip Reduction Law, promotes commute options that reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips and associated air pollution by working with area agencies and businesses. Distribution went to their **over 110 participating employers** in Spokane County, followed by their own internal circulation.