

Spokane Earth Day Community Workshop Summary

City of Spokane Earth Day Community Workshop Summary

Overview

On April 22, 2025, the City of Spokane and Climate Planning consultant team hosted an Earth Day Community Workshop to learn from and share with Spokane's community. Hosted at the West Central Community Center, 21 community members shared their experiences with climate hazards and how we can support a more resilient Spokane. The workshop was a drop-in style event with posters at 4 stations, where attendees engaged in activities, interacted with the Climate Vulnerability Index online mapping tool, and were able to have in-depth conversations with staff members. Food was provided by Feast World Kitchen and a kids table with activities such as coloring pages, was set up to support a fun and accessible event. Participants filled out 'passports', receiving a stamp at each station, to enter into a raffle for Feast World Kitchen gift cards and City swag. Feedback received during the workshop informed the Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment and will support the development of future policies for a resilient and adaptive Spokane.

Date & Time	April 22, 2025
	6:00PM - 7:30PM
Location	Newton Meeting Room at the West Central Community Center
Number of Participants	21

Purpose

The purpose of the workshop was to:

- Facilitate broad community input on climate impacts to the City and idea for City actions.
- Provide an inclusive and accessible opportunity for engagement, with efforts made to accommodate diverse needs and preferences.

Key Takeaways

- All attendees were at least somewhat concerned with climate impacts in Spokane.
- Participants were asked to rank six climate pollution reduction actions: 1) renewable energy sources, 2) energy efficient buildings, 3) electric vehicles, 4) alternative transportation options, 5) waste minimization, and 6) protect green spaces and trees. Of the six climate pollution reduction action categories, alternative transportation options and protect green spaces and trees received the most support, and electric vehicles and waste minimization received the least support.
- Participants were asked to rank eight climate resilience actions: 1) preserve, restore, and expand nature, 2) address rising costs, 3) stronger infrastructure, 4) community preparedness, 5) weatherproof buildings, 6) support local food systems, 7) water protection and conservation, and 8) community education and action. Of the eight climate resilience action categories, preserve, restore, and expand nature received the most support, and addressing rising costs, weatherproof buildings, and support local food systems received the least support.
- Participants were presented with 6 categories of individuals actions they could take in the next five years: 1) expand your transportation options, 2) make changes at home, 3) reduce waste, 4) support local, sustainable food systems, 5) adapt to climate risks, and 6) organize with your community. Of the six categories presented, support local, sustainable food systems and organize your community received the most support, and adapt to climate risks received the least.
- There were a few action ideas that were common among the attendees' suggestions:
 - Increase bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and ensure current systems are safe
 - Expand public transportation infrastructure and promote connectivity
 - Support infill and mixed-use development to reduce sprawl
 - Promote water conservation

Workshop Stations

As previously noted, the workshop was a drop-in style event with 4 stations.

Station 1 introduced the City of Spokane's climate planning efforts as part of the PlanSpokane 2046 Periodic Update to the Comprehensive Plan. Participants shared how concerned they are about climate impacts and extreme weather events in Spokane.

Station 2 examined Spokane's climate pollution, shared the benefits of reducing climate pollution, and asked participants to share which actions they want to see in Spokane to reduce climate pollution.

Station 3 explored how climate hazards and extreme weather events will affect Spokane and potential ways to adapt and build local resiliency to changes. There was a computer with Spokane's Climate

Vulnerability Index, where participants could explore the map and understand how climate change will impact their neighborhood. Additionally, participants shared which actions they want to see in Spokane to build resilience to climate change.

Station 4 shared individual actions participants could take to prepare for climate change, build resiliency to climate impacts, and reduce their impact. There was a mapping activity, where participants detailed where they would like to see changes to enable individuals to take more climate-resilient actions.

See Appendix A for a list of all the posters and images of poster activities and written responses.

Action Prioritization Feedback

Climate Pollution Reduction

Participants were asked to place a star by the climate pollution reduction actions they support and would like to see prioritized. Of the 6 climate pollution reduction categories, alternative transportation options and protect green spaces and trees received the most votes with 10 each, followed by renewable energy sources (6), energy efficient buildings (3), and electric vehicles and waste minimization with the fewest votes (2 each).

Participants were also asked to share any additional ideas they had for the City to reduce climate pollution. These are the following ideas they shared:

Sector	Recommendation	Instances
Transportation	Additional and safer bike and pedestrian corridors, more bike trails like the Ben Burr trail	6
Transportation	Increased and free public transit	3
Transportation	More regional rail, consider light rail development	3
Transportation	North/South and East/West bike corridors	1
Transportation	Comprehensive bus transportation, serving destinations outside of downtown	1
Transportation	Lower taxes on EVs	1
Transportation	Offer EV incentives	1
Waste Management	Curbside composting	2

Sector	Recommendation	Instances
Water Resources	Better aquifer management to conserve water	2
Zoning and Development	Incentive infill development	2
Zoning and Development	Low cost predesigned and permitted ADUs	1

Climate Resilience

Participants were asked to place a star by the climate resilience actions they support and would like to see prioritized. Of the 8 climate resilience categories, preserve, restore, and expand nature received the most votes with 9, followed by water protection and conservation (7), community education and action (4), stronger infrastructure (3), community preparedness (3), and addressing rising costs, weatherproof buildings, and support local food systems with the fewest votes at 2 each.

Participants were also asked to share any additional ideas they had for the City to support climate resilience. These are the following ideas they shared:

Sector	Recommendation	Instance
Agriculture and Food Systems	Reduce food deserts	1
Agriculture and Food Systems	Less regulation for farms	1
Buildings and Energy	Energy conservation tools for rental housing	1
Buildings and Energy	Incentives for landlord improvement	1
Community Wellbeing	More indoor play spaces	1
Community Wellbeing	Protect outdoor workers from extreme heat and smoke impacts	1
Community Wellbeing	Improvements for schools to have air filtration for wildfire smoke	1
Economic Development	Stable jobs and pay for outdoor workers	1
Ecosystems	Tree canopy planting to reduce heat impacts	1
Water Resources	Water conservation initiatives	1
Zoning and Development	Mixed use development	1

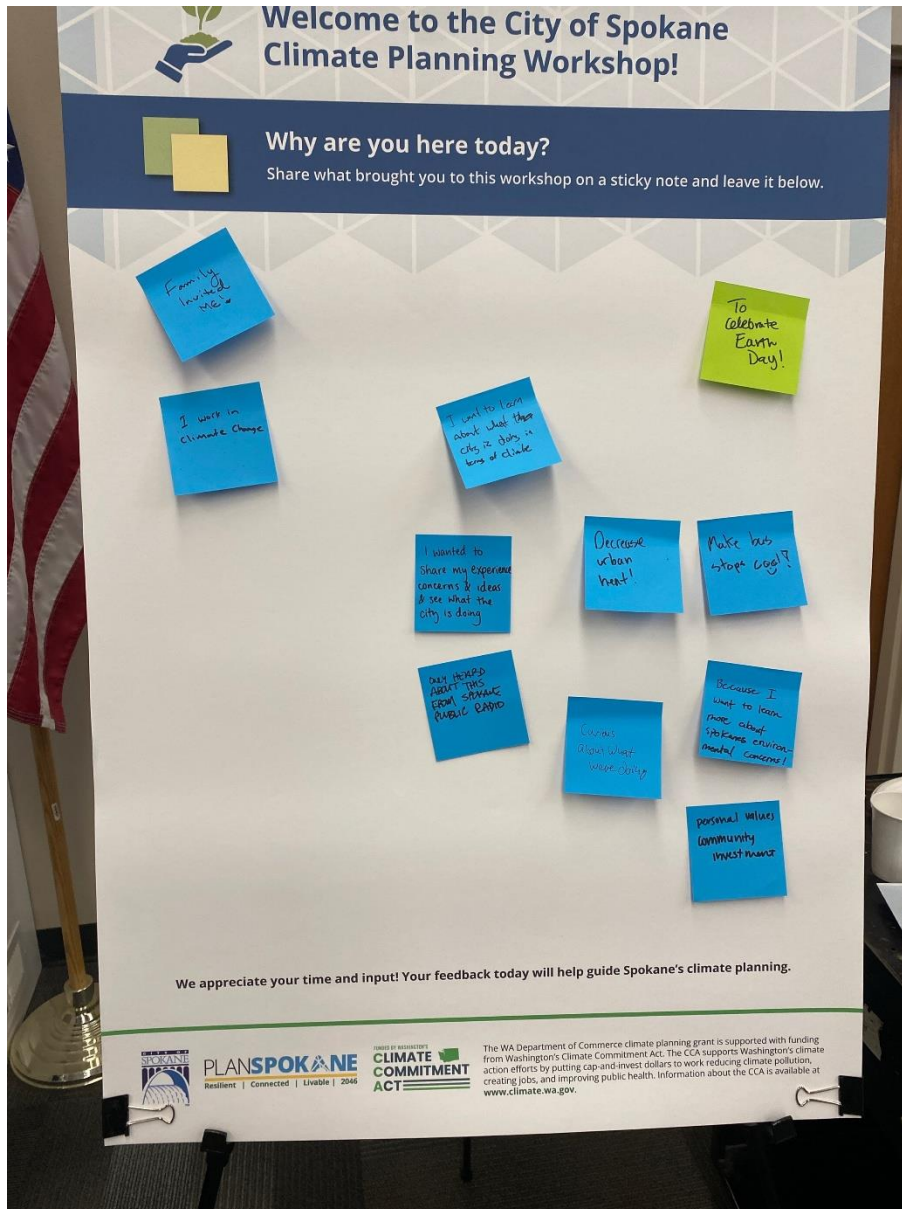
Appendix A: Climate Element Workshop Posters

The workshop had the following stations and posters:

- Station 1: Welcome & Climate Planning Overview
 - Poster 1: Welcome to the City of Spokane Climate Planning Workshop!
 - Poster 2: Welcome to the City of Spokane Climate Planning Workshop/Why are you here today?*
 - Poster 3: Planning for Climate Change in the City of Spokane*
- Station 2: Climate Pollution Reduction
 - Poster 4: Climate Pollution in Spokane
 - Poster 5: Prioritizing Climate Pollution Reduction Actions*
- Station 3: Climate Impacts & Building Resilience
 - Poster 6: How will Spokane be Impacted by Climate Change?
 - Poster 7: Spokane's Climate Vulnerability
 - Poster 8: Prioritizing Actions That Build Local Resilience*
 - Computer: Climate Vulnerability Index
- Station 4: How You Can Take Action
 - Poster 9: What You Can Do Right Now in Spokane*
 - Poster 10: Climate Ready Spokane*
 - Poster 11: Climate Ready Spokane*
 - Poster 12: Mapping for a Better Spokane (District 1)*
 - Poster 13: Mapping for a Better Spokane (District 2)*
 - Poster 14: Mapping for a Better Spokane (District 3)*

See below for images of workshop poster activities and the written responses.

Poster 2: Welcome to the City of Spokane Climate Planning Workshop!



- Family invited me
- I work in climate change
- I want to learn what the city is doing in terms of climate
- I wanted to share my experience, concerns, and ideas and see what the city is doing
- Only heard about this from Spokane Public Radio
- Decrease urban heat
- Curious about what we're doing
- To celebrate Earth Day
- Make bus stops cool
- Because I want to learn more about Spokane's environmental concerns

- Personal values and community investment

Poster 3: Planning for Climate Change in the City of Spokane

Planning for Climate Change in the City of Spokane

The City of Spokane is embarking on a transformative journey to support community resiliency to growing climate hazards. As part of this effort, we're undertaking a major update to our Comprehensive Plan, a foundational document guiding the city's growth. This update, mandated by law and due in 2026, presents a unique opportunity to integrate climate considerations into every aspect of our city's future.

How concerned are you about climate impacts and extreme weather events in Spokane, like rising temperatures, wildfires, wildfire smoke, and drought?

Place a sticker on the scale below to indicate your level of concern.

1 Not at all concerned 3 Somewhat concerned 5 Extremely concerned

What will Spokane's climate planning do?

The City of Spokane's climate planning effort focuses on two main areas: reducing climate pollution and building local resilience to climate impacts.

Reduce Climate Pollution

- 1 Cut emissions from transportation, buildings, and other sources without shifting pollution elsewhere.
- 2 Expand walkable neighborhoods, bike infrastructure, and reliable public transit to reduce the need for driving.
- 3 Focus on pollution reductions that prioritize and benefit overburdened communities most impacted.

Climate Pollution
ADDRESS THE CAUSE

Sustainable Transportation, Building Electrification, Waste Reduction, Green Energy

Build Climate Resilience

- 1 Prepare for climate hazards like flooding, extreme heat, drought, and wildfire smoke.
- 2 Protect and enhance green spaces and natural areas.
- 3 Help everyone prepare and stay safe from the impacts of climate hazards, especially those who are most vulnerable and will feel the effects first and worst.

Climate Resilience
ADDRESS THE IMPACT

Restoration of Natural Areas, Smart Growth, Improving Infrastructure, Disaster Preparedness, Early Communication for Extreme Weather

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WASH. STATE CLIMATE COMMITMENT ACT

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 at www.climate.wa.gov.

- 1, not at all concerned - 0 votes
- 2 – 0 votes
- 3, somewhat concerned – 1 vote
- 4 - 5 votes
- 5, extremely concerned – 8 votes

Poster 5: Prioritizing Climate Pollution Reduction Actions

Prioritizing Climate Pollution Reduction Actions

What actions do you want to see in Spokane to reduce climate pollution?

Place one sticker next to each of your top 3 actions.

Renewable Energy Sources	Energy Efficient Buildings	Electric Vehicles
Support clean energy like solar, wind, and batteries to power the grid. Install solar on City buildings, make it easy for property owners to add solar, and offer community solar for renters. Support local clean energy businesses and jobs like solar and battery installation.	Encourage rules that make new homes and buildings more energy efficient. Implement programs to help building owners—including businesses and homes—upgrade existing buildings. This helps save energy and lower costs.	Expand charging stations for electric vehicles across Spokane, especially where they currently lack. Switch as many City vehicles as possible to electric.
Alternative Transportation Options	Waste Minimization	Protect Green Spaces & Trees
Improve and incentivize public transportation. Make it easier to walk, bike, or take other car-free options by adding sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes, especially in neighborhoods that lack them. Support workforce development for bike/transit infrastructure installation and maintenance.	Reduce single-use plastics, encourage deconstruction of buildings rather than demolition, and create more ways for people to reduce their consumption. Share and reuse resources (e.g. via lending libraries), reduce and compost food waste, and recycle. Create job pathways in reuse, recycling, and composting industries.	Preserve and expand natural lands, trees, and green spaces—especially in neighborhoods where there is currently less of them—that help clean the air by absorbing climate pollution.

What ideas do you have?
Write your ideas or comments on a sticky note and leave them here.

Sticky notes include:

- Free buses! Try them at least 6/1/21
- North-South and East-West Bike Corridors
- Actual curbside composting (not buried)
- Make it hard to drive like Paris!
- Free home energy audits
- Bus network should be comprehensive and don't waste money by not connecting
- encourage businesses to join climate action
- BETTER BIKE LANES
- Low-cost redesigned & provided A.D.U.s
- Less AI data centers
- Light rail from Coeur d'Alene to the airport
- More regional rail (Gillie for Bury)
- Lower taxes on EVs - More EV incentives

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CLIMATE COMMITMENT ACT

The WA Department of Ecology
from Washington's Climate Commitment Act
action efforts by putting
creating jobs, and improving public health. Informa
www.climate.wa.gov

- Renewable energy sources – 6 votes
- Energy efficient buildings – 3 votes
- Electric vehicles – 2 votes
- Alternative transportation options – 10 votes
- Waste minimization – 2 votes
- Protect green spaces and trees – 10 votes

- What other ideas do you have?
 - Free buses/public transit- try them at least (+2)
 - North/South and East/West bike corridors
 - Safer bike traffic to Centennial Trail (+1)
 - Actual curbside composting, not burned (+1)
 - More bike infrastructure, protected and bike/pedestrian only corridors (+4)
 - Better aquifer management to conserve water (+1)
 - Make it hard to drive like Paris (+1)
 - Bus network should be comprehensive, don't route every bus to downtown
 - Safe bike corridors, more bike trails like the Ben Burr trail (+1)
 - Regional light rail (+1)
 - Incentivize infill development (+1)
 - Lower taxes on EVs
 - More EV incentives
 - We can be Paris for bikes
 - Less AI data centers (+1)
 - More regional rail (dville-Spo-Pullman)
 - Low cost predesigned and permitted ADUs
 - Light rail from Coeur d'Alene to the airport (+1)

Poster 8: Prioritizing Actions that build Local Resilience

Prioritizing Actions that Build Local Resilience

What actions that build climate resilience do you want to see here in the City of Spokane?

Place one sticker next to each of your top 3 actions.

Preserve, Restore, & Expand Nature Preserve and restore natural areas, natural drainage systems, and green spaces for their cultural, economic, environmental, and recreational benefits. Expand tree canopy and green spaces in neighborhoods that lack them.	Address Rising Costs Help residents—including those with low incomes—cope with rising energy and other costs, for example through energy efficiency programs that reduce heating and cooling needs.	Stronger Infrastructure Make sure important infrastructure—like roads and water treatment systems—can handle extreme weather, including heatwaves and flooding.	Community Preparedness Help residents, including seniors and those with disabilities, prepare for and stay safe during extreme weather. This can include the creation of 'resilience hubs' that provide resources, communication, and shelter during heat waves, wildfire smoke, and other emergencies.
Weatherproof Buildings Help owners of buildings—including schools, city facilities, businesses, and homes—to insulate and upgrade their buildings so occupants stay comfortable and healthy in extreme weather.	Support Local Food Systems Strengthen community gardens and food businesses, expand access to farmers' markets, eliminate food deserts, and reduce food waste through composting and better distribution.	Water Protection & Conservation Safeguard clean water and encourage conservation to prepare for challenges like drought and harmful algal blooms.	Community Education & Action Provide everyone opportunities to learn how to build resiliency to climate hazards, and be involved in shaping actions that make our community stronger.

What else should we consider?
Write your ideas or comments on a sticky note and leave it here.

Sticky notes include:
 - More indoor play spaces
 - Fast track...
 - Make it easier for local farms...
 - Stable jobs + pay for outdoors/natural resource workers
 - Outdoor learning...
 - The priority should be...
 - ...

SPokane CLIMATE COMMITMENT ACT
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The WA Department of Commerce...
 The 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 at www.climate.wa.gov.

- Preserve, restore, & expand nature – 9 votes
- Address rising costs – 2 votes
- Stronger infrastructure – 3 votes
- Community preparedness – 3 votes
- Weatherproof buildings – 2 votes


- Support local food systems – 2 votes
- Water protection & conservation – 7 votes
- Community education & action – 4 votes
- What else should we consider?
 - Multi-level/ mixed use development (commercial on ground floor, housing above)
 - Food desert mitigation through small, fresh corner stores
 - Water conservation initiatives
 - More indoor play spaces
 - “plug and play” energy conservation tools for rental housing
 - Heat mapping and subsequent canopy planting
 - Make it easier for local farms. Less regulation CPGs, etc.
 - Fast track permitting for buildings and housing with lower GHG infrastructure
 - Stable jobs and pay for outdoor/natural resource workers
 - Renters' vs homeowner- incentives for landlord improvement
 - Outdoor workers:
 - Extreme heat- provide cold packs, start work earlier/flexible hours, provide breaks, provide cool water
 - Smoke- provide N95 masks, medical knowledge and protocols
 - The parks/school bond measure should have improvements for schools to have air filtration for wildfire smoke


Climate Vulnerability Index Computer

Attendees viewed the Climate Vulnerability Index on a computer and added their comments directly to the online map. You can view the map and comments [here](#).

Poster 9: What You Can Do Right Now in Spokane


setting the 20-year vision and goals for reducing climate pollution and increasing resiliency in the City of Spokane. However, there are individual actions you can take now too! In the City of Spokane, these actions will look different for everyone, depending on access to resources, knowledgeability, and expertise.

 Place a sticker by the actions you will do in the next 5 years.




Expand Your Transportation Options

- Walk, bike, or use a scooter for short trips.
- Learn your closest public transit route.
- Carpool when possible.
- Consider alternatives to air travel when you can.




Make Changes at Home

- Turn lights and appliances off when not in use, and switch to LED lights over time.
- Boost energy efficiency by using a programmable thermostat, sealing leaks, or adding insulation to your home.
- Fix small water leaks and switch to low-flow showerheads and toilets.
- When needing replacement, upgrade to electric or Energy Star-certified appliances, like heat pumps and efficient water heaters, or explore renewable energy sources from your local utility provider.
- Wash laundry with cold water and hang things to dry.




Reduce Waste

- Buy fewer things, repair what you can, and choose secondhand when possible - support your local Buy Nothing groups to reuse and share items and build community!
- Use up what food you buy and compost leftover food waste.
- Support food and clothing donation drives to help others in your community.
- Follow guidelines for acceptable clean recyclables for residential curbside recycling on the City's website.
- Carry a reusable cup, water bottle, or utensil.




Support Local, Sustainable Food Systems

- Buy seasonal and local from local farmers, food producers, and farmers' markets.
- Eat more plant-based foods, and less meat and dairy.
- Volunteer at your local community garden.



Adapt to Climate Risks

- Plant a garden with native species, and learn about the City's SpokaneScape Lawn Replacement Program to reduce traditional grass lawns and promote more diversity, save water, and reduce yard maintenance.
- Get an air purifier or make your own using a box fan, cardboard, and MERV-13 filters. Visit cleanairecrew.org for more details.
- Build a basic emergency kit for your home and car to respond quickly in changing conditions with household items like water, food, battery-powered radios and flashlights. Visit ready.org/kit for more details.



Organize With Your Community

- Get to know your neighbors and check in on each other during weather events.
- Volunteer with local environmental groups, food banks, or community organizations that support causes important to you.
- Participate in local planning efforts like this one and advocate for stronger climate policies locally and beyond!

How can the City support you or make individual actions easier?

Write your ideas on a sticky note and leave them here.

Handwritten sticky notes include:

- Make it like a bike share
- Make it more like a car share
- Reduce water usage in parks & homes
- Improve infrastructure
- Provide more information on how to get to school, work, or other places by using mass transit or other public transit
- Encourage more people to use less water to maintain city-managed grounds
- Encourage more people to use less water to maintain city-managed grounds

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- Expand your Transportation Options – 5 votes
- Make Changes at Home – 5 votes
- Reduce Waste – 6 votes
- Support Local, Sustainable Food Systems – 7 votes
- Adapt to Climate Risks – 4 votes
- Organize with Your Community – 7 votes

- How can the City support you or make individual actions easier?
 - Make it safer to bike and walk
 - Make it more convenient to bike and walk
 - Reduce watering parks and lawns
 - Incentives
 - Build up and not out- make it easier to get to goods/services by bringing them closer to where people live
 - Make composting less expensive through the city
 - Use less water to maintain City grounds

Poster 10: Climate Ready Spokane

Climate Ready Spokane

Take your best guess with the questions on the right, and flip the page over to see the answers! →

Any surprises? Share your thoughts on a sticky note below!

Question 1: Water
How much water do Spokane residents use compared with the national average?

- a. Half
- b. About the same amount
- c. About 20% more
- d. More than twice as much water

Question 2: Energy
How much of the city's greenhouse gas emissions come from energy use?

- a. 20%
- b. 45%
- c. 48%
- d. 80%

Question 3: Land Use
How do neighborhoods with lots of services and housing choices benefit the environment?

- a. Less reliance on driving
- b. Less water use
- c. Less energy use
- d. All of the above

Sticky Notes:

- Yellow: It surprises me that we use more than twice as much water.
- Green: Less water use & energy use.

Logos: SPOKANE, PLAN SPOKANE, CLIMATE COMMITMENT ACT.

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- (Related to question 1) It surprises me that we use more than twice as much water
- (Related to question 3) Less water and energy use

Poster 11: Climate Ready Spokane

Take your best guess with the questions on the right, and flip the page over to see the answers! →

Any surprises? Share your thoughts on a sticky note below!

Need more transportation

Question 4: Transportation
What percent of Spokane workers take train, bike, or walk to work?

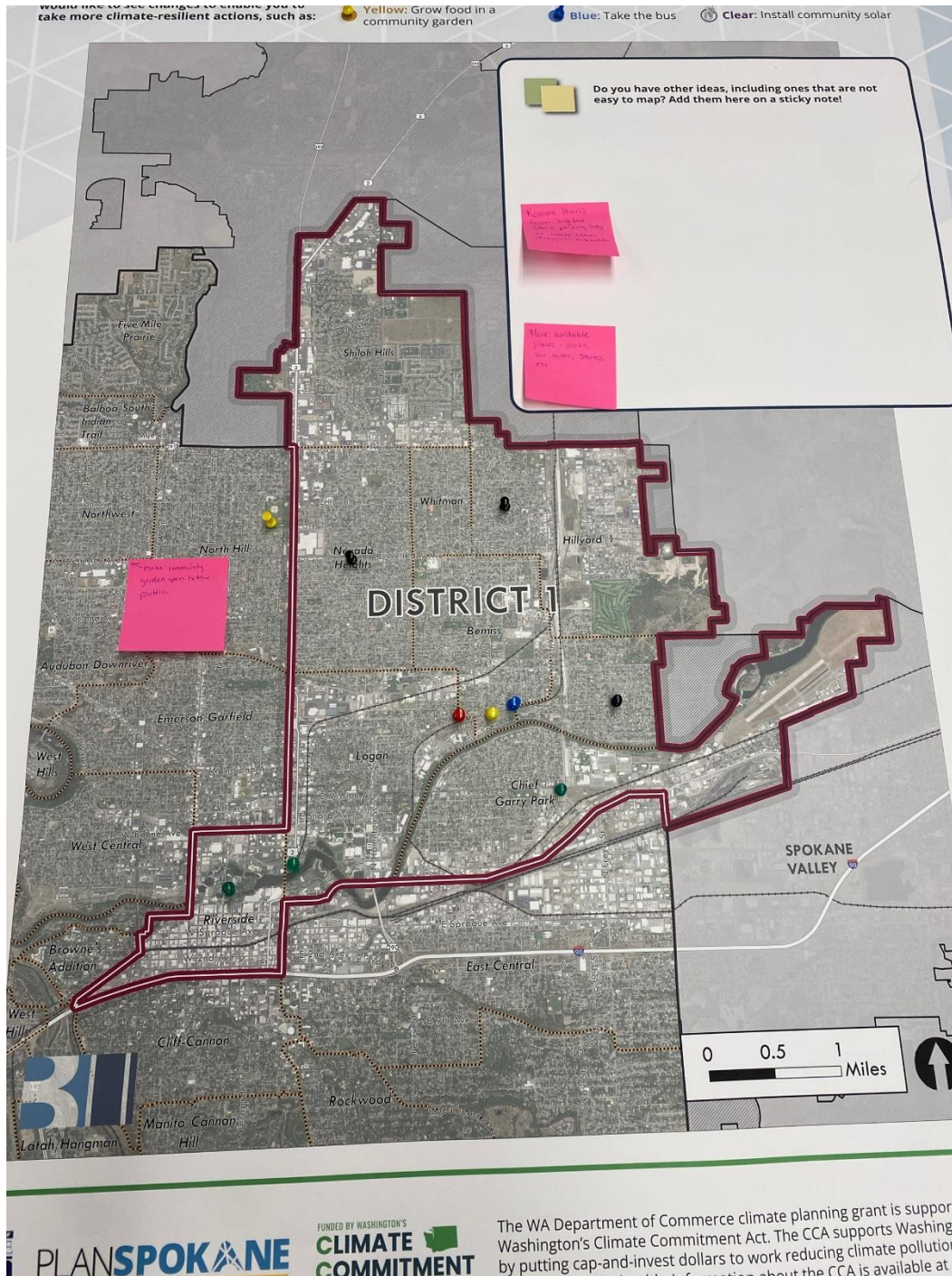
- a. 2%
- b. 7%
- c. 14%
- d. 26%

Question 5: Resiliency
Which Spokane buildings will be upgraded to serve as "community resilience hubs" during extreme weather?

- a. Central Public Library and Libert Park Library
- b. West Central Community Center and Northeast Community Center
- c. All of the above

- (Related to question 4) Need more transportation

Poster 12: Mapping for a Better Spokane (District 1)



- (Northwest block) Make community garden open to the public
- Additional Ideas:
 - Remove lawns from big box store parking lots and make them drought tolerant
 - More walkable places- parks, bus routes, stores, etc.

Poster 13: Mapping for a Better Spokane (District 2)

Black: Walk, or ride a bike or scooter (instead of drive)

Clear: Install community solar

Do you have other ideas, including ones that are not easy to map?
Add them here on a sticky note!

Bus routes are not convenient when nearly all trips pass through the plaza. People choose cars because they are more convenient. Make buses more convenient please!

KMT the LATAM HANGMAN VALLEY HOUSING DUMP INTO BEAVER CITY IN TERMS of PUBLIC TRANSIT, SCHOOLS, FIRE STATIONS, etc.

expand protected bike lanes

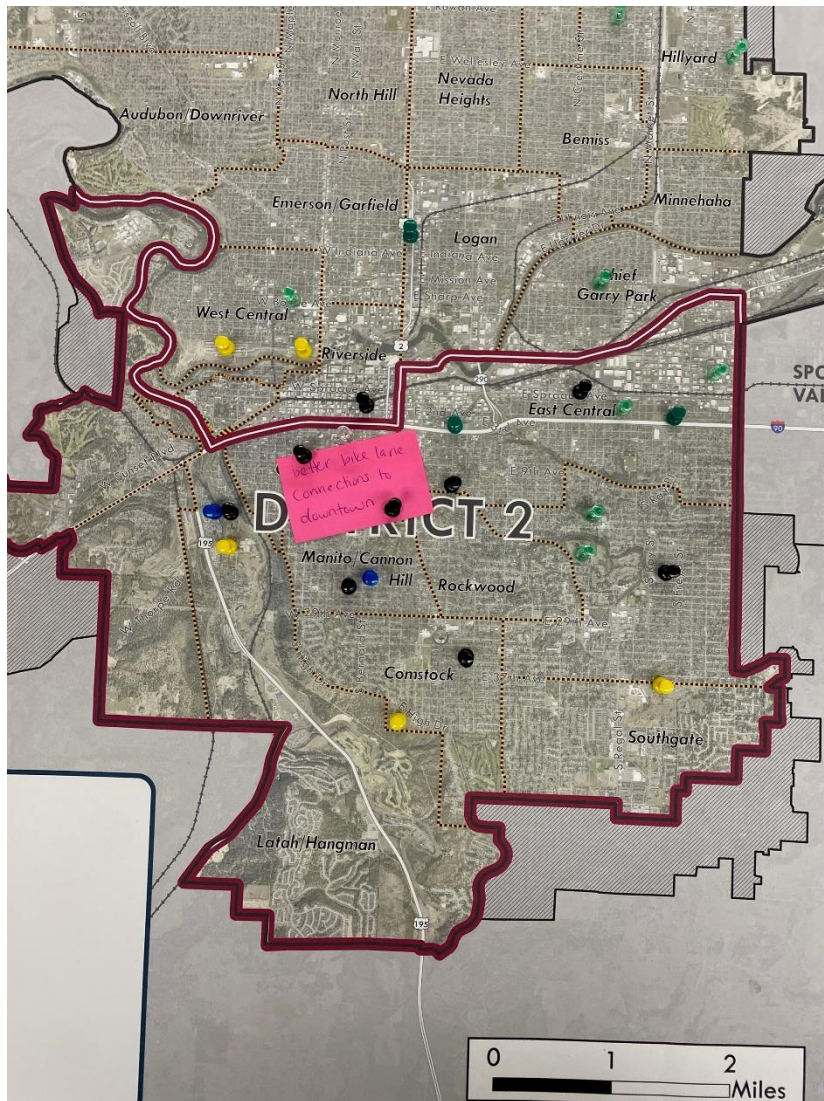
clean debris from existing bike lanes

put info about local, state, and federal incentives in one place to make it easier to implement (solar, housing, etc.)

Working for a Better S

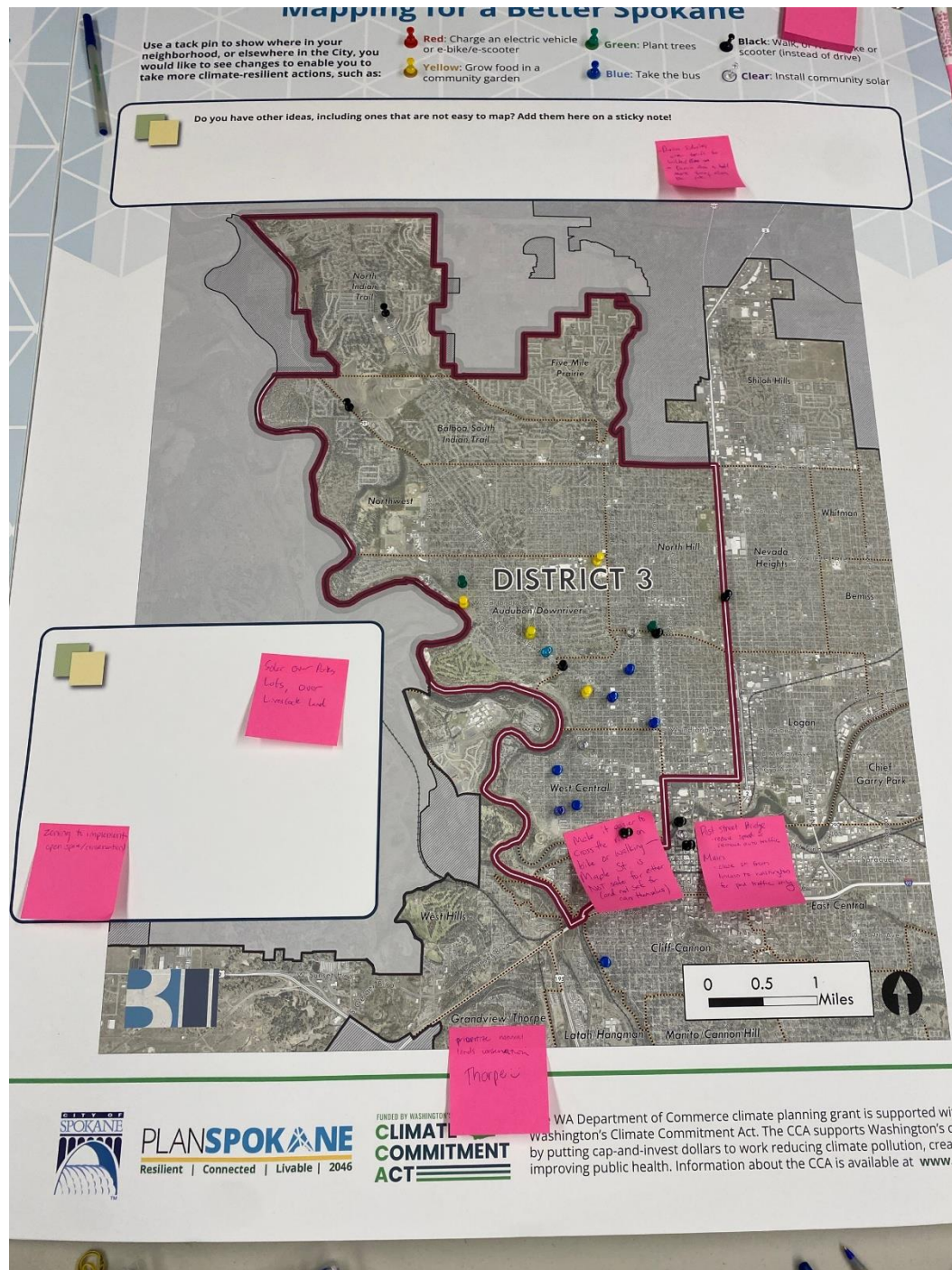
Replant trees lost
in parks

Set up community
gardens in all
public parks



- Better bike lane connections to downtown
- Additional ideas:
 - Bus routes are not convenient when nearly all trips pass through the plaza. People choose cars because they are more convenient. Make buses more convenient please!
 - Knit the Latah Hangman Valley Housing development into broader city in terms of public transit, schools, fire stations, etc. These are mcmansion...
 - Expand protected bike lanes
 - Clean debris from existing bike lanes
 - Replant trees lost in parks
 - Set up community gardens in all public parks

Poster 14: Mapping for a Better Spokane (District 3)



- Make it easier to cross the river on bike or walking- Maple Street is not safe for either (or not safe for cars themselves)
- Post Street Bridge: reduce speed or remove auto traffic
- Main: close street from Lincoln to Washington for pedestrian traffic only
- Prioritize natural lands conservation Thorpe
- Additional ideas:

- Solar over parking lots and livestock land
- Zoning to implement open space/conservation

Appendix B: Event Photos

