



# Measuring Community

A Newsletter of Spokane's Community Indicators Initiative (CII)

spokanetrends.org

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## Indicator News

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### **Priority Spokane receives \$100,000 award from JP Morgan Chase**

Last month, JP Morgan Chase awarded \$100,000 to Inland Northwest Community Foundation, which will be passed to Priority Spokane to help combat the Spokane area's high school dropout rate. Priority Spokane will use the award to help with current efforts in middle school to identify potential dropouts and provide the support students need to finish school.



Spokane Public Schools, with the assistance of Priority Spokane, is working to build an improved dropout early-warning system by first completing a study to identify risk factors associated with dropout. This is the first award Priority Spokane has received from a for-profit entity; previous awards have come from the Inland Northwest Community Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Spokane County United Way, Empire Health Foundation, and Harriet Cheney Cowles Foundation.

### **Download data for further detail on your favorite indicators**

Did you know that you can download the data behind the graphs of your favorite indicators? Simply click the "Download Data" button, and save the indicator's Excel spreadsheet to your computer. Not only can you see the exact numbers used in each of the graphs, but you can see the various components that go into the calculations that appear in the graphs, such as total population for per capita calculations. Additionally, many Education trends contain further breakdowns for the various school districts within the county, allowing users to get district-specific data.

### **Follow us on Facebook**



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## Featured Indicators

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### **Gap between Spokane and the state for patents issued to residents is growing**

Innovation plays a fundamental role in the development and sustainability of our nation's economy. Patents provide legal protection for innovation, ensuring the protection of intellectual property and, by extension,

the spread of new knowledge that could lead to further advances in science, technology, and ultimately business. How is Spokane's innovation economy doing? Indicator **3.18** measures the number of patents issued per 1,000 residents in Spokane County, other regional cities, and the state.

According to the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), a patent is defined as the grant of a property right to the inventor. Patents are issued by the USPTO, and the term is generally 20 years from the date on which the application for the patent was filed. Patents grant “the right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale, selling, or importing the invention.” Data for this indicator are presented as number of patents issued to residents of Spokane County and Washington State per 1,000 population, and come from the USPTO. Copyrights and trademarks are not part of this data series.

The number of patents per 1,000 population in Spokane County has remained relatively flat for the last decade, peaking at 0.22 in 2010 with 105 total patents, and reaching a low of 0.14 in 2005 with 59 total patents. The gap between Spokane and the state has been increasing since the beginning of the last decade. In 2010, Washington State’s patent rate per 1,000 population was 1.02, an increase of nearly 143% since 2000’s rate of 0.42 per 1,000 population. Last year was a better patent year for Spokane County, but on a relative basis, the gap between Spokane and the state has grown.

Patent data is also further broken

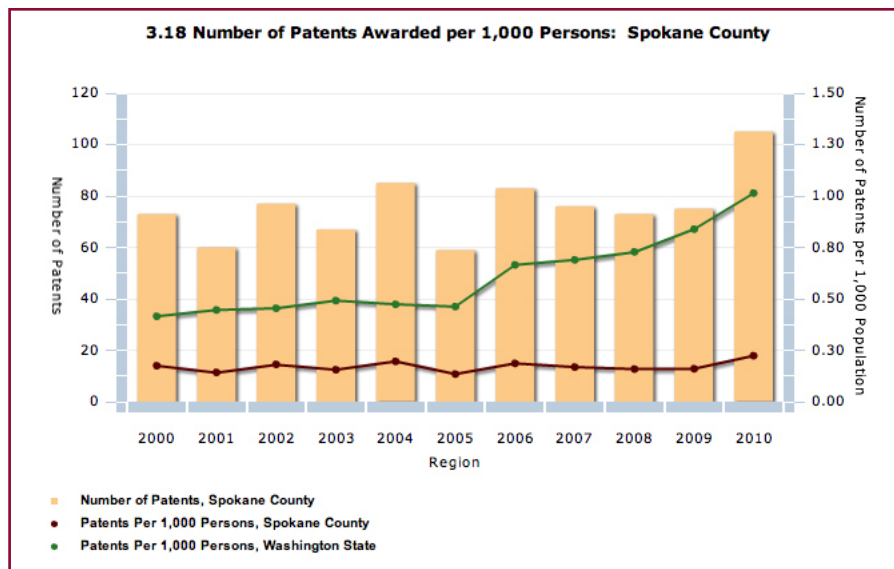
down by city. Total number of patents and patents per 1,000 population are both highest for the City of Spokane, reaching 85 and 0.41, respectively, in 2010. The City of Spokane Valley’s total number of patents was 14 in 2010, or 0.16 per 1,000 population. For the last ten years, the City of Spokane has consistently had higher rates of patents issued per 1,000 population than the county and the City of Spokane Valley. By comparison, rates for Seattle and Pullman have consistently been much higher than Spokane’s rates, reaching 4.32 and 1.40, respectively, in 2010.

Patents encourage and reward inventors, leading to a strong and innovative economy. If Spokane is to have an innovative economy, the number of patents will likely need to increase. “It would be great to see that line grow and start to trend with the rest of the state,”

comments Lewis Lee, patent attorney and partner for Lee & Hayes, one of the nation’s top patent attorney groups that’s based in Spokane. “Spokane, historically, has had a manufacturing base... When I think of innovators here, I think of Itron, Signature Genomics, Advantage IQ, Telect, and newer companies like Next IT and Purcell Systems. The activity in Spokane over the last year or two seems to be increasing.”

While Spokane’s innovation economy may be growing, the gap between Spokane and the rest of the state may be growing faster. “WSU is a research institution and likely contributes to Pullman’s higher number. Seattle is dominated by large, fast growing companies that have instilled a rich IP [intellectual property] culture,” Lee reports.

We value patents because they represent an official sign of innovation and new ideas that are potentially going to improve life and bring economic benefits to users. “As



a society, we’ve benefited from allowing individuals to have rights to innovations,” adds Lee. As for Spokane, improving our innovation economy will likely only bring good to our community. “We want to be competitive in that global innovation economy.”

### **City of Spokane Valley, county show strong overall increases in population density**

Any urban area exhibits diversity in its population density: population is the highest near the center of the urban area and generally gets lower as the distance away from the center grows. Population density is also affected by the size of the urban area, and goes hand in hand with population growth. Spokane County is no exception. Indicator 5.2I takes a further look into population density within the county.

The Growth Management Act (GMA) was adopted in 1990 by the Washington State legislature in response to rapid population growth on the west side of the state. In the early to mid 1990s, Spokane also experienced rapid growth and was required by the state to be a part of growth management. Some of the goals set

within the GMA include reducing sprawl, encouraging development in urban areas, retaining open space and enhancing recreational opportunities, and others related to transportation, housing, and economic development. Population density plays a significant role in many of these local planning efforts required by the state.

Population density is measured as the number of people per unit of land area, or in this case, square mile. The measurement only includes square miles of land, and does not take into account bodies of water. Data are published annually and come from the Washington State Office of Financial Management. Pierce and King Counties are offered as benchmarks for the county measure, and Seattle, Vancouver, and Tacoma are offered as benchmarks for the city measure.

In 2010, the population density for Spokane County as a whole was 267 persons per square mile. This represents a 13% increase since 2000 when the series began. By comparison, King County and Pierce County's population densities were 909 and 485 persons per square mile in 2010, respectively. These densities represent 11% and 16% increases, respectively.

The City of Spokane's population density was 3,436 in 2010. This is a 3.7% increase since 2000, or approximately just over 100 people per square mile. This implies, within another decade, a density of up to 3,565 if density increases at the same rate. In contrast, the City of Tacoma, a city similar in population size to the City of

Spokane, showed a population density of 4,107 in 2010, or a 4% increase since 2000. It would take 45-50 years at the City of Spokane's current growth rate to reach Tacoma's current population density.

The City of Spokane Valley's population density was even lower, reaching 2,361 in 2010, but has increased by 10%

since 2003 when its series began. The City of Spokane Valley's population density is growing faster than any city benchmark offered here.

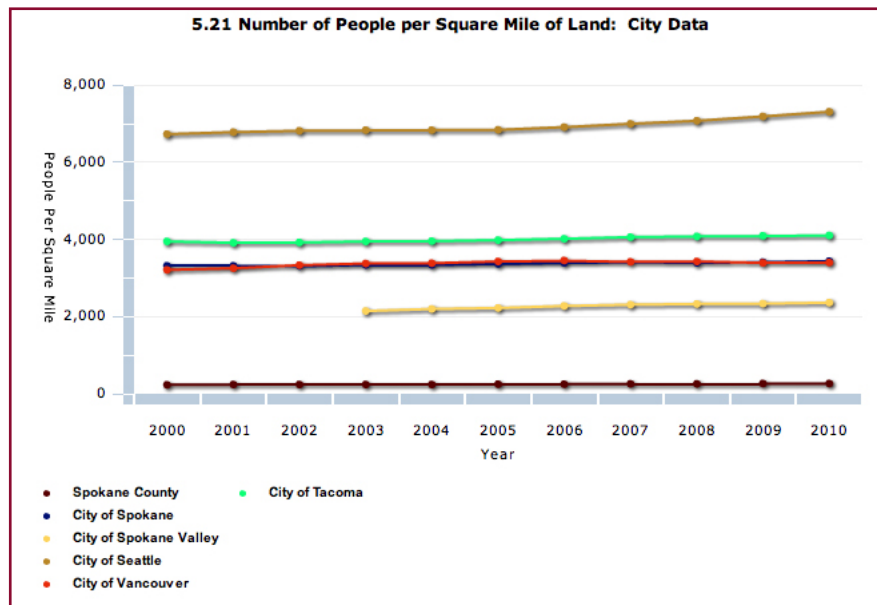
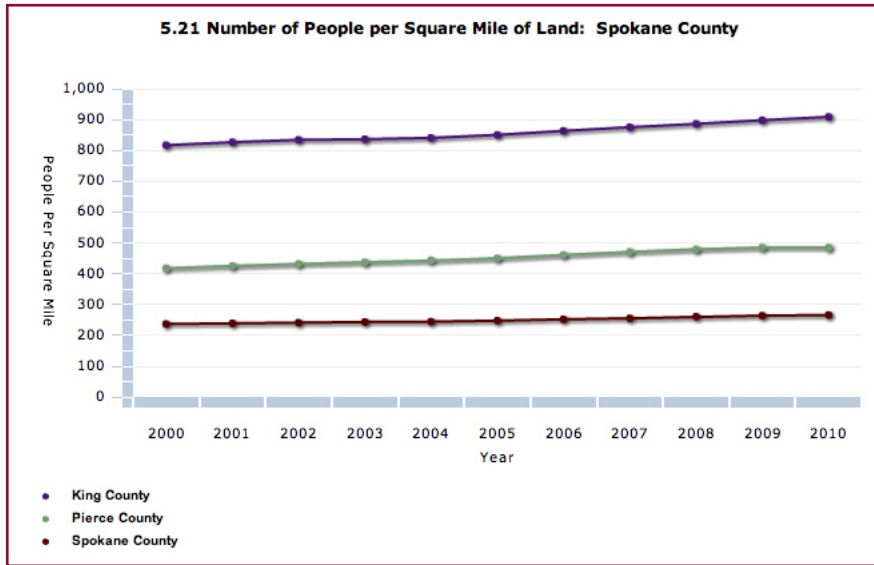
Increased density has economic advantages for a city. "The obvious one is simply that you have a lot of fixed cost investment in a city for infrastructure,

and the incremental cost of using that infrastructure is very small once it's in place and being used," states Gavin Cooley, Chief Financial Officer for the City of Spokane. "Once [the infrastructure] is in place, adding additional users is relatively

inexpensive. Expanding areas and adding new infrastructure is expensive in the first place, and if you have a low density area that cost is onerous."

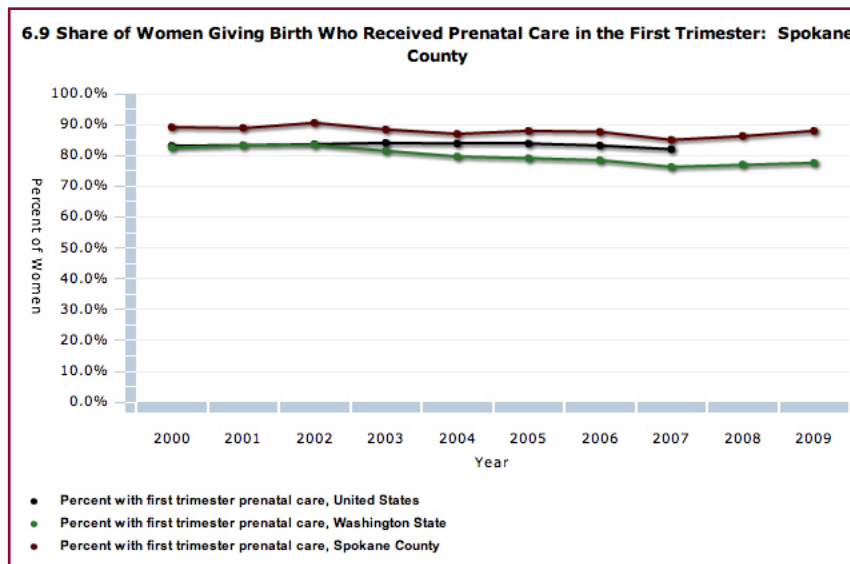
Population density is one way to measure where growth occurs, helping to inform developers and planners how to better manage land use.

Comprehensive plans, environmental groups, and businesses all call for certain levels of population density. It's important to measure population density because city government and public agencies must know how to serve that density. "[The city's] budget director projects financial activities, and those projections vary depending on what kind of density you have. A higher density means



the city budget is healthier, which means healthier services and a healthier community... Density has a dramatic impact on what we're able to offer," adds Cooley.

Cooley also adds that the wrong idea is to be like west-side cities, stating that Spokane needs to determine what it does well and what it wants to be. "It all comes back to density. Do we want it in the first place? Beyond the financial arguments, there needs to be a community dialogue about what kind of density we want and where in order to plan for what we want."



three months of their pregnancy. These data are reported on infant birth certificates, and are compiled through worksheets completed by parents or medical staff, and from information obtained from medical charts. Data are reported annually by the Washington State Department of Health's Center for Health Statistics. Data for

Washington State and the US are offered as benchmarks. US data releases are generally two to three years behind the state.

Among women giving birth in 2009 in Spokane County, 88.0% received first trimester prenatal care. This represents a 1% decrease from 2000, when the series began. Yet, Spokane County's rate is significantly higher

In urban settings, minimum population density requirements must be met to financially support urban services such as public transit, grocery stores, and other commercial amenities. "It's important to measure density as it relates to the physical outlay of a city," reports Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning for Spokane Transit Authority. "Density to us is not just how intense the land use is, but also the connectivity of the land use." Without complementary land use planning, minimum population density goals will not guarantee healthy growth.

### **Local first trimester prenatal care rates higher than the state, nation**

Prenatal care, or the care a woman receives before and during her pregnancy, is absolutely essential for the health of not only pregnant women but their unborn babies as well. Early access to prenatal care has helped to reduce maternal death, miscarriages, birth defects, and other infant health problems. However, despite private and public efforts, access to prenatal care is not universal, particularly within the first trimester. Indicator 6.9 on the CII site explores the share of women in Spokane County who received first trimester prenatal care.

First trimester prenatal care is measured here as the share of women who gave birth in Spokane County who received any kind of prenatal care during the first

than the state's which stood at 77.6% in 2009. The state's rate also has fallen since 2000, 6%. The nation's first trimester prenatal care rates have landed somewhere in the middle; in 2007, the most recent year we have data for, the rate was 82.0%.

Extending the measure to include the number of women who receive prenatal care by the end of their sixth month of pregnancy increases the rates even further. "The trend now is to measure whether or not women have prenatal care by the end of their second trimester," reports Adrian Dominguez, Epidemiologist in the Community Health Assessment program at Spokane Regional Health District. "If you combine the first and second trimester, rates are really high for both Spokane and the State. Spokane was consistently around 98.5% over the last decade, and the State ranges from 93-96%."

Beginning in the early 1980s, federal legislation has progressively expanded eligibility for pregnant women to receive Medicaid benefits. In addition to expanding federal eligibility levels, states were allowed to extend coverage beyond the minimum levels to women with incomes up to 185% of the federal poverty level (FPL) (Washington State Medicaid expanded coverage to this level). These expansions had great impact on increasing the enrollment of pregnant women, and thus increased the number of women receiving early prenatal care. In 2009 in Spokane County, 47.5% of births were paid for by Medicaid (see indicator 3.30 for more information).

Age, income, education, and racial and ethnic disparities are all associated with late entry into prenatal care. “The least likely of all age groups [to receive early prenatal care] in Spokane County are teenagers, and this is probably consistent across the board,” adds Dominguez. “The most likely of all age groups are women in their 30s and 40s.” Asian/Pacific Islanders are the least likely to receive prenatal care locally, while the data for whites, blacks, and Latinos are all within the same limits for most likely to receive early prenatal care.

Early prenatal care is not the only component that ensures a positive pregnancy outcome. Spokane ranks

higher than the state for other key maternal risk and infant outcome measures. For example, the smoking during pregnancy rate in Spokane is consistently higher than the state’s. Additionally, Spokane has ranked higher than the state for premature birth rates and low birth weight rates for most of the last decade. However, given the importance of prenatal care and its potential to prevent poor pregnancy outcomes, Spokane has reason to be proud of its high early prenatal care rates.

## Indicators in Action

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***Ted Danek is the City Administrator for the City of Spokane. Ted has also been a leader in the efforts Priority Spokane, participating on the Steering Committee and now serving as its Chair. We asked him a few questions about the uses and benefits of trends-based data for the City of Spokane and Priority Spokane.***



### **1) How do you, as City Administrator, use trend-based data to help you make decisions?**

As the City Administrator, I’m ultimately responsible for the daily operations of the City of Spokane so I end up tracking a lot of activity. Static, or “snapshot” data are helpful, but trend data showing movement are the most helpful. While it’s helpful to see how many building permits we issued last month, or how many fire department calls we went on, that really only shows the return of investment on you made in time, resources and money. To remain proactive, though, I need to be able to see where operations are headed so we can plan and move limited resources to where they’re needed; that’s why trend data are so important.

### **2) How do you think the web site can be used by the citizens of Spokane in general?**

I think it’s more interesting and much better for your brain to surf the net and land on Community Indicators than it is to watch an hour of people falling down and breaking their arms and legs, but I digress. Kidding aside, I see two main values for citizens to use the site. The first is work-related. No matter what career you’re in, the Initiative has data that can’t be matched for planning your business or job-related needs. Secondly, from winning an argument with your know-it-all neighbor by checking facts or gaining insight into current events, the Community Indicators site has it all. Interested in helping out in the community with housing? It’s there. Want to help protect the environment or promote education? It’s there. It’s amazing how many urban legends and “old wives’ tales” about Spokane we all think to be true are dispelled by visiting the site.

### **3) From your knowledge of the various trends tracked by the Spokane CI site for the City specifically, which ones jump out?**

I use the site regularly and for so many different reasons, that this is a nearly impossible question to answer. Before I pick one, I’d have to say the Economic Vitality section is my favorite area - it packs a lot of powerful data. The single indicator being tracked for the City though, that jumps out is the Median Age of the Population in People. Knowing the age of our population is younger than Spokane County and Washington as a whole helps guide decisions on service delivery, business development and quality of life programs. What makes it jump out though is that it goes against a popular misconception about Spokane. Conventional wisdom in the area seems to be that the age of the population in Spokane is older than average when in fact it’s the opposite.

**4) You have served on the steering committee of Priority Spokane and are now its chair. How does and how will this organization use the Spokane CI site?**

Priority Spokane was actually born from the Community Indicators Initiative. Some of the people behind the Initiative started Priority Spokane as a way to apply what was being widely seen and measured for the first time. The first thing Priority Spokane did was to look at the data being tracked and present the hard facts about how we were doing in areas like healthcare, education, employment, crime, etc. Over the course of a year or so or in ensuring good community input, educational attainment rose to the top as the number one area needing attention. The organization is currently focused on this by facilitating the development of programs with schools, government, non-profit agencies and the business community for middle school students. Needing to meet Priority Spokane’s goal of having measurable impact within three to five years, Community Indicators will be referenced often and studied more as we start implementing the programs. The site will be able to show progress and will be instrumental in fine-tuning our efforts over the next few years.

**5) Any final comments about the future of evidence-based decision-making in Spokane?**

That’s a model that is only going to go up in use. Whether you’re at work or at home, resources are scarce. I think most everyone has made major adjustments to how they live at home and what they do at work to the point where “business as usual” is long gone. Personally, I think the recent recession has permanently changed our whole nation’s decision-making process, not just Spokane’s. Even if the economy were to come roaring back decisions based on facts not feelings are here to stay.

## **Indicator Insider**

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### ***Online tools available to help measure accountability and performance***

Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP) is a toolset used by Washington State agencies to help measure and improve their performance. GMAP also helps state agencies be accountable to citizens for the “quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the services Washington State government provides.”



On the GMAP website, “how to” guides are published as resources for employees who are starting to use performance measurement and management principles within state agencies (click [here](#) to access the guides). One of the guides instructs users on how to create a dashboard, or scorecard, that can be used as a quick reference of summary information for leaders, managers, and other decision makers. Dashboards often serve as a reflection of current priorities. Many data elements, or measures, are collected and included in dashboards for easy reference and then ranked with a score or status. Which measures to include depends on who is using the dashboard and what they’re using it for.

The Spokane CII site can be a helpful tool for people wanting to create their own dashboard. Users can include measures from the CII site for use in their dashboards, using data for Spokane and the Washington State benchmark.