

Pathways to Elevate North Idaho

2026-2030

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy



- BENEWAH
 - BONNER
 - BOUNDARY
 - KOOTENAI
 - SHOSHONE



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Panhandle Area Council extends its gratitude to the individuals and organizations who have generously contributed their time and vision to the development of the 2026-2030 CEDS for north Idaho. This exceptional regional collaboration united team members and made the creation of this document possible.

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Economic Recovery Corps
Boundary EDC
Coeur d'Alene Area EDC
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Arts/Culture/Asset Mapping
Economic Development
Economic Development
Economic Development
Economic Development
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Idaho Dept of Commerce
Panhandle Health District
Idaho Dept of Labor
Idaho Dept of Transportation
EDA
SBA
Office of Mike Crapo
USDA Rural Development
USDA Rural Development
NIC Workforce Training

Industry

Government – City Council
Government – City Council
Government – Planning
Government – Planning
Government – Planning
Government – Planning
Government – Planning
Government – Broadband Action Team
Government – Economic Development
Government – HHS
Government – Workforce Development
Government – State Transportation
US Government – Economic Development
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US Government – Legislature
US Government – Community Development
US Government – Community Development
Workforce Development



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**Represents both the Public and Private sectors.

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PREFACE

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), published for comment at www.pacidaho.org from August 22, 2025, until September 21, 2025, is supported by Section 302 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 and EDA regulations. It's funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) through a Planning Partnership Investment, with help from local community partners. The goal of EDA Planning Investments is to help Planning Organizations develop or update CEDS to support job creation and retention.



The area that comprises Region I of Idaho include Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai and Shoshone counties along with 35 cities and the Coeur d'Alene and Kootenai Tribal Nations is in the most northern part of Idaho, within the Inland Northwest region of the United States. Nestled between the rugged mountains and pristine lakes that define the area, northern Idaho is a diverse and vibrant region known for its natural beauty, outdoor recreation opportunities, and rich history. Encompassing approximately 4.9 million acres within 7,930 square miles, the natural features make for some of the nation's best fishing and hunting, while winters provide many opportunities for skiing and snowmobiling.

These counties are geographically diverse, rich in forests, lakes, rivers, and a mix of rural and urban landscapes. While the counties within the region have many advantages, such as their natural beauty and recreational opportunities, they also face a range of challenges that have an impact on their social, economic, and environmental conditions. Understanding these challenges and identifying

opportunities is crucial for sustainable development and enhancing the quality of life in the region.

The Panhandle Area Council, Inc. (PAC), an EDA-certified planning district organization serving Idaho Region I was formed in 1972 to promote and assist growth and development, and foster a cooperative effort in resolving problems, policies and plans that are common and may be regional in scope. The planning activities supported by the Investment are part of a continuous process involving the active participation of the private sector, public officials, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and private citizens.

As a regional plan for economic growth, this CEDS focuses on identifying and prioritizing opportunities to strengthen the local economy. *Pathways to Elevate North Idaho* is a community-driven planning process that helped the region recognize its strengths and challenges while bringing together partners to create good jobs, grow the economy, and spur economic growth. Guiding principles for development of this CEDS follows 13 CFR §303.7, *Requirements for Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies*, and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) *Seven Principles of CEDS Standards of Excellence*.

This CEDS would not be possible without the partnership of the EDA and Regional Economic Development (RED) Team: Timber Plus (Benewah County); Pend Oreille Economic Partnership (Bonner County); Boundary EDC (Boundary County); Coeur d'Alene Area EDC (portions of Kootenai County); and Silver Valley EDC (Shoshone County). They were active participants in the development of the CEDS and took a leadership role in assisting with the CEDS Team, identified in the Acknowledgements section of this document. The outcome of the partnership builds on **WE** in lieu of ME.

SUMMARY BACKGROUND

North Idaho is a region that has experienced various economic shifts in recent decades. The local economy is influenced by factors like natural resources, tourism, agriculture, and an increasingly diversified economic base. Here's an overview of the key elements of the economic situation in North Idaho:

Demographic and Socioeconomic Data:

The Economy

The increasingly diverse economic base and lifestyle of the northern Idaho region have attracted thousands of new residents in recent years, making it Idaho's second most populous region. The largest city, Coeur d'Alene, is just 33 miles from Spokane, Washington, where many Panhandle residents work. The June 2025 unemployment rate for the region is 4.7%, the highest of all of Idaho's six regions and 1.1 points higher than the State of Idaho of 3.6%.

Industries that continue to play a major economic role include lumber, manufacturing, mining, tourism, retail, health care, and the Coeur d'Alene and Kootenai Tribal Nations. From 2013 to 2023 the top industries continue to be in the Education and Health Services, Trade, Transportation and Utilities, and the Leisure and Hospitality sectors. This information is further detailed in Appendix A, Demographics At-A-Glance for the Panhandle and each County.

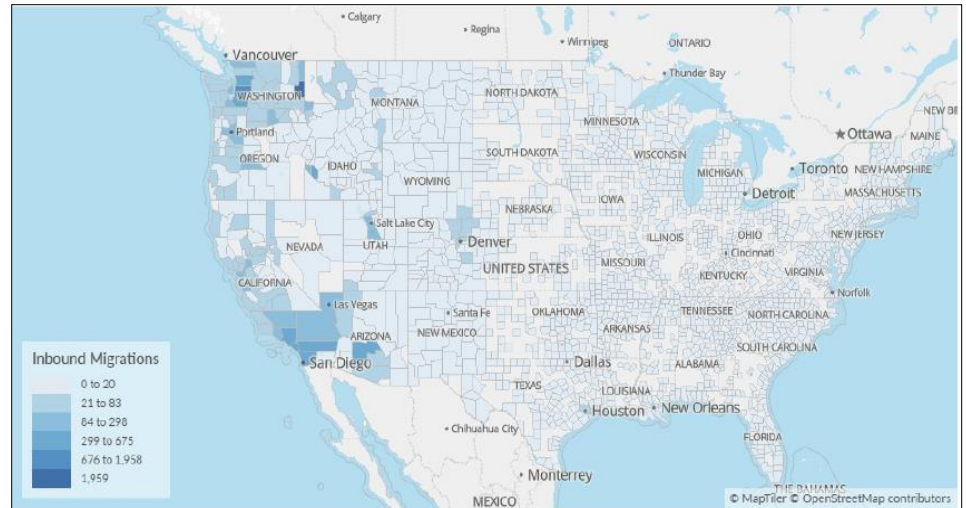
Economic Indicators	2004	2009	2014	2019	2024
Population	192,442	213,662	220,395	245,941	282,601
People per Square Mile	25.12	27.89	28.76	32.10	36.88
Unemployment Rate	6.3%	11.2%	5.8%	3.8%	4.7%
Civilian Labor Force	96,851	108,498	102,819	115,475	129,495
Employed Residents	90,768	96,304	96,831	111,046	123,436
Unemployed Residents	6,083	12,194	5,988	4,429	6,059
Total Payroll Jobs	72,803	76,939	78,782	90,334	99,232
Average Pay	\$ 27,257	\$ 31,286	\$ 34,500	\$ 40,064	\$ 54,933
Private-Sector Employers	6,790	7,742	7,016	7,875	12,300
Private-Sector Payroll Jobs	58,430	61,553	62,915	73,013	84,872
Private-Sector Average Pay	\$ 26,477	\$ 30,130	\$ 33,340	\$ 38,683	\$ 54,613
Per Capita Personal Income	\$ 26,528	\$30,512	\$ 36,699	\$ 45,569	\$ 59,838
Poverty Rate	11.1%	11.4%	14.2%	14.4%	10.5%
Nonfarm Proprietors Income	\$ 494,361	\$ 419,797	\$ 572,433	\$ 950,872	\$ 1,462,846
Farm Proprietors Income	\$ 8,865	-\$ 1,598	-\$ 2,435	-\$ 3,498	-\$ 9,201
Transfer Payments	\$ 933,896	\$ 1,476,465	\$ 1,816,474	\$ 2,505,597	\$ 3,561,712
Income Maintenance Benefits	\$ 68,653	\$ 114,618	\$ 139,324	\$ 141,221	\$ 186,471
Retirement and Other Benefits	\$ 829,875	\$ 1,252,901	\$ 1,650,667	\$ 2,345,274	\$ 3,356,127
Unemployment Insurance Compensation	\$ 35,368	\$ 108,946	\$ 26,483	\$ 19,102	\$ 19,114
Note: Red and Bold indicates 2024 Data has not been published yet, 2023 estimates are included instead					

Source: Idaho Department of Labor August 2025

Population

The Panhandle is ranked second in population and fifth in geographic size among Idaho's six regions. The Idaho Panhandle's growing economy and diverse lifestyle have attracted many new residents, making it the state's second most populous region. Coeur d'Alene, the largest city, is near Spokane, Washington, where many locals work.

A noticeable trend across the region has been an influx of new residents, particularly from more urbanized areas such as Spokane (WA), Boise (ID), and states like California, Arizona, and Nevada. The map at right highlights the amount of domestic migration between states, serving as a useful indicator of labor force movement and migrating workers. Total regional inbound migrations equal 14,503, while outbound migrations equal 9,882, leaving a net migration of 4,621. People who move to this region are often seeking a rural lifestyle, lower taxes, and outdoor recreational opportunities.



Source: Lightcast Q3 2025

Like much of rural America, the region is also experiencing an aging population, with retirees being a significant driver of migration into the area. However, the influx of younger remote workers has provided some counterbalance. The following charts identify the population by age group and by geography.

Regional Population by Age Group

Current and Projected

Age Bracket	2020		2023		2030 (projected)	
0-17	53,225	22%	57,778	22%	64,405	20%
17-64	137,937	57%	149,260	57%	174,366	56%
65 and older	49,289	21%	56,342	21%	74,261	24%
Total	240,451		263,380		313,032	

Source: Idaho Department of Labor, June 2025

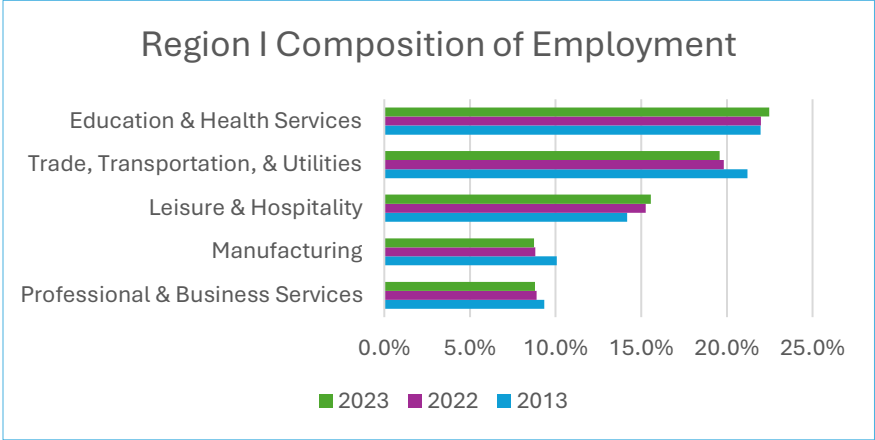
Regional Population Distribution by Geography

Current and Projected

Geography	2020	2023	2030 (projected)
Benewah	9,231	9,912	11,451
Bonner	44,688	49,456	60,233
Boundary	12,156	12,695	15,512
Kootenai	161,676	177,736	210,479
Shoshone	12,700	13,580	15,357
Total	240,451	263,379	313,032

Source: Idaho Department of Labor, June 2025

Economic conditions, including housing affordability and job availability, play a key role in population dynamics. For example, Bonner and Kootenai Counties are seeing more growth due to better job opportunities in tech, healthcare, and tourism, while Shoshone and Benewah counties have not seen similar economic booms.



Source: Idaho Department of Labor, July, 2025

Educational Attainment

Northern Idaho has a relatively diverse educational landscape with a solid portion of the population holding at least some college education. While the percentage with less than a high school education is small, there’s still a noticeable portion that have some college experience but haven’t completed a degree. This group presents itself as a strong target for further education and workforce development efforts, which could help improve both local economic opportunities and quality of life.

Population 25 years and over	Benewah	Bonner	Boundary	Kootenai	Shoshone	Northern Idaho	Region (%)
Less than 9 th Grade	165	806	380	1,975	201	3,527	1.9%
9 th to 12 th , No Diploma	935	2304	740	5,054	903	9,936	5.3%
High school graduate	2,321	10789	2,856	33,149	3,834	52,949	28.2%
Some college-no degree	1,529	9456	2,206	34,425	2,786	50,402	26.9%
Associate’s degree	715	3021	872	14,268	970	19,846	10.6%
Bachelor’s degree	924	7017	1,038	23,688	728	33,395	17.8%
Graduate degree	475	3720	679	12,189	405	17,468	9.3%

Source: Anywhere USA Profile: StatsAmerica, 2025

Challenges remain in terms of meeting the demand for higher education credentials in sectors like technology, healthcare, and business. Balancing between rural educational needs and urban skill requirements is a key factor in the region’s future growth.

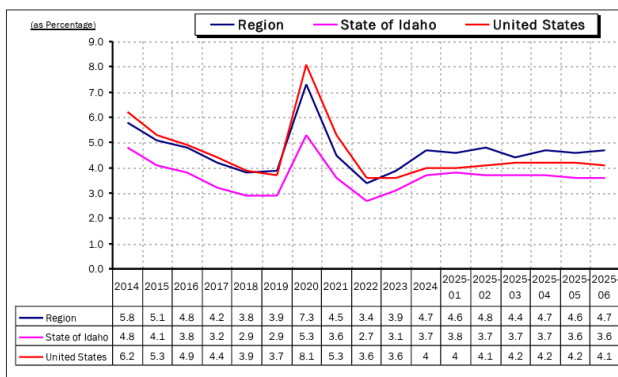
Labor Force Characteristics

Labor force expansion has been steady, with mid-year 2025 civilian labor force is 132,466, up 2.6% from the same time in 2024. Unemployment remains higher than Idaho’s statewide, ranging 4-7% depending on the season and county. There is a strong demand for workers in healthcare, retail, construction, and logistics. Persistent shortages in these occupations are exacerbated by retirements and population growth.

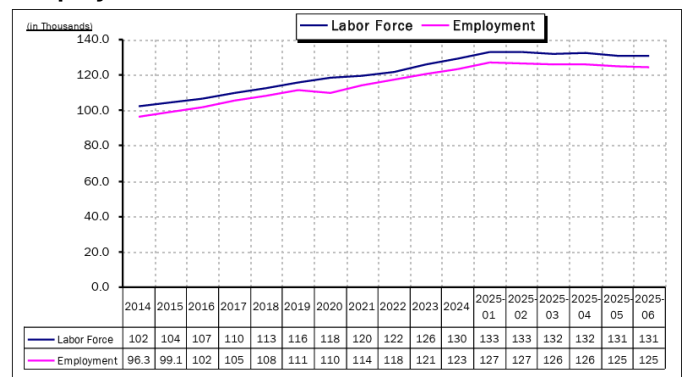
Civilian Labor Force

Area	2009	2014	2019	2024	Growth (2009-2024)
Benewah	4,174	4,036	4,109	4,117	-1.4%
Bonner	20,958	18,225	20,058	23,366	12%
Boundary	4,410	4,608	5,376	5,902	34%
Kootenai	70,972	70,471	80,102	90,061	27%
Shoshone	6,304	5,203	5,143	6,051	-4%
Northern Idaho	106,817	102,773	114,788	129,495	

Source: Idaho Department of Labor, August 2025

Seasonally-Adjusted Unemployment Rate, 2014 to June 2025

Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

Regional Seasonally-Adjusted Labor Force and Employment 2015 to June 2025

Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

The ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) population are among the employed but due to childcare costs, transportation challenges, high cost of living, and so much more, are living paycheck to paycheck. These households earn more than the U.S. poverty level, but less than the ALICE threshold. Forty-nine percent (49%) of North Idaho households are walking a financial tightrope (uwnorthidaho.org/alice).

Natural Resources

Historically, the economy of the region has been reliant on natural resource extraction industries that include timber, mining, and agriculture. This dependency has left the region vulnerable to fluctuations in commodity prices, especially timber and mining, which are subject to global demand and environmental regulations.

Environmental—Superfund

More than a century of mining in the Silver Valley (Shoshone County) resulted in mine tailings deposited throughout the valley floor and toxic emissions from smelting activities caused widespread metals contamination in the Coeur d'Alene River Basin. In 1983, the Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Complex was officially listed under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Priority List. The Silver Valley, and Kellogg in particular, has a long history of being economically reliant on mining. While the contamination impacted on the area's environment, the town has worked to transition to other forms of economic activity, including tourism and outdoor recreation.

Infrastructure Characteristics

While urbanized areas like Coeur d'Alene are well-connected, rural areas across the Region struggle with outdated or insufficient infrastructure. This includes limited access to broadband internet, poor transportation networks, and inadequate water and waste management systems. These issues hinder economic development, limit education and healthcare access, and impact residents' quality of life.

Expanding broadband internet access is one of the most significant opportunities for rural northern Idaho. With more remote work and online education taking place, providing reliable internet access to rural areas can enhance economic development, improve educational outcomes, and provide healthcare services through telemedicine. There are already some initiatives at the federal and state levels aimed at bridging the digital divide.

Urban Renewal

Urban renewal has been highly successful in many cities in the region with the goal of revitalizing blighted or underutilized areas by transforming them into vibrant, economically productive, and livable communities. This process typically involves targeted efforts to stimulate economic development in specific locations, where cities or municipalities focus on improving deteriorated neighborhoods, vacant properties, or aging industrial sites to enhance their economic, physical, and social conditions.

The Idaho Urban Renewal Law of 1965 empowered cities and counties to identify and revitalize deteriorated areas. In 1985, the Local Economic Development Act introduced tax increment financing (TIF), allowing agencies to fund development projects by capturing the growth in property tax revenue within designated Revenue Allocation Areas. Since the establishment of the first Urban Renewal Agency in the region (Post Falls in 1991), ten additional agencies have been created in the region, as shown in the chart below.

Region I Urban Renewal Agencies					
County	City	Agency Created	Current Number of Districts Open	Number of Closed Districts	Total Agency Managed Districts
Bonner	Dover	2005	1		
	Sandpoint	2005	2		
	Priest River	2007	1		
	Oldtown	2009	1		
Boundary	Bonniers Ferry	2011	2		
Kootenai	Post Falls	1991	3	7	10
	Coeur d'Alene	1997	3	1	4
	Hayden	2005	1		
	Spirit Lake	2005	1		
	Harrison	2008	1		
	Rathdrum	2019	2		

Transportation

The key transportation goal is to maintain a safe and efficient system that supports the movement of people and goods, benefiting communities and the regional economy.

Rail transportation plays a vital role in the region, with service from major carriers including BNSF (Burlington Northern Santa Fe), MRL (Montana Rail Link), UP (Union Pacific), and CPR (Canadian Pacific Railroad). The Eastport, Idaho-Canada border crossing ranks 10th out of 23 U.S. entry ports for loaded rail and truck containers, underscoring its growing significance in cross-border trade.

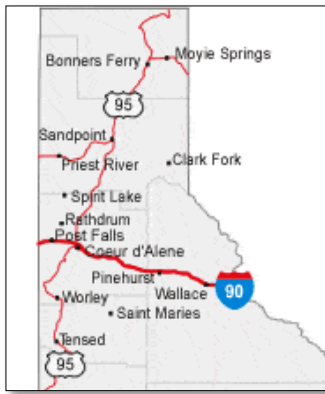
Border Crossing/Entry Data 2024

Port Name	Loaded Rail Containers	Rail Rank	Loaded Truck Containers	Truck Rank	Total Loaded Containers	Top Ports Rank Loaded Containers
MI: Detroit	97,483	6	1,945,673	1	2,043,163	1
MI: Port Huron	208,630	2	1,476,228	2	1,684,862	2
NY: Buffalo-Niagara Falls	84,750	8	1,283,191	3	1,367,952	3
WA: Blaine	93,711	7	406,071	5	499,789	4
ND: Pembina	115,288	5	383,380	6	498,673	5
NY: Champlain Rouses Point	38,967	10	433,368	4	472,345	6
MN: International Falls	435,738	1	21,345	15	457,084	7
ND: Portal	175,500	3	136,442	10	311,945	8
MT: Sweetgrass	28,988	11	230,498	7	259,497	9
ID: Eastport	136,173	4	71,371	12	207,548	10
WA: Sumas	870	23	176,000	8	176,893	11
VT: Highgate Springs	9,758	15	144,970	9	154,743	12
ME: Calais	2,584	20	73,150	11	75,754	13
MI: Sault Sainte Marie	15,078	14	48,897	13	63,989	14
ME: Jackman	20,754	13	40,728	14	61,495	15
ME: Vanceboro	59,652	9	135	23	59,796	16
NY: Trout River	21,139	12	9,859	17	31,010	17
ME: Van Buren	5,821	18	17,909	16	23,748	18
VT: Norton	6,586	17	6,962	18	13,565	19
ND: Northgate	5,812	19	2,287	20	8,118	20
WA: Boundary	7,297	16	420	22	7,733	21

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics <https://data.bts.gov/stories/s/Tables-Query-Tool/6rt4-smhh>

Airports in the region support business, healthcare, agriculture, emergency services, and recreation, enhancing regional and international connectivity and contributing to economic development. Of the 54 airports, 13 are for public use, with 6 designated as general aviation airports under NPIAS (National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems). The Coeur d'Alene Airport in Kootenai County is the largest in the region, serving everything from bush planes to business jets, reporting 400 to 600 operations per day, and more than 750 operations a day in peak months of summer in 2024. With the high air traffic levels, Kootenai County installed an air traffic control tower constructed with three shipping containers with a tower cap on top.





Highway infrastructure is anchored by Interstate 90, running east-west through Shoshone and Kootenai Counties, and U.S. Highway 95, which spans north-south from the Canadian to the Mexican border, passing through key counties in the region (Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai, Benewah). Both routes are essential for regional mobility and international commerce.

Together, modes of transportation in the region form a crucial transportation backbone, linking both urban and rural communities, facilitating economic activity, and providing access to outdoor recreation opportunities, like hiking, skiing, and boating. The intersection of these highways also makes the region a key hub for travelers passing through the Pacific Northwest, contributing to the area's cultural and economic vitality.

Manufacturing and Technology

Manufacturing in North Idaho, particularly in cities like Coeur d'Alene, has grown in recent years. This includes a range of industries, from furniture and wood products to aerospace components. While most of the manufacturing companies have smaller operations, the region continues to push forward to advance new opportunities in bioscience/medical device manufacturing and composites. These efforts led to being designated as one of 31 Tech Hubs in the United States. The Tech Hubs are targeted areas with capabilities to advance manufacturing in the United States. Our focus is on next generation composite material testing in partnership with Spokane.

In recent years, there has also been a push to develop the technology sector in the region. Small tech startups and companies are increasingly setting up shops, attracted by the access to outdoor recreation and expanded remote work capabilities, which can serve as a draw for young tech workers.

Healthcare and Educational Services

Rural counties often struggle with limited access to healthcare services, with some areas lacking healthcare facilities or specialized medical staff. Similarly, educational opportunities can be limited, especially in remote communities, which impacts the long-term development of the region's workforce and social infrastructure. This issue is compounded by limited funding for rural schools and fewer advanced educational opportunities.

Expanding access to healthcare through telemedicine, mobile health clinics, and incentives for healthcare professionals to work in rural areas can help address healthcare shortages. In terms of education, investing in rural schools, expanding access to higher education through satellite campuses or online programs, and creating workforce development programs will help ensure that residents are equipped for the modern economy.

Diversification of the Economy

As mentioned in the Preface, PAC was formed in 1972 to promote and assist growth and development, and foster a cooperative effort in resolving problems, policies and plans that are common and may be regional in scope. The first regional planning document, the Overall Economic Development Plan (OEDP, aka CEDS) was created in 1974. It identified three primary industries: lumber manufacturing, mining, and agriculture, with some of the counties having a heavier concentration of one over the other. A series of events led to the creation of additional economic development corporations at the county level to push harder on local diversification:

- Silver Valley Economic Development Corporation, Shoshone County – formed in 1986 to help Shoshone County recover from the collapse of the local mining industry, once the top silver production region in the world.
- Coeur d’Alene Area Economic Development Corporation/Jobs Plus, Coeur ‘Alene, Kootenai County – established in 1987 in response to a significant economic decline in Kootenai County during the early 1980s.
- Timber Plus/Greater St. Joe Economic Development Corporation, Benewah County – formed in 1989 as the economy was almost entirely dependent on the timber industry.
- Bonner County Economic Development Corporation, Bonner County – was formed in 2000 to diversify and strengthen the local economy.
- Boundary Economic Development Council – founded in 2001 to foster a more resilient and sustainable economic base.

Key factors that have been addressed collectively by these organizations have been:

- Need for Economic Diversification
- Job Retention and Creation, particularly those offering competitive wages and full benefits
- Reducing seasonal fluctuations in employment
- Leveraging Community Strengths especially appeals as a special place to live, with abundant recreational opportunities and a strong sense of community

Diversification efforts have been very successful in Kootenai and Bonner Counties and are more recently beginning to gain traction in Boundary, Shoshone and Benewah counties.

Manufacturing in North Idaho, particularly in cities like Coeur d’Alene, Post Falls and Sandpoint, has grown in recent years. Several other industries also established or expanded during this more recent period, including:

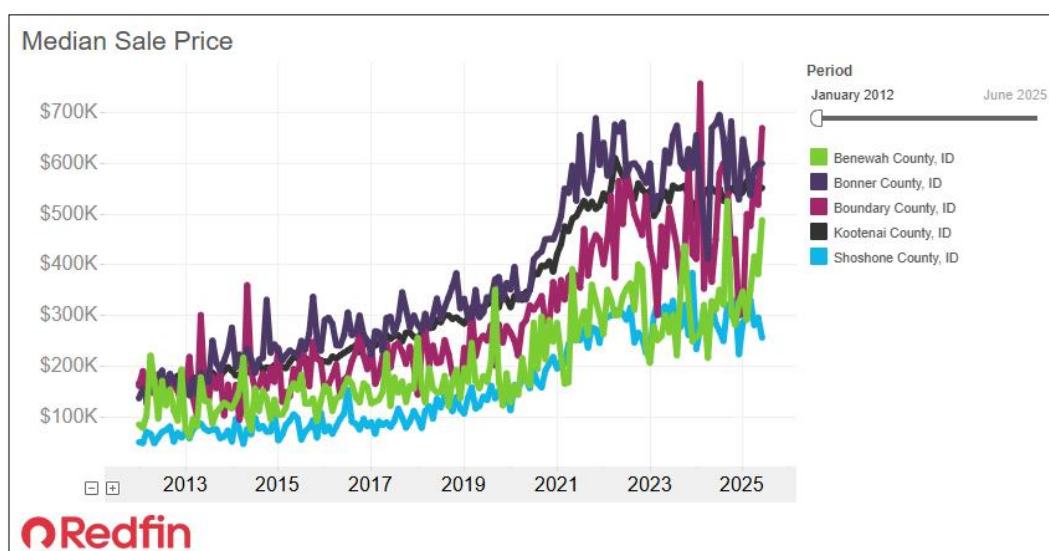
- Furniture, cabinetry, doors and specialty wood products
- Aerospace and aviation
- Bioscience and medical devices
- Composites
- Digital and information technology
- Communications
- Outdoor recreation and tourism
- Healthcare
- Specialty foods
- Construction and development

While resource extraction industries have traditionally been the economic backbone, there is potential for additional diversification. Agriculture, tech, and renewable energy are emerging sectors. Kootenai County, for example, is seeing growth in technology and healthcare sectors, which could spread to neighboring counties. Small businesses and entrepreneurs can benefit from the region’s relatively low cost of living compared to more urbanized areas.

Real Estate and Development

In recent years, real estate in North Idaho has seen significant growth, particularly due to an influx of people moving from more urban areas, seeking a quieter lifestyle. Cities like Coeur d'Alene and Sandpoint have become hotspots for relocation. This increase in demand has led to a booming real estate market, with rising property values and construction of new housing developments. This growth has led to increased demand for housing, outpacing the availability of affordable homes. Inadequate housing infrastructure, combined with rising housing prices, has made it difficult for residents, especially ALICE and low-income families, to find affordable and attainable living options. Challenges, such as affordability and concerns about sustainability continue as infrastructure tries to keep pace with rapid development.

Although North Idaho historically had a lower cost of living, rising housing prices and inflation have made it harder for families to keep up. Many workers commute long distances to access better-paying jobs, adding transportation costs to their financial burdens.



The 2023 Next Steps Housing Study identified that 75% of households in Kootenai County could afford to buy a home in 2018; however, only 20% of Kootenai County Households were able to purchase a home in 2023. It further identifies that in 2023 70% of households want home ownership.

The year 2020 brought heightened concerns as in-migration numbers and housing prices spiked throughout the region. The Housing Solutions Partnership was created, and includes regional planners, elected representatives, housing, and support organizations. Their mission is to increase the availability and affordability of housing for local workers in North Idaho. They have developed a Solutions Toolkit to provide local government and the community in North Idaho with the framework to increase local worker housing. (www.housingni.org/)

In recent years the Panhandle Affordable Housing Alliance (PAHA) has been devoted to bringing home ownership within reach of more people who would otherwise not afford it. PAHA's Miracle on Britton is a housing development with homes priced below market and deed-restricted to ensure the homes remain affordable for future owners. A solution for local worker housing, Miracle on Britton, is scalable and replicable and can be a blueprint for other developments in the region. (www.pahaid.org/)

Community and Regional Collaboration

Region I counties collaborate across county lines to tackle common challenges in areas like healthcare, education, and broadband infrastructure. Regional economic development initiatives, which leverage the collective strengths of the counties, can foster growth. Additionally, cross-county tourism marketing campaigns and joint investment in transportation networks have created more cohesive and thriving communities.

Long-Term Economic Trends

The long-term economic trends in North Idaho reflect a mix of growth, transformation, and challenges across various sectors. Key trends include:

Health Care as a Dominant Sector. Health Care continues to be the fastest-growing industry, driven by an aging population and regional efforts to establish a health care hub. Employment in health care is projected to grow nearly 1.9% annually, with increasing demand for nursing, specialized care, and ambulatory services.

Population Growth and Demographic Shifts. North Idaho is experiencing steady population growth, largely due to migration from other states, especially retirees and remote workers. This is increasing demand for housing, health care, and local services but also creating pressure on infrastructure and affordability.

Expansion of Advanced Manufacturing and Technology. Growth in aerospace, electronics, and cybersecurity is helping diversify the economy, with investments in skilled labor and innovation hubs. Automation and high-tech industries are rising.

Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Growth. Although tourism is sensitive to economic downturns and environmental concerns, such as wildfires, the natural beauty of North Idaho supports year-round tourism, with an emphasis on eco-tourism, adventure sports, and resort development.

Workforce and Education Transitions. There is a shift toward skilled labor and technical education to meet the needs of emerging industries. Investments in vocational training, apprenticeships, and STEM education are necessary to supporting workforce demands.

Infrastructure and Transportation Development.

Continued growth is leading to transportation and infrastructure upgrades, with a focus on road expansion, broadband access, and public services. Investment in logistics and distribution is expected to rise as the region becomes a hub for regional commerce.

Economic Inequalities

Economic inequalities in North Idaho are shaped by differences in income levels, employment opportunities, housing affordability, and access to services across various communities. The following are areas where gaps are evident.

Income Inequality

North Idaho has a mix of affluent retirees, middle-class workers, and lower-income residents, particularly in rural areas. Kootenai and Bonner Counties have higher wages and economic opportunities compared to more

rural counties like Benewah, Boundary, or Shoshone. Service industry and seasonal tourism jobs often pay lower wages, while healthcare and technology-related jobs offer higher salaries.

Employment Disparities

- Healthcare and tech sectors in Coeur d'Alene are growing, but many rural areas rely on lower-paying jobs in industries like tourism and retail.
- Limited job variety in smaller towns leads to higher unemployment or underemployment rates.

Housing Affordability Issues

Rapid population growth has led to housing shortages and rising home prices, making affordability a major concern. Increased real estate investment from out-of-state buyers has impacted local homeownership rates. Rural areas have lower housing costs but often lack access to well-paying jobs, exacerbating economic hardship.

The Census Bureau only publishes their ACS 1-year estimates for the larger counties, resulting in the ability to pull data only for Kootenai County. Median Household Income in Kootenai increased from \$42,316 in 2010 to \$73,456 in 2023. That's a 73.6% increase, which is not representative of the increase in home prices. The All-Transactions House Price Index for Kootenai County (from the Federal Housing Finance Agency) increased by 182.3% in that same timespan. To that end, since 2010 home prices have grown about 2.5 times as fast as household income. (Sam Wolkenhauer, Regional Economist, Idaho Department of Labor)

Education and Workforce Development

Kootenai County is home to North Idaho College (NIC), which in turn houses satellite campuses for the University of Idaho and Lewis-Clark State College. At one time, the NIC programs were available throughout Region 1 via satellite campuses in Bonner County (Sandpoint), Boundary County (Bonners Ferry), and Shoshone County (Kellogg). Presently, only the Sandpoint satellite campus remains, as the Shoshone and Boundary centers were closed in 2020 early in the COVID pandemic. The array of programs offered by the entire collaborative system includes undergraduate and graduate programs, technical training and certifications, GED, Dual Credit, CTE, Adult Continuing Education and more. While Kootenai County is well served, the rural counties struggle with lower education funding and fewer training programs. Long driving distances and the lack of public transportation mean that the four Rural Counties (Benewah, Bonner, Boundary and Shoshone) have lower educational opportunities and attainment, consequently limiting access to higher-paying jobs.

Income Gaps

Income disparities in North Idaho vary across both racial and geographic lines, influenced by factors like employment opportunities, industry presence, and access to education. Here's a breakdown of how income differences manifest:

Income Disparities by Geography

- Kootenai County, home to Coeur d'Alene, and Bonner County, home to Sandpoint, have a more diversified economy with healthcare, tourism, and tech industries. Median household incomes are higher compared

to more rural counties. The influx of new residents has driven up housing prices, making affordability a challenge despite relatively strong wages.

- Benewah, Boundary, and Shoshone Counties are rural areas with economies historically rooted in resource-based industries such as logging, mining, and agriculture. These industries have traditionally offered higher wages, which can skew the median income and create greater disparities in wages across the population. Job opportunities in these counties are more limited, and many residents rely on seasonal employment. As a result, economic instability is more pronounced due to the lack of diversification in their local economies.

In summary, the **urban-rural divide** plays a major role, with Coeur d'Alene offering better wages compared to more remote counties. **Education and industry presence** strongly influences income potential, with healthcare and tech offering better wages than traditional resource-based jobs.

Emerging Industry Clusters

In addition to health care, the largest growing industry, driven by an aging population and regional health care hub, several other industry clusters are emerging in North Idaho:

Advanced Manufacturing – The region has seen growth in aerospace, electronics, and precision manufacturing, with companies specializing in components for aircraft, defense, and industrial applications.

Technology and Cybersecurity – With the presence of tech incubators and increased investment in IT infrastructure, North Idaho is fostering growth in software development, cybersecurity, and data management industries.

Tourism and Outdoor Recreation – The area's natural beauty supports a strong tourism economy, with expansions in eco-tourism, adventure sports, and resort development.

Renewable Energy and Sustainability – Interest in biofuels, solar energy, and sustainable forestry is increasing as the region seeks to balance economic growth with environmental stewardship.

Forestry and Wood Products – While traditional, this sector is evolving with advancements in engineered wood, mass timber construction, and sustainable forestry practices.

Aerospace and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) – Some companies in North Idaho are developing drone technology and aviation components, supporting commercial and defense applications.

Creative Economy – The creative economy is gaining traction in the area because of its strong base of artists, makers, and innovators, paired with a growing demand for unique cultural experiences. It builds on local talent and identity, turning creativity into both economic opportunity and community vitality.

Specialty Foods – Sandpoint (Bonner County) is home to Litehouse Inc., an internationally distributed specialty foods manufacturer with over 1,200 employees. In 2023 Nutliscious, another specialty foods manufacturer launched its company in Dover (Bonner County), and in 2023 the Pend Oreille Specialty Foods Incubator, a 501c6 nonprofit, was launched in Ponderay, Idaho, to incubate small and startup local specialty foods businesses. Additionally, North Idaho College hosts a culinary arts program, so in combination, these activities suggest real potential for specialty foods as an emerging industry cluster.

Renewable Energy and Sustainability – Interest in biofuels, solar energy, and sustainable forestry is increasing as the region seeks to balance economic growth with environmental stewardship.

Aerospace and Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) – Some companies in North Idaho are developing drone technology and aviation components, supporting commercial and defense applications.

Declining Industry Clusters

Several industry clusters in North Idaho have experienced stagnation or decline due to economic shifts, automation, and changing market demands. These include:

Traditional Timber and Logging – Forestry, traditional logging and raw lumber production have declined slightly due to environmental regulations, low housing starts due to high interest rates, and competition from engineered products being produced elsewhere. Overall sales have remained somewhat flat due to increases in pricing and enhancements to productivity that have resulted from advances in mechanization and technology. Total employment and harvest have trended down since highs in 2006 and 2020, but trending analysis is difficult to ascertain due to high volatility and a multiplicity of factors.

Mining and Natural Resources – The historical mining industry, especially silver and other minerals, has seen a decline due to resource depletion, regulatory challenges, and fluctuating commodity prices.

Retail Trade – The rise of e-commerce and shifting consumer habits have led to the decline of traditional smaller brick-and-mortar retail stores.

Agriculture – Small family farms have declined as large-scale agribusiness operations dominate, and younger generations increasingly move toward other industries.

Print Media and Publishing – Local newspapers and traditional publishing have declined due to the shift to digital media, affecting employment in journalism and printing.

Regional Assets

To help guide the SOAR Analysis, the CEDS Team used the eight Wealthworks Capitals to identify the existing stock of regional assets.

Individual—*Stock of skills, understanding, physical health and mental wellness in a region's people:* Resourceful, Healthy Lifestyle, Work Hard / Play Hard, Resilient

Intellectual—*Stock of knowledge, resourcefulness, creativity and innovation in a region's people, institutions, organizations and sectors:* Entrepreneurship, Higher Education, Innovation, Workforce Training, Idaho Launch

Social—*Stock of trust, relationships and networks in a region's population:* Non-Profit Organizations, Collaborations, Chambers of Commerce, Recreational Amenities, Community Collectives

Cultural—*Stock of traditions, customs, ways of doing, and world views in a region's population:* Sense of community, Tribal Nations, Historic Preservation, Religious Organizations, Arts

Natural—Stock of natural resources in a region's places: Public Lands, Water, Wildlife, Four Seasons, Trails

Built—Stock of constructed infrastructure in a region's places: Redevelopment, Aerospace, Roads, Energy, Hydroelectricity, Wastewater

Political—Stock of goodwill, influence and power that people, organizations and institutions in the region can exercise in decision-making: Access to Local Leaders, Younger Participation, Community Conversations, Input to Public Policy, Diverse Viewpoints

Financial—Stock of monetary resources available in the region for investment in the region: Urban Renewal, Local/State Grant Opportunities, Tourism, Economic Momentum, Individual Philanthropy

SOAR ANALYSIS

The SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) analysis looked at the assets for the strengths and opportunities of the region, as well as the future aspirations and risks that drive organizational action.

A region-wide effort to identify the SOAR was conducted in each county, engaging a total of 77 stakeholders. The findings were subsequently reviewed and refined by the 37-member CEDS Team.



Key discussions included continuing to seek and form solutions to the local worker housing crisis through housing development and affordability initiatives. The Housing Solutions Partnership and Panhandle

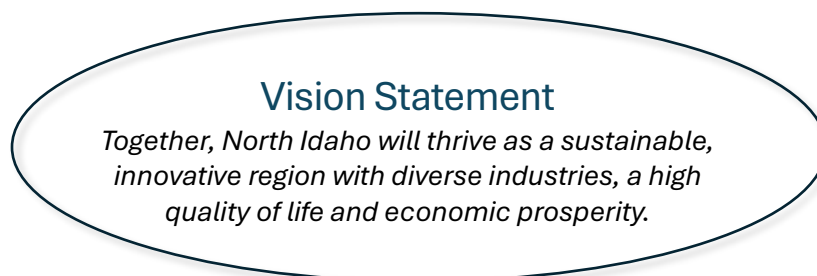
Affordable Housing Alliance continue to encourage affordable housing development by offering incentives such as reduced property taxes, zoning changes, and expedited permitting processes for developers. Additionally, supporting community land trusts and affordable housing nonprofit organizations could help ensure that low-income residents have access to affordable housing options.

Using the SOAR Analysis as a guide for development of the Strategic Direction, the CEDS Team anticipated what the newspaper headlines would read in 2030, envisioning the following:

- Infrastructure/Transportation Improvement
- Thriving Economic Development
- School Test Scores and Graduation Rates Increased
- Workforce Housing Complete
- Dynamic Economies/Power to the People
- Crime Rate and Substance Abuse Down
- Job Growth and Wages Up
- Collaboration Matters
- CDA Lake Quality Improved
- Citizen Collaboration
- Prosperous While Preserving Culture
- Vibrant Youth Bring Urban Vitality to Mainstreet
- Creative Placemaking Finally Opens

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The CEDS Team developed the following vision statement to encourage collaboration on economic development and diversification.



The goals developed under the vision support progress in education, transportation, entrepreneurial resources, and community infrastructure which provides beneficial results for three Pathways—**Elevate Industry, Empower People, and Strengthen Communities**. Each are entwined with each other, following a course of process of change to assist in strengthening the region's economy.

Using the visioning headlines, SOAR analysis and Vision Statement as a guide, the CEDS Team discussed and narrowed down CEDS Goals that include broad, long-term aims that define fulfillment of the vision, and identified objectives and strategies.

ELEVATE INDUSTRY

Support existing industries, empower business opportunities, and invigorate innovation and research for thriving industries that are diverse, sustainable, geographically dispersed and globally competitive.

Goal 1: Strengthen Industry

Objective: Strengthen collaboration between education and industry to enhance workforce quality and growth.

Strategies:

1. Promote region-wide CTE opportunities to streamline the transition from school to career.
2. Encourage regional partnerships of key organizations that will evaluate and develop a plan to reduce duplication of efforts and identify measurable goals.
3. Identify stakeholders to bring them together to map out pathways that closes gaps and create opportunities.
4. Determine incentives to bring multi-faceted partnerships to support advocacy efforts and identify opportunities.

Goal 2: Expand Business Opportunities

Objective: Anticipate emerging trends and proactively address community needs.

Strategies:

1. Leverage local asset mapping to define potential business opportunities, available resources, and target community engagement efforts.
2. Utilize community connections, i.e., Chambers, EDCs, etc., to assist and provide resources that entrepreneurs and businesses need to succeed.
3. Engage industry leaders in community conversations regarding their needs to retain existing employers and promote new business development.
4. Monitor local data and emerging trends to identify opportunities and areas of need to ensure sustainable solutions.

Goal 3: Foster Innovation/Entrepreneurship

Objective: Cultivate an environment that nurtures innovation and empowers entrepreneurs.

Strategies:

1. Establish a regional HUB for entrepreneurial resource dissemination and guidance.
2. Maximize creative placemaking to encourage incubators, co-working spaces, local worker housing and promote collaboration amongst entrepreneurs and creatives.
3. Encourage collaborative community spaces to spark ideas and subsequently explore and expand financial and mentorship opportunities for small and start up new business and innovative technologies.
4. Create resources for entrepreneurs to access physical and financial capital through maker space local lending institutions.

EMPOWER PEOPLE

Engineer talent pipelines, cultivate K-through-career and expand high quality jobs to enable people to lead productive, prosperous, and meaningful lives.

Goal 1: Support Lifelong Learning

Objective: Foster lifelong growth opportunities from early development through all stages of life.

Strategies:

1. Encourage collaborative community efforts or initiatives.
2. Connect community members with essential resources through organizations such as the Community Resource Envision Center.
3. Break down silos where communities collectively share resources and mentor learning opportunities and excitement.
4. Develop an asset mapping app for students, workers, and mentors that will promote an infectious love of learning for their entire life.

Goal 2: Support Leadership Development

Objective: Create an environment where every voice is heard and valued.

Strategies:

1. Promote and market opportunities for leadership to participate in a variety of non-partisan community forums.
2. Invite youth groups to have a seat at the table to develop the community and world they want to live in. The future belongs to those that show up.
3. Encourage idea sharing through community advisory group.

Goal 3: Increase Workforce Opportunities

Objective 3: Raise awareness of evolving workforce opportunities.

Strategies:

1. Provide opportunities to encourage the expansion and diversification of skill sets of the existing and future workforce.
2. Build a resource library of current economic opportunities.
3. Encourage cooperative conversations that highlight transferable skills as an asset for industry and workforce.
4. Encourage movement toward skills-based hiring to create a diverse workforce.

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES

Inspire community vitality, develop infrastructure solutions, and galvanize regional collaboration thereby enhancing our communities' unique characteristics, strengths, and assets to improve economic competitiveness.

Goal 1: Improve Infrastructure

Objective: Develop livable communities with robust services and infrastructure that drive economic vitality.

Strategies:

1. Plan proactive strategies that embody the vision of thriving communities.
2. Collaborate with the greater community to facilitate robust services and infrastructures that have regional impacts.
3. Use asset mapping, growth forecasting, and creative placemaking to improve community services and infrastructure by engaging citizens with the value of participating in comprehensive planning.
4. Educate community leaders about investing in infrastructure necessary to support economic changes.

Goal 2: Encourage Collaboration

Objective: Promote collaboration by fostering a supportive environment where differing perspectives are valued, and collective efforts are aligned towards shared goals.

Strategies:

1. Cultivate communities built upon shared values.
2. Promote collaboration between leadership and community through civic engagement to encourage transparency in decision making.
3. Hold community leaders accountable to model empathetic listening and civil discord with citizens.
4. Foster opportunities for the community to participate in a variety of open forums on shared goals to provide a broad spectrum of perspectives.

Goal 3: Promote Sustainable Communities

Objective: Enhance existing programs while implementing proactive, creative solutions.

Strategies:

1. Identify duplicative services and create cooperatives to increase capacity, maximize resources, and eliminate waste.
2. Support legislative actions that strengthen community, infrastructure, housing, environmental programs, and enhance existing services.
3. Promote a sustainable community through an awareness of existing programs and to facilitate proactive solutions to protect the environment and to maintain community required robust wrap around services.
4. Encourage working groups to shift community paradigms based on data driven analysis.

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is in Appendix B.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

PAC and the Regional Economic Development Team will ensure the progress of this CEDS is efficiently monitored and evaluated. The primary goal of the performance measures is to oversee the Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Action Plan to ensure regional advancement, as follows:

1. Monitor all action strategies on a semi-annual basis:
 - a. Identify the status of each initiative.
 - b. Report findings to PAC.
2. The CEDS Team will, at a minimum, meet twice a year, conducting a review of the findings to identify successes and barriers:
 - a. Identification of which initiatives were successfully implemented.
 - b. Provide status of long-term initiatives.
 - c. Identify and resolve any obstacles.
 - d. Recommend changes to enable continued progress.
3. The CEDS Team will use the semi-annual findings to examine the progress of the longer-term strategies:
 - a. Has there been an increase in employment and investment?
 - b. Are economic development efforts more efficient?
 - c. Has the quality of life been enhanced and promoted?
 - d. Are the current and future workforce needs of businesses being met?
 - e. Are current and future infrastructure needs being addressed?
4. The semi-annual meeting of the CEDS Team will review the progress of the Action Plan and make recommendations for changes.

RESILIENCE

Sustainability and resiliency in disaster recovery in North Idaho require coordinated efforts across agencies and levels of government. Pre-disaster planning includes integrating resiliency into daily operations, while recovery efforts begin immediately during a disaster. The region is prone to both natural disasters (e.g., wildfires, floods, landslides) and man-made hazards (e.g., cyber-attacks, hazardous material spills). Challenges include increased oil and coal transport and threats from cross-border criminal activity.

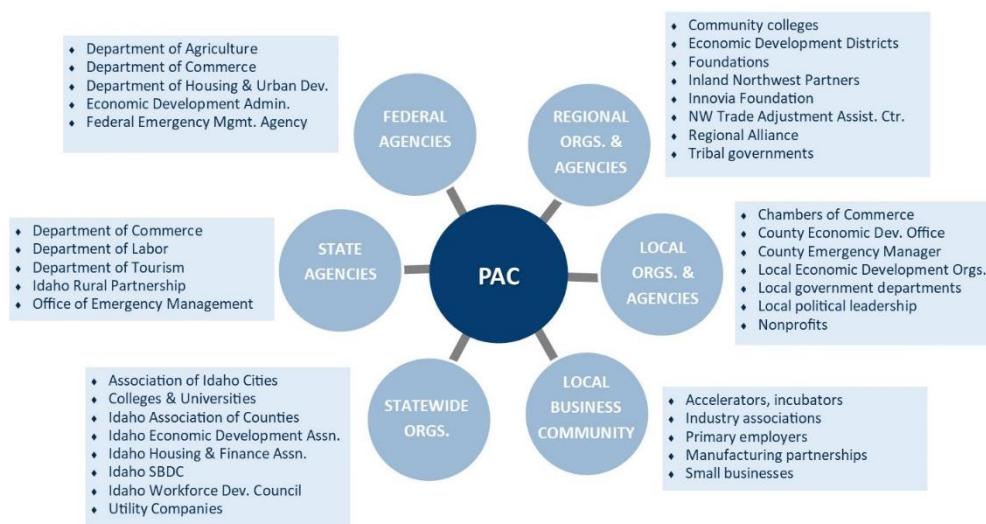
Key players during natural disasters include County Offices of Emergency Management, the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security, and the Panhandle Area Council (PAC), which coordinates interagency economic recovery.

Economic resilience across the five northern Idaho counties—Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai, Benewah, and Shoshone—varies. The local economic development corporations often take a leading role in reaching out to the business community with available resources. Regional cooperation, workforce development, and investment in housing and broadband are essential to building resilience.

COVID-19 exposed gaps in economic recovery planning, underscoring the need for all stakeholders—governments, businesses, and individuals—to be involved. The private sector is critical in restoring public confidence and economic stability post-disaster. Each county’s Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) outlines government roles, but more focus is needed on involving the private sector in recovery efforts. As the regional Economic Development District, PAC supports pre-disaster planning, disaster response, and post-disaster recovery, coordinating efforts among governments, Tribal Nations, private industry, and the public using a structured communication strategy.

GROUP	PRE-DISASTER (PLANNING, PREPARATION, MITIGATION)	EVENT (RESPONSE)	POST-DISASTER (RECOVERY, RESILIENCY)
FEDERAL AGENCIES	- Request funding; fulfill reporting requirements - Data/information sharing - Relationship building	- Increased communication: identify regional needs and gaps - Monitor for federal announcements and resources	- Fulfill reporting requirements - Communicate ongoing needs - Data/information sharing
STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES	- Request funding; fulfill reporting requirements - Data/information sharing - Relationship building - Maintain up-to-date state CEDS	- Increased communication: identify regional needs and gaps - Monitor for state announcements and resources - Identify opportunities for short-term response activity collaboration	- Fulfill reporting requirements - Communicate ongoing needs - Data/information sharing - Identify long-term areas of collaboration (services, programs, funding)
REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES	- Data/information sharing - Ongoing economic development and planning activities - Monitor for signs of economic stress - Regular cross-functional response team meetings - Relationship building - Maintain up-to-date regional CEDS	- Cross-functional team takes the lead in coordinating and disseminating information - Frequent, consistent messaging and outreach to local stakeholders - Develop short-term response activities and opportunities for collaboration	- Conduct impact assessments to identify ongoing needs - Lead a post-event review - Data/information sharing; monitor trends - Adapt planning and response strategies - Adjust program, service, and funding opportunities - Identify long-term areas of collaboration
LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS	- Data/information sharing - Regular cross-functional response team meetings - Relationship building - Coordinate emergency management and other planning efforts with economic development planning - Engagement and communication with business community	- Participation in cross-functional response team activities - Frequent, consistent messaging and outreach to stakeholders - Develop short-term response activities and opportunities for collaboration - Create pathways for information gathering from stakeholders	- Provide impact assessments to identify ongoing needs - Monitor data trends - Participation in post-event review - Adjust program, service, and funding opportunities - Identify new areas of collaboration

The five northern counties of Idaho have demonstrated a proactive approach to enhancing economic resilience through strategic investments, infrastructure development, and diversification of economic sectors. Continued collaboration between government agencies, educational institutions, and the private sector as identified below will be essential to address ongoing challenges and capitalize on emerging opportunities.

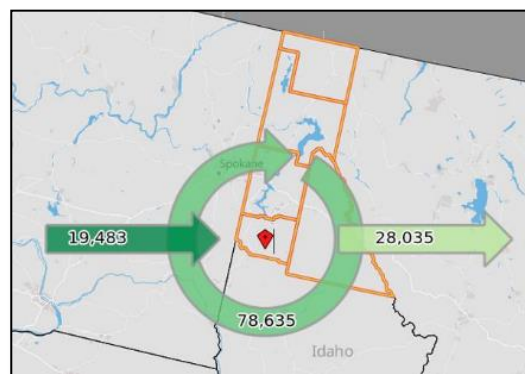


WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

North Idaho College (NIC) meets the diverse educational needs of students, employers, and north Idaho communities it serves through a commitment to student success, educational excellence, community engagement, and lifelong learning. NIC's Workforce Training Center in Post Falls (Kootenai County) offers a wide variety of credit-free classes for career development and personal interest. Classes are open to the public, and generally without pre-admission, academic or residential requirements. A catalog of classes offered is published each fall, spring, and summer, and is mailed to all north Idaho residents. NIC offers workforce and entrepreneur training programs, as well as customized training to respond to the needs of industry. NIC is also home to the North Idaho Small Business Development Center.

Workforce development in northern Idaho is an evolving, multi-agency effort to meet the talent needs of a changing regional economy. While Kootenai County leads with broader access and diverse programs, rural counties are working to close gaps through partnerships, remote learning, and targeted training.

In 2022, it is estimated that 78,634 workers lived and worked in Northern Idaho. Another 19,483 workers were employed in Northern Idaho but lived outside, while 28,035 workers lived in the area but commuted outside for work (Idaho Department of Labor).



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

APPENDIX A

Demographics At-A-Glance

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AT A GLANCE: REGION I — PANHANDLE



Benewah,
Bonner,
Boundary,
Kootenai and
Shoshone
Counties

7,936 Square
Miles

2023 POPULATION

Total	263,380
Males	50.0%
Females	50.0%
Median Age	44.6
Age 65+	56,342
Age 18-64	149,255
Under 18	27,798
Minority	6.9%

SOURCES:
Idaho Department of Labor
U.S. Census ACS DP04
Realtor.com
Feeding America of the Meal Gap

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Civilian Labor Force (June 2025)
130,746

Unemployment Rate (June 2025)
4.7%

Median Household Income (2023)
\$62,234

Per Capita Personal Income (2023)
\$59,531

Poverty Rate (2023)
10.5%

Food Insecurity Rate (2023)
14.3%

HIGHER EDUCATION

North Idaho College
University of Idaho – Coeur d’Alene
Lewis-Clark State College – Coeur d’Alene
Boise State University – Coeur d’Alene

LARGEST EMPLOYERS (2023)

Kootenai Health
Wal-Mart
Coeur d’Alene School District
Hagadone Hospitality
Coeur d’Alene Casino
Kootenai County
Super 1 Foods
Post Falls School District
Silverwood
Idaho Forest Group

HOUSING

Median Listing Price \$612,280 (June 2025)

Total Housing Units (2023)	126,554
Occupied Housing Units (2023)	108,344
Homeowner Vacancy Rate (2023)	4.7 %
Rental Vacancy Rate (2023)	2.9 %

North Idaho
(Panhandle) Industry Employment and Wages – 2013, 2022, and 2023

Industry Sector	2013		2022		2023	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	77,079	\$33,918	96,422	\$50,077	98,743	\$52,192
Natural Resources and Mining	2,035	\$63,439	2,481	\$70,607	2,505	\$74,915
Construction	4,408	\$35,624	8,544	\$55,062	8,837	\$57,289
Manufacturing	7,759	\$40,548	8,492	\$57,115	8,624	\$59,372
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	16,337	\$32,377	19,109	\$47,776	19,330	\$49,264
Information	1,064	\$42,746	1,208	\$73,013	1,192	\$81,320
Financial Activities	3,540	\$42,842	4,247	\$66,083	4,048	\$68,517
Professional and Business Services	7,200	\$36,526	8,576	\$61,359	8,693	\$64,484
Education and Health Services	16,937	\$34,523	21,204	\$52,443	22,195	\$54,489
Leisure and Hospitality	10,921	\$16,766	14,722	\$25,317	15,364	\$26,356
Other Services	1,926	\$23,535	2,610	\$37,686	2,655	\$41,235
Public Administration	4,952	\$42,693	5,229	\$58,671	5,300	\$63,537

Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Quarterly Census of Employment Wages (QCEW)

AT A GLANCE: BENEWAH COUNTY



Square Miles: 784
County Seat: St. Maries (2,487)
Established in 1915

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Civilian Labor Force (June 2025)
4,175

Unemployment Rate (June 2025)
5.5%

Median Household Income (2023)
\$56,553

Per Capita Personal Income (2023)
\$45,633

Poverty Rate (2023)
15.0%

Food Insecurity Rate (2023)
12.9%

HIGHER EDUCATION

North Idaho College Dual Credit
University of Idaho Extension

LARGEST EMPLOYERS (2023)

Coeur d'Alene Tribe
St. Maries School District
Jack Buell Trucking
Benewah Community Hospital
Plummer-Worley School District
Benewah County
Valley Vista Care
Archies IGA
Idaho Department of Lands
Harvest Foods

2023 POPULATION

Total	9,913
Males	51.3%
Females	48.7%
Median Age	46.0
Age 65+	2,325
Age 18-64	5,399
Under 18	2,89
Minority	13.1%

SOURCES:
Idaho Department of Labor
U.S. Census ACS
Realtor.com
Feeding America of the Meal Gap

HOUSING

Median Listing Price \$575,000 (June 2025)

Total Housing Units (2023)	4,706
Occupied Housing Units (2023)	3,978
Homeowner Vacancy Rate (2023)	0.3%
Rental Vacancy Rate (2023)	0.2%

Benewah Co. Industry Employment and Wages – 2013, 2022, and 2023

Supersector	2013		2022		2023	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	3,240	\$35,723	3,429	\$50,231	3,380	\$53,781
Natural Resources and Mining	176	\$42,702	185	\$65,589	177	\$68,126
Construction	85	\$30,389	105	\$41,522	116	\$43,030
Manufacturing	503	\$50,125	557	\$64,865	515	\$69,587
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	662	\$30,830	704	\$51,058	686	\$56,155
Information	40	\$43,577	40	\$43,729	33	\$35,440
Financial Activities	83	\$30,482	76	\$52,301	79	\$68,045
Professional and Business Services	92	\$35,550	104	\$71,136	105	\$75,486
Education and Health Services	774	\$34,694	765	\$47,827	765	\$50,896
Leisure and Hospitality	150	\$10,845	207	\$15,270	224	\$14,990
Other Services	61	\$28,764	86	\$31,442	86	\$34,093
Public Administration	614	\$36,226	600	\$46,832	594	\$51,641

Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Quarterly Census of Employment Wages (QCEW)

FUN FACTS

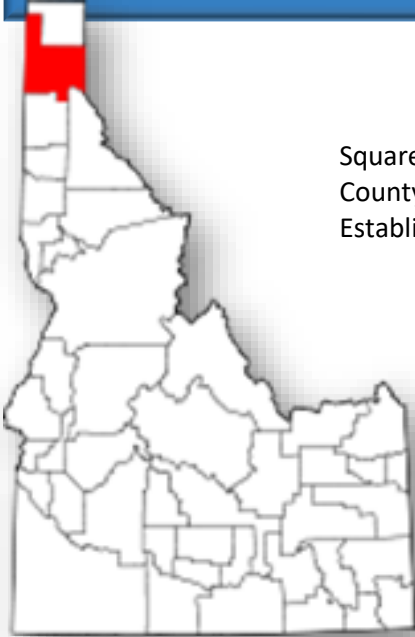
The Emerald Creek area of Benewah County is one of 2 places in the world where 6-point Star Garnets are found. The other is India. This is the reason for Idaho being called the Gem State.

Emida was named after its first settlers. It's a composite of the last names, East, Miller & Dawson.

Tensed and Desmet were founded by a developer who planned to name them the same forwards and backwards. That didn't happen due to a clerical error at the time of recording.

The Post Office in Santa, ID hires an extra employee at Christmas time to help postmark letters from "Santa".

AT A GLANCE: BONNER COUNTY



Square Miles: 1,919
County Seat: Sandpoint (10,444)
Established in 1907

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Civilian Labor Force (June 2025)
23,241

Unemployment Rate (June 2025)
5.1%

Median Household Income (2023)
\$65,168

Per Capita Personal Income (2023)
\$55,464

Poverty Rate (2023)
10.7%

Food Insecurity Rate (2023)
13.5%

HIGHER EDUCATION

North Idaho College
University of Idaho Extension

LARGEST EMPLOYERS (2023)

Lake Pend Oreille School District
Bonner General Hospital
Bonner County
Litehouse
Schweitzer Mountain Resort
Wal-Mart
Kodiak Aircraft
West Bonner County School District
Idaho Forest Group
Super 1 Foods

2023 POPULATION

Total	49,456
Males	50.0%
Females	50.0%
Median Age	48.2
Age 65+	12,932
Age 18-64	26,820
Under 18	9,704
Minority	3.7%

SOURCES:
Idaho Department of Labor
U.S. Census ACS
Realtor.com
Feeding America of the Meal Gap

HOUSING

Median Listing Price \$819,000 (June 2025)

Total Housing Units (2023)	26,623
Occupied Housing Units (2023)	19,599
Homeowner Vacancy Rate (2023)	1.1%
Rental Vacancy Rate (2023)	5.1%

Bonner Co. Industry Employment and Wages – 2013, 2022, and 2023

Supersector	2013		2022		2023	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	12,830	\$32,481	15,739	\$46,314	15,921	\$49,191
Natural Resources and Mining	320	\$42,827	380	\$58,862	379	\$63,589
Construction	640	\$29,750	1,331	\$50,481	1,336	\$52,988
Manufacturing	2,039	\$38,030	2,014	\$58,030	1,992	\$62,299
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,957	\$35,152	3,282	\$41,566	3,290	\$44,136
Information	198	\$40,394	321	\$73,797	315	\$83,208
Financial Activities	448	\$40,021	670	\$56,336	668	\$62,679
Professional and Business Services	808	\$43,086	1,142	\$67,618	1,199	\$71,916
Education and Health Services	2,402	\$30,812	2,780	\$43,423	2,820	\$44,598
Leisure and Hospitality	1,726	\$14,912	2,272	\$24,076	2,375	\$25,610
Other Services	464	\$22,880	650	\$33,924	667	\$36,408
Public Administration	828	\$37,917	897	\$55,711	880	\$61,124

Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Quarterly Census of Employment Wages (QCEW)

FUN FACTS

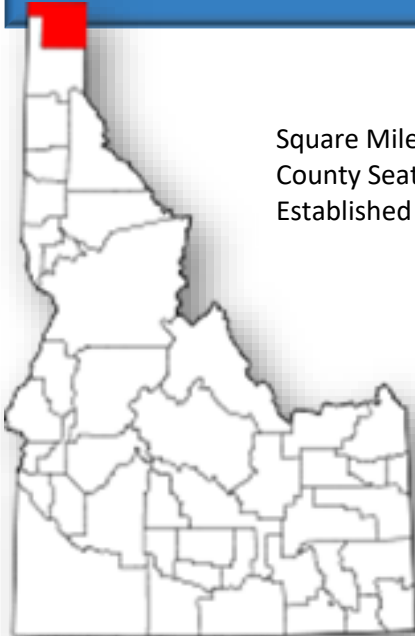
Bonner County is the only place in America where the three great transcontinental railroads all cross—Great Northern, Northern Pacific and Canadian Pacific.

Lake Pend Oreille, the majority of which is in Bonner County, is Idaho's biggest at 43 miles long with 111 miles of shoreline. It's also the deepest—at 1,158 feet deep, there are only four deeper lakes in the nation.

Dr. Forrest Bird, an inventor and aviator who studied high-altitude breathing problems of World War Two pilots lived in Bonner County. He later created medical devices that saved lives and aided thousands of people with respiratory ailments.

During World War Two, Farragut Naval Training Station was the largest city in Idaho with a population of about 42,000 people.

AT A GLANCE: BOUNDARY COUNTY



Square Miles: 1,278
County Seat: Bonners Ferry (2,788)
Established in 1915

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Civilian Labor Force (June 2025)
5,915

Unemployment Rate (June 2025)
5.1%

Median Household Income (2023)
\$62,438

Per Capita Personal Income (2023)
\$47,225

Poverty Rate (2023)
17.2%

Food Insecurity Rate (2023)
15.8%

HIGHER EDUCATION

North Idaho College Dual Credit
University of Idaho Extension

LARGEST EMPLOYERS

Boundary County School District
Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
Boundary Community Hospital
Idaho Forest Group
Boundary County
Alta Forest Products
Super 1 Foods
Panhandle Door
US Department of Homeland Security
Safeway

2023 POPULATION

Total	12,695
Males	51.1%
Females	48.9%
Median Age	42.8
Age 65+	2,990
Age 18-64	6,743
Under 18	2,962
Minority	9.6%

SOURCES:

Idaho Department of Labor
U.S. Census ACS
Realtor.com
Feeding America of the Meal Gap

HOUSING

Median Listing Price \$593,500 (June 2025)

Total Housing Units (2023)	5,535
Occupied Housing Units (2023)	4,835
Homeowner Vacancy Rate (2023)	1.1%
Rental Vacancy Rate (2023)	2.6%

Boundary Co. Industry Employment and Wages – 2013, 2022, and 2023

Supersector	2013		2022		2023	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	3,256	\$31,882	3,870	\$46,362	3,905	\$47,842
Natural Resources and Mining	294	\$36,776	328	\$44,414	307	\$49,911
Construction	185	\$28,922	368	\$53,422	345	\$48,228
Manufacturing	366	\$43,056	560	\$56,655	581	\$57,030
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	588	\$26,000	679	\$43,737	688	\$45,877
Information	20	\$19,115	24	\$45,244	21	\$53,432
Financial Activities	74	\$39,569	82	\$47,771	82	\$42,361
Professional and Business Services	275	\$31,117	270	\$43,424	275	\$46,935
Education and Health Services	682	\$28,408	732	\$42,812	709	\$44,825
Leisure and Hospitality	277	\$16,256	314	\$23,640	345	\$25,826
Other Services	56	\$23,363	70	\$32,880	75	\$35,433
Public Administration	439	\$44,521	443	\$58,644	477	\$61,453

Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Quarterly Census of Employment Wages (QCEW)

FUN FACTS

Boundary County at the Idaho-Canada border is less than 800 football fields long.

Boundary is bordered by two states and a foreign country (Canada). Only one of two counties in the nation to do so.

The Kootenai River starts in Canada, flows through Boundary County and then back into Canada.

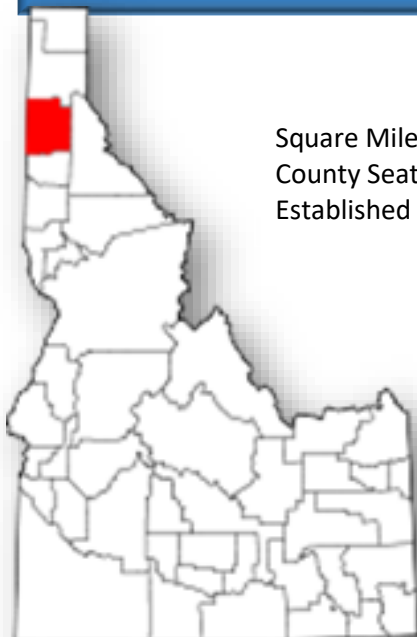
Northern Boundary County is home to the Continental Mine, which was established in 1915 and produced lead and copper for ammunition in World War One.

The County has 2 of the 20 remaining peace monuments at the Canadian port of entries.

Teddy Roosevelt hunted and camped in the area that became Boundary County in 1888. When Roosevelt became President, he established the USFS land and Glacier Park in the area.

In 1864 the Kootenai River ferry operation was established by Edwin Bonner to accommodate traffic headed to gold fields in British Columbia.

AT A GLANCE: KOOTENAI COUNTY



Square Miles: 1,316
County Seat: Coeur d'Alene (57,355)
Established in 1864

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Civilian Labor Force (June 2025)
91,345

Unemployment Rate (June 2025)
4.5%

Median Household Income (2023)
\$77,037

Per Capita Personal Income (2023)
\$63,893

Poverty Rate (2023)
9.3%

Food Insecurity Rate (2023)
12.5%

HIGHER EDUCATION

North Idaho College
University of Idaho – Coeur d'Alene
Lewis-Clark State College – Coeur d'Alene
Boise State University – Coeur d'Alene

LARGEST EMPLOYERS

Kootenai Health
Coeur d'Alene School District
Hagadone Hospitality
Wal-Mart
Kootenai County
Post Falls School District
Silverwood
Coeur d'Alene Casino
Lakeland School District
North Idaho College

2023 POPULATION

Total	177,736
Males	49.9%
Females	50.1%
Median Age	40.8
Age 65+	35,003
Age 18-64	102,630
Under 18	40,103
Minority	7.4%

SOURCES:

Idaho Department of Labor
U.S. Census ACS
Realtor.com
Feeding America of the Meal Gap

HOUSING

Median Listing Price \$714,900 (June 2025)

Total Housing Units (2023)	82,654
Occupied Housing Units (2023)	74,253
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.9%
Rental Vacancy Rate (2023)	4.7%

Kootenai Co. Industry Employment and Wages – 2013, 2022, and 2023

Supersector	2013		2022		2023	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	53,069	\$33,740	68,473	\$51,123	70,563	\$53,172
Natural Resources and Mining	385	\$75,758	788	\$65,381	822	\$69,985
Construction	3,322	\$36,829	6,560	\$56,327	6,842	\$58,858
Manufacturing	4,677	\$40,688	5,160	\$56,670	5,349	\$58,285
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	10,859	\$31,741	13,337	\$48,582	13,589	\$50,189
Information	751	\$44,551	783	\$76,678	784	\$85,239
Financial Activities	2,799	\$44,709	3,258	\$69,776	3,066	\$72,114
Professional and Business Services	5,726	\$35,686	6,792	\$61,206	6,841	\$64,124
Education and Health Services	12,262	\$35,978	15,960	\$55,745	16,864	\$57,822
Leisure and Hospitality	8,346	\$17,496	11,165	\$26,168	11,650	\$27,115
Other Services	1,261	\$23,251	1,724	\$39,683	1,746	\$43,625
Public Administration	2,681	\$46,487	2,946	\$63,064	3,010	\$67,828

Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Quarterly Census of Employment Wages (QCEW)

FUN FACTS

Silverwood is the only amusement and water park in the inland northwest (including Washington, Oregon and Montana).

Hayden is home to Rocky Mountain Construction—worldwide roller coaster manufacturer of I-Box track and Topper Track for wooden roller coasters.

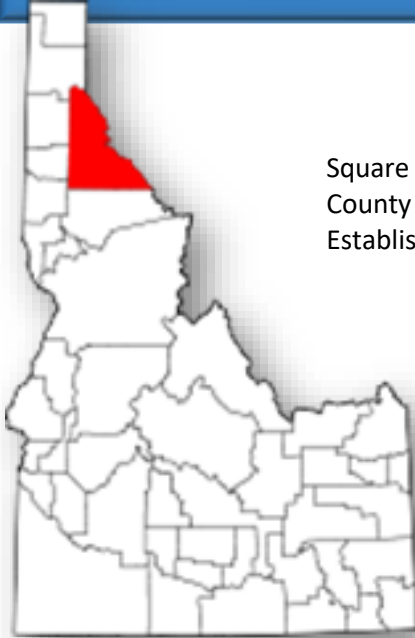
Coeur d'Alene's Old Mission State Park aka Cataldo Mission contains the oldest building in Idaho. The Mission of the Sacred Heart was constructed between 1850 and 1853.

North Idaho College sits on the grounds of the original Fort Sherman, established in 1878 after the Battle of the Little Big Horn by General William Tecumseh Sherman of Civil War fame.

The U.S. Navy's Acoustic Research Detachment, located at the most southern end of Lake Pend Oreille in Kootenai County, is where new submarine and surface ship shapes and subsystems are tested.

There is a 60-mile walking/biking trail along Lake Coeur d'Alene.

AT A GLANCE: SHOSHONE COUNTY



Square Miles: 2,633
County Seat: Wallace (823)
Established in 1861

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Civilian Labor Force (June 2025)
6,070

Unemployment Rate (June 2025)
6.3%

Median Household Income (2023)
\$49,975

Per Capita Personal Income (2023)
\$45,440

Poverty Rate (2023)
15.1%

Food Insecurity Rate (2023)
16.6%

HIGHER EDUCATION

None

LARGEST EMPLOYERS

Hecla Mining
Dave Smith Motors
U.S. Silver Corp.
Kellogg School District
Wal-Mart
Shoshone County
Shoshone Medical Center
Wallace School District
Lookout Pass Ski & Recreation
Loving Care & More

2023 POPULATION

Total	13,580
Males	49.8%
Females	50.2%
Median Age	45.1
Age 65+	3,092
Age 18-64	7,668
Under 18	2,820
Minority	3.4%

SOURCES:
Idaho Department of Labor
U.S. Census ACS
Realtor.com
Feeding America of the Meal Gap

HOUSING

Median Listing Price \$359,000 (June 2025)

Total Housing Units (2023)	7,036
Occupied Housing Units (2023)	5,679
Homeowner Vacancy Rate (2023)	1.3%
Rental Vacancy Rate (2023)	2.1%

Shoshone Co. Industry Employment and Wages – 2013, 2022, and 2023

Supersector	2013		2022		2023	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	4,642	\$40,401	4,863	\$50,880	4,924	\$50,749
Natural Resources and Mining	856	\$79,321	795	\$93,818	817	\$96,270
Construction	174	\$44,332	177	\$55,039	195	\$57,074
Manufacturing	168	\$34,519	194	\$40,625	181	\$39,674
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,265	\$35,276	1,097	\$57,383	1,067	\$51,509
Information	53	\$35,874	37	\$44,240	35	\$45,811
Financial Activities	132	\$23,745	158	\$48,641	148	\$37,414
Professional and Business Services	295	\$40,715	264	\$53,648	267	\$55,529
Education and Health Services	813	\$28,681	963	\$34,962	1,033	\$36,585
Leisure and Hospitality	419	\$12,436	761	\$20,073	767	\$20,809
Other Services	81	\$28,750	77	\$37,552	78	\$44,070
Public Administration	386	\$35,239	340	\$49,858	336	\$55,970

Source: Idaho Department of Labor- Quarterly Census of Employment Wages (QCEW)

FUN FACTS

Wallace was home to the last stoplight on I-90 between Seattle and Boston. It was retired in 1991.

Silver Mountain Resort in Kellogg is home to the longest Gondola in North America at 3.1 miles and is the longest single-stage Gondola in the Nation.

Prostitution and gambling were openly practiced until an FBI raid in 1988.

Actress Lana Turner was born in Burke and lived in Wallace.

Dante's Peak was filmed in Wallace, Shoshone County.

There are two ski resorts within 25 miles of each other. Both offer winter sports and summer bicycling activities.

Devastating fire events occurred in 1910 and 1972. Both influenced national policy and safety.

Shoshone County Airport has a mile-long runway—one of the longest general aviation runways in Idaho.

APPENDIX B

Action Plan

ACTION PLAN

ELEVATE INDUSTRY

Support existing industries, empower business opportunities, and invigorate innovation and research for thriving industries that are diverse, sustainable, geographically dispersed and globally competitive.

TASKS FOR COMPLETION	DESIRED OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	REALISTIC TIMEFRAME AND WHEN
Goal: Strengthen Industry Objective: Strengthen collaboration between education and industry to enhance workforce quality and growth.			
Strategy 1: Promote region-wide CTE opportunities to streamline the transition from school to career.			
Contact high schools and colleges.	Prepare an inventory of existing programs.	Workforce Training Center	1 Year
Prepare and conduct surveys of missing industries in CTE Programs.	Maintain a list of missing industries/skills.	Local EDCs within each county	1 year
Strategy 2: Encourage regional partnerships of key organizations that will evaluate and develop a plan to reduce duplication of efforts and identify measurable goals.			
Promote the WTC as the regional hub for partnership.	Central location for sharing information.	Workforce Training Center	On-going
Partner with Idaho Commerce and SBDC's.	Business development collaboration to reduce duplication.	Idaho Commerce; Business Advisors; Joel Nania (SBA)	1 year
Goal: Expand Business Opportunities Objective: Anticipate emerging trends and proactively address community needs.			
Strategy 1: Leverage local asset mapping to define potential business opportunities, available resources, and target community engagement efforts.			
Prepare RFP for a consultant to lead the region in Asset Mapping.	Hire consultant.	Workforce Training Center	6 months
Asset mapping process.	Document identified assets for potential business opportunities, available resources, and community engagement efforts.	Consultant	2 years
WTC disseminate asset mapping findings on their website.	Central location for information.	Workforce Training Center	Quarterly

TASKS FOR COMPLETION	DESIRED OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	REALISTIC TIMEFRAME AND WHEN
Goal: Foster Innovation/Entrepreneurship Objective: Cultivate an environment that nurtures innovation and empowers entrepreneurs.			
Strategy 1: Establish a regional HUB for entrepreneurial resource dissemination and guidance.			
EDC from each county contact Innovative Collective to investigate regional activities.	Regional collaboration for entrepreneurial resources and guidance.	EDCs Innovative Collective	1 month
Identify incubator spaces for regional HUB.	Locations for new entrepreneurial resources.	Business Associations SBDC PAC	1 year
Have an implementation plan for mental health National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).	Provide mental wellness for entrepreneurial businesses.	Social Services Business Owners	1 year
Strategy 2: Maximize creative placemaking to encourage incubators, co-working spaces, local worker housing and promote collaboration amongst entrepreneurs and creatives.			
Identify creative districts and opportunities to have them support creative placemaking.	Workshops to help artists create spaces/places for entrepreneurs.	CdA EDC Training provided by SBDC	1 year

EMPOWER PEOPLE

Engineer talent pipelines, cultivate K-through-career and expand high quality jobs to enable people to lead productive, prosperous, and meaningful lives.

Goal: Support Lifelong Learning Objective: Foster lifelong growth opportunities from early development through all stages of life.			
Strategy 1: Encourage collaborative community efforts or initiatives.			
Re-engage lead partners in the community that have initiatives between 1-5 years.	Ensure current community initiatives come to fruition and to expand community initiatives throughout the panhandle as applicable.	PAC; Chambers; CdA EDC	2 years
Create marketing materials for community leaders to share.	Provide resources for people new to the area to increase community engagement.	Realtors, public, cities, Chambers, service orgs	1-2 years

TASKS FOR COMPLETION	DESIRED OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	REALISTIC TIMEFRAME AND WHEN
Strategy 2: Connect community members with essential resources through organizations such as the Community Resource Envision Center.			
Identify and activate a leadership organization to bring existing entities to work together.	Awareness, collaboration to bring together at the same table.	PAC, EDCs, United Way	6 months
Create a centralized HUB of community information.	Regional resource center: web page hosted by PAC & actively shared across Panhandle.	PAC, CEDS, Silver Valley Cares	1 year
Create a 4-point questionnaire to broaden mapping services of community organizations throughout the panhandle and procure lists of non-profits.	Create a resource platform and data base that is centralized (mapping).	EDCs and United Way	1 year
Prepare a canned statement on how to engage community. members from regional sources for businesses.	Customers will have access to information on individual. business pages from larger organizations	PAC & Businesses/Chambers	1 year
Duplicate business resource newsletters from Covid	Centralize information and resources	PAC, CdA EDC	6 months
Goal: Support Leadership Development			
Objective: Create an environment where every voice is heard and valued.			
Strategy 1: Promote and market opportunities for leadership to participate in a variety of non-partisan community forums.			
Engage & train local businesses on how to create opportunities for citizens of all ages to engage.	Create an inclusive environment where every voice is heard and valued.	Businesses, leadership programs through Chambers, etc., incentive based.	ongoing
Identify gaps of engagement in the community and bring opportunities to connect and inform – go to them program.	Show information with people who aren't engaged otherwise.	Chambers, EDC, Businesses, electeds	ongoing
Strategy 2: Promote and market opportunities for leadership to participate in a variety of non-partisan community forums.			
Host open houses, workshops, youth liaisons, think tanks, and mentorships.	Prepare next generation leaders to engage in the community.	Schools, Chambers, Service organizations, clubs	ongoing
Partner with school districts to host opportunity fairs for volunteer and workforce engagement.	Ensure youth engagement in civic and non-partisan organizations to develop leadership skills.	Schools; businesses; non-profits; municipalities; home school co-ops	ongoing

TASKS FOR COMPLETION	DESIRED OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	REALISTIC TIMEFRAME AND WHEN
Goal: Increase Workforce Opportunities Objective: Raise awareness of evolving workforce opportunities. Strategy 1: Provide opportunities to encourage the expansion and diversification of skill sets of the existing and future workforce.			
Have education and workforce development trainers teach OJT workshops in-person/digital.	Create custom curriculum to meet the needs of employers.	Businesses U of I Higher Ed Idaho Launch WIOA Youth-Dept of Labor	1-2 years
Strategy 2: Build a resource library of current economic opportunities.			
Internships, H4 (hard hats, hammers & hot dogs), unlock your future, resource fairs.	Industry partners to have resources linked to their businesses. Exposing current & future workforce to real jobs in our region.	Chambers, Schools, employers, trade groups, Idaho Dept of Labor	ongoing
Creative economic leaders to share workforce opportunities.	Highlight the economic impact demand & pathways.	ERC, Arts & Culture, GSI, IDOL	2 years
Collaborate with community organizations to share existing resources.	Reduce duplication of efforts & fill in gaps on the lists.	Silverwood, EDC's, Chambers, Service organizations	2 years
Connect IDOL website to local schools.	Grow existing resources	IDOL; Education	ongoing

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES

Inspire community vitality, develop infrastructure solutions, and galvanize regional collaboration thereby enhancing our communities' unique characteristics, strengths, and assets to improve economic competitiveness.

Goal: Improve Infrastructure Objective: Develop livable communities with robust services and infrastructure that drive economic vitality. Strategy 1: Plan proactive strategies that embody the vision of thriving communities.			
Create a plan for all services	Baseline assessments (where you are & where to go). Budget and timeline needs.	Public City Leadership Stakeholders	Baseline – 1 year Budgeting-1-5 years

TASKS FOR COMPLETION	DESIRED OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	REALISTIC TIMEFRAME AND WHEN
Strategy 2: Collaborate with the greater community to facilitate robust services and infrastructures that have regional impacts.			
Analyze / Review Strategic Plans for all communities.	Identify priorities as an initial step toward funding.	City/County leaders	18 months
Legislative bill for creative districts.	Statewide initiative for creative districts.	Idaho Arts Commission Idaho Department of Commerce Higher Ed	2 years
Goal: Encourage Collaboration Objective: Promote collaboration by fostering a supportive environment where differing perspectives are valued, and collective efforts are aligned towards shared goals.			
Strategy 1: Cultivate communities built upon shared values.			
Idaho Rural Partnership collaboration (community review).	Identify desired shared values. Summarized report for use.	Community technical assistance group.	6 months – 1 year
Identify resources for community (organizations, funding, etc.).	Resources to tap into for further support.	Economic development city/community leadership	6 months
Utilize western rural development center and WE CAN.	Educational outreach public comment.	universities	1 year
Encourage municipalities to improve public information.	Hire PIO's / build community teams, hold community listening sessions.	Cities, counties	3 years
Strategy 2: Promote collaboration between leadership and community through civic engagement to encourage transparency in decision making.			
Create awareness with city officials and leadership.	Transparency between public and private officials.	Vista Service Member / AmeriCorps	6 mo – 1 year
Assemble best practices resources	Help promote pedestrian walkways	Vista Service Member / AmeriCorps	1 year
Create 'know before you go' pages on websites for cities.	Increase knowledge and awareness of civic and community-led events	Municipalities Chambers Non-profits	1 year

TASKS FOR COMPLETION	DESIRED OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	REALISTIC TIMEFRAME AND WHEN
Goal: Promote Sustainable Communities Objective: Enhance existing programs while implementing proactive, creative solutions. Strategy 1: Identify duplicative services and create cooperatives to increase capacity, maximize resources, and eliminate waste.			
Map resource centers and utilize what is already established.	Focus on assistance that is established to reduce overlap	Vista Service Member / AmeriCorps	6 mo – 1 year
Strategy 2: Support legislative actions that strengthen community, infrastructure, housing, environmental programs, and enhance existing services.			
Attend Northwest CDI trainings.	Empowerment through Education and certification.	Economic & Community Development professionals; Planners; city, county, and state officials	3-year program
Staying engaged with Idaho Association of Counties and Association of Idaho Cities.	Collaboration assistance with legislation awareness of upcoming actions.	City officials/staff State representatives Economic Development Groups/Districts	6 months

APPENDIX C

Panhandle Area Council Board of Directors Resolution



Resolution # 02-09.24.2025

RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE 2026-2030 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) FOR THE PANHANDLE AREA COUNCIL 5-COUNTY AREA, KNOWN AS REGION I IN IDAHO, COMPOSED OF BENEWAH, BONNER, BOUNDARY, KOOTENAI AND SHOSHONE COUNTIES, AS PRESENTED TO THE PANHANDLE AREA COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

WHEREAS, the Panhandle Area Council (PAC) was officially designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration as an Economic Development District and qualifies as an area-wide planning organization, and

WHEREAS the completion of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is necessary to meet the statutory requirement pursuant to 13 CFR §303.6; and

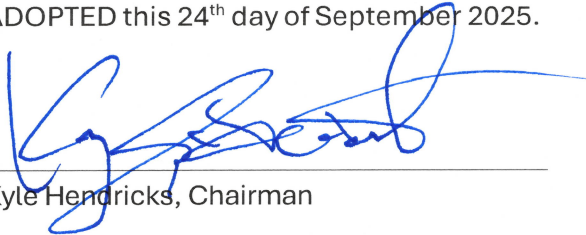
WHEREAS, PAC, as part of its strategic planning program, is responsible for planning and coordinating economic development activities throughout the region with the goal of stimulating new private and public investments to create employment and growth opportunities; and

WHEREAS PAC is organized in accordance with Federal requirements to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to broadly represent the economic development district area including representation of local government, business and other community interests; and

WHEREAS, the CEDS Committee and PAC have prepared its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as a guide for economic development activities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Panhandle Area Council does hereby adopts the 2026-2030 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Region I Economic Development District of the State of Idaho.

ADOPTED this 24th day of September 2025.



Kyle Hendricks, Chairman



Jeri DeLange, Secretary