



## LEADING WITH INTENTION: CREATING AN ECONOMY FOR THE FUTURE

The Results of an Economic Development Training for North Central Idaho Communities.  
Funded by the U.S.D.A. Community Development Initiative (RCDI) Program

Think-Tank Workshop Report

March 28, 2019

# LEADING WITH INTENTION: CREATING AN ECONOMY FOR THE FUTURE

## Think-Tank Workshop Report

This report summarizes the training and planning session held at The Monastery of St. Gertrude in Cottonwood, Idaho on March 28, 2019. Approximately 30 North Central Idaho stakeholders participated in the Think-Tank and developed the scenarios presented in this report. This report has been produced as part of the a U.S.D.A. Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) funded project for leaders from participating North Central Idaho communities, many of which are residents of communities in the Idaho counties of Lewis and Idaho. The intent of the project is to increase recipient capacity for preserving community assets and to increase community wealth through a set of sound economic development principles and effective comprehensive planning and development.

Report Prepared by:

future→iQ®

Create **Future Intelligence**®

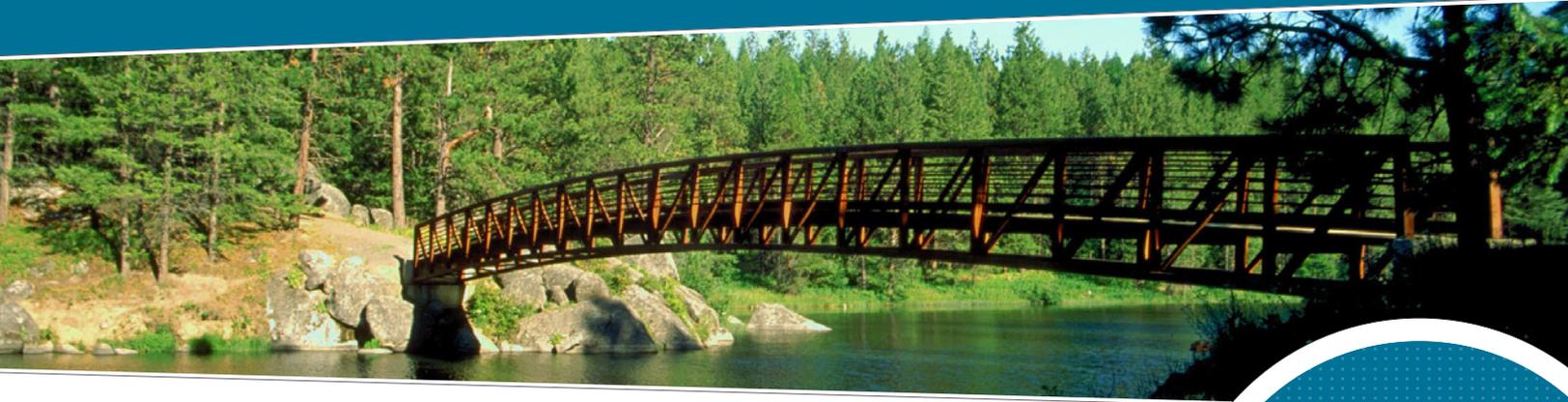
Workshop Hosted by:



Committed to the future of rural communities.

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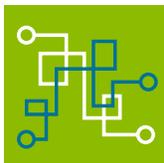


## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The scenario-based Think-Tank was conducted on March 28, 2019 and included North Central Idaho stakeholders, private citizens, public officials and industry group members. Approximately 30 people attended this eight-hour session. The session was intended to build coherency around initial future planning for sustainable economic development strategies that will guide regional stakeholders over the next five years and beyond. The components of the project included the following:

- **Background reading** – Prior to the Think-Tank, participants were asked to read Daniel M. Johnson’s book, *Leading Economic Development: A Toolkit for Public Officials and Civic Leaders*.
- **Think-Tank surveys** – A survey was sent to invited participants of the Think-Tank before the workshop and was allowed to run until two weeks following the workshop. This input, along with assistance from CEDA’s leadership, helped to create the axes of the scenario matrix and guide the Think-Tank discussions.
- **Think-Tank workshop** – The scenario-based planning Think-Tank held on March 28, 2019, provided an important opportunity to engage stakeholders in a critical dialogue about the future and impacts of economic development in the North Central Idaho region.
- **Think-Tank report** – The Think-Tank report summarizes and analyzes the survey results and the participants’ deliberations that took place during the Think-Tank workshop. The report also identifies regional priorities for action as determined by the Think-Tank participants.

The Think-Tank Workshop was an exciting collaborative opportunity for North Central Idaho stakeholders to take a ‘deep-dive’ into regional economic development.



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### FUTURE INSIGHTS:

- As the pace of change accelerates worldwide, the need for regional economic development groups to come together to plan collaboratively becomes more important.
- Successful regions build on existing economic strengths and explore new economic opportunities on regional and global scales provided by the ‘new economy’.





## 2.0 LEADING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CEDA drives regional development and works with community leaders to build community assets and wealth within the Idaho counties of Clearwater, Idaho, Latah Lewis and Nez Perce. The organization works to stimulate North Central Idaho's economic growth through technical services that make it easier for local businesses, entrepreneurs and start-up companies, and communities to connect and make use of resources for prosperous development. In support of its *Pathways to Accelerate North Central Idaho* comprehensive economic development strategy, CEDA hosted the Think-Tank as part of its economic development training services funded by a USDA Rural Community Development Initiative. The project is called *Leading with Intention: North Central Idaho Economic Development Training and Community Planning Assistance*. The intent of the project is to increase recipient capacity for preserving community assets and to increase community wealth through a set of sound economic development principles and effective comprehensive planning and development.

To provide preparatory background information for the Think-Tank, participants were asked to read Daniel M. Johnson's book, *Leading Economic Development: A Toolkit for Public Officials and Civic Leaders*. Many of the themes and strategies for economic development covered in the book emerged during the Think-Tank process. In particular, Johnson supports CEDA's strategies by highlighting the need for public officials, private citizens and economic development professionals to be:

- Aligned in their vision
- Working together collaboratively
- Pursuing common regional goals and objectives

The visioning and strategy pillars that emerged from the training workshop build on North Central Idaho's comprehensive economic development strategy and helped to formulate the new 5-year strategy.





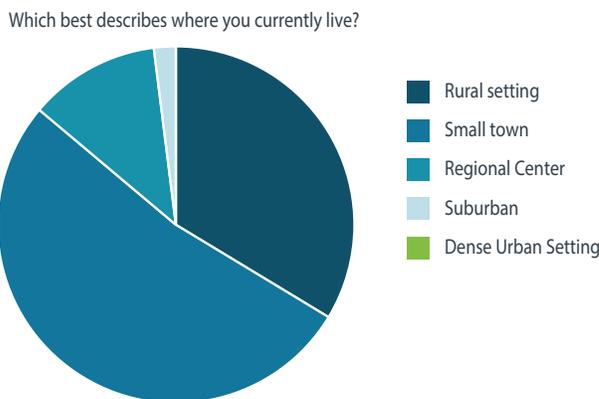
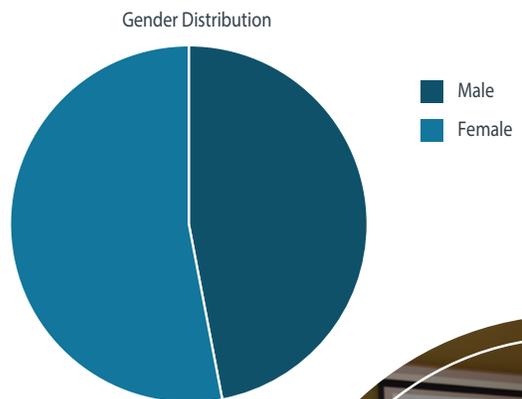
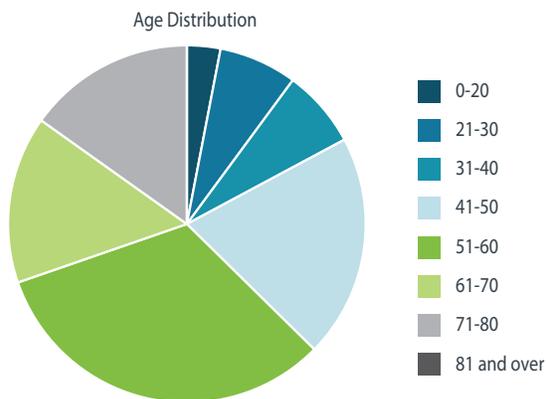
## 3.0 SURVEY RESULTS – KEY STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Prior to the Think-Tank, a Think-Tank survey was conducted, and participation was encouraged for two weeks after the workshop. Respondents were asked about their views on having a shared vision for the future of North Central Idaho, particularly in terms of economic development strategies. Approximately 60 individuals responded to the survey. Below are the compiled results of the Think-Tank survey.

The results from the stakeholder survey informs the creation of the scenario matrix axes used to guide discussions in the Think-Tank.

### 3.1 STAKEHOLDER PROFILE INFORMATION

In terms of survey respondent demographics, approximately 53% were female and 47% were male. The majority of respondents were aged 51 or over, with 34% between the ages of 21-50. Respondents were asked to describe where they lived and 87% described themselves as living in a rural setting or small town.

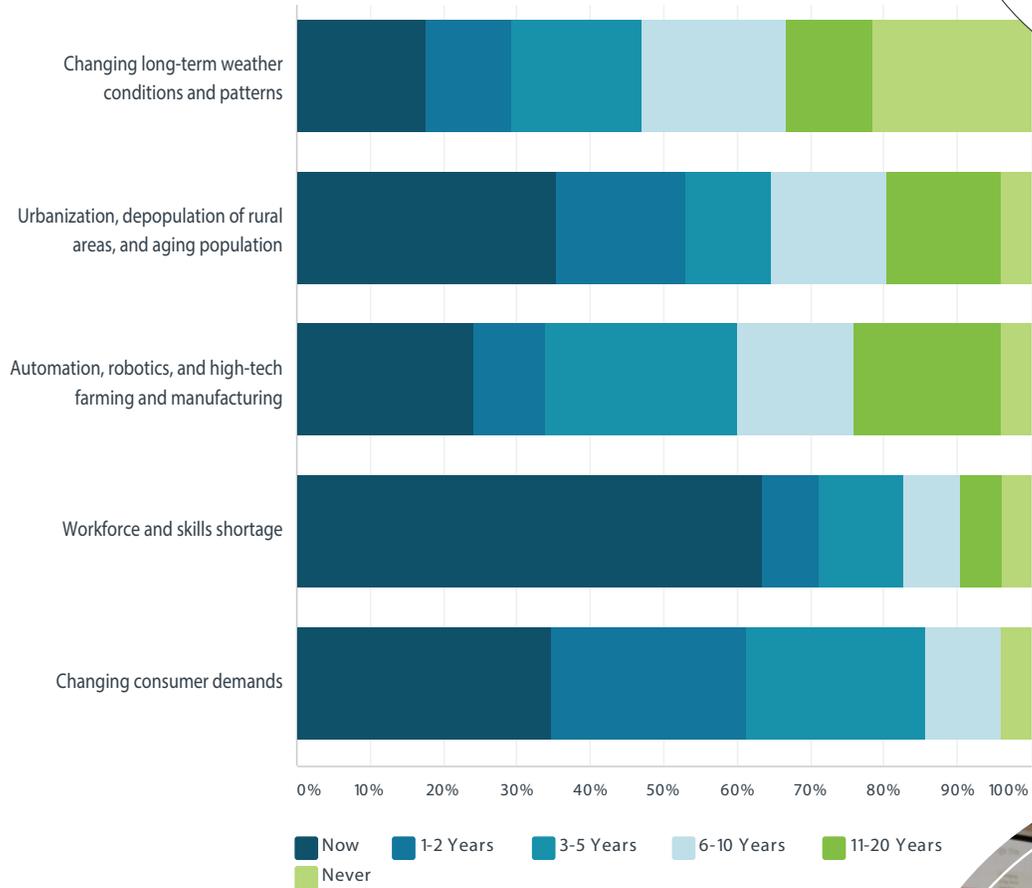


### 3.2 TIMING OF IMPACT ON REGIONAL INDUSTRIES

To assess how immediately respondents thought certain factors may impact regional industries, respondents were asked when they thought certain factors would significantly change the industries in their region. The most immediate impacts were identified in the areas of workforce and skills shortages.

Nationwide, addressing workforce needs and skills shortages are becoming critical elements of any economic development strategy. Workforce shortages are having immediate impact on regions.

#### When do you think the following factors will significantly change the industries in your region? (n=52)



DataInsight

#### DATA INSIGHTS:

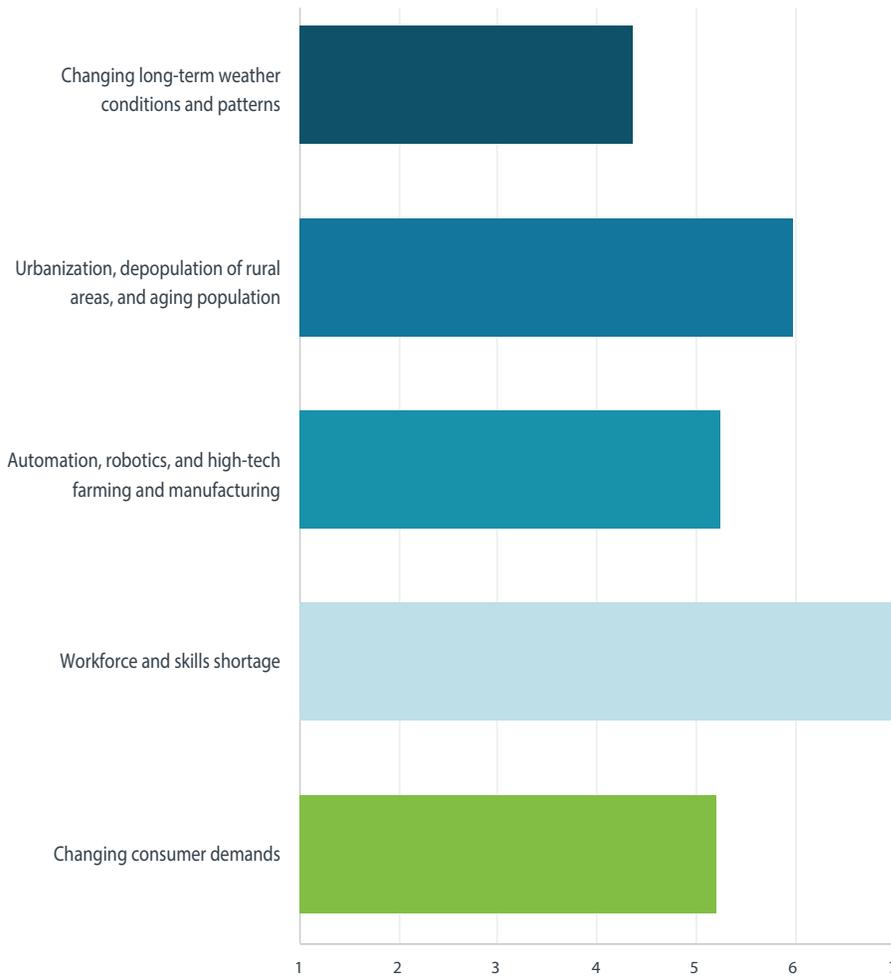
- Changing consumer demands is seen by regional stakeholders as key to new economic opportunities for the region.
- Demographic changes such as urbanization, depopulation of rural areas and aging are highlighted as factors that will impact the region within the next five years.



### 3.3 OVERALL MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE

To measure how significant respondents considered the impact of change on the identified factors, respondents were asked what they thought was the overall magnitude of the changes within each topic area. Once again, workforce and skills shortages were identified as the topic area with the greatest magnitude of change.

**Considering your answers to the above questions, what do you think will be the overall magnitude of the changes within each topic area? (n=47). Scale 1= very small; 10 = very large.**



Providing the educational options for life-long learning and training is becoming a necessary strategy to address workforce and skills shortages across the country.



DataInsight

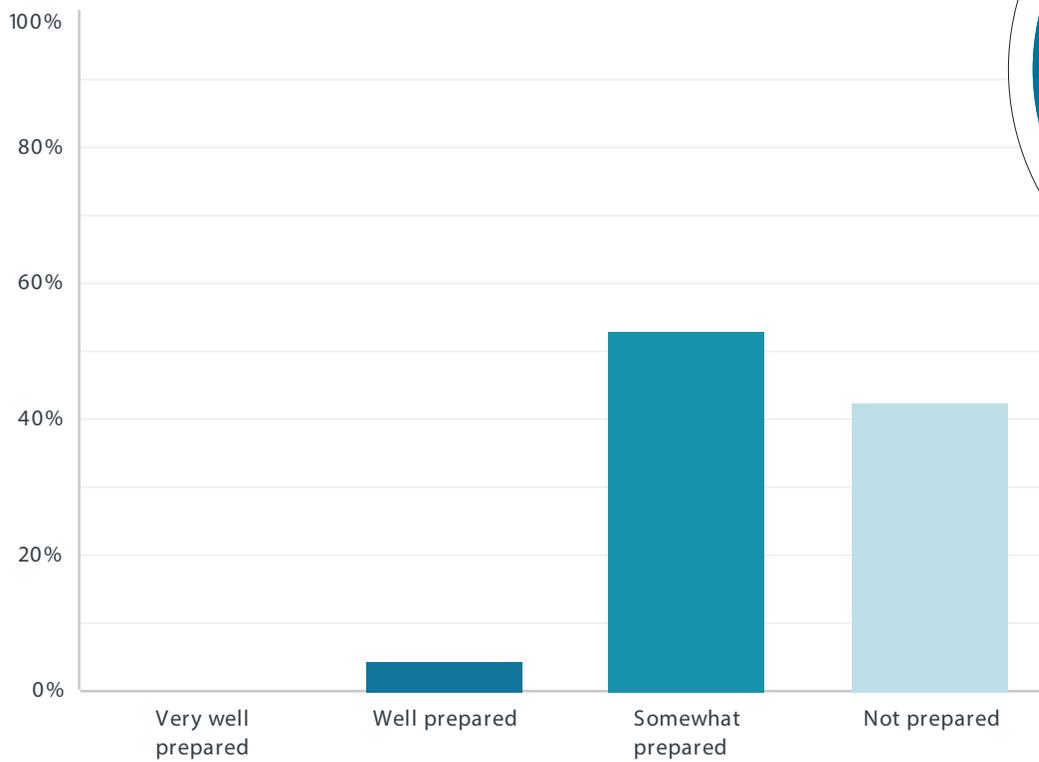
#### DATA INSIGHT:

- CEDA and regional stakeholders will need to take preemptive actions to address the emerging workforce crisis and to mitigate its potential impacts on the region.
- Being open to automation, robotics and high-tech farming and manufacturing will help address workforce needs in the region.

### 3.4 REGIONAL PREPAREDNESS

Preparedness is an important step in building resiliency into any economic development strategy. Preparedness provides leadership with the flexibility and agility they need to deal with rapidly changing dynamics confronting communities. To gauge how well prepared respondents think the region is to adapt to emerging trends and change, respondents were asked to rate the region's preparedness. None of the respondents considered the region very well prepared.

#### How well prepared is your region to adapt to these changes? (n=47)



Careful planning and thought leadership is necessary to help prepare for the impact of emerging trends and changes.



#### DataInsight

#### DATA INSIGHTS:

- With lack of preparedness identified as an issue for the region, economic development organizations have been given a mandate for action.
- The Think-Tank is a significant step in identifying strategic pillars for the region to address on its path to preparedness for emerging trends and changes.





## 4.0 SCENARIO-BASED THINK-TANK

The Scenario Planning process, used by Future iQ in this workshop, provides a method to explore plausible futures and consider the implications of various future scenarios. The Think Tank workshop aimed to:

- Deepen the understanding and examination of how external events and local conditions could shape decision-making
- Identify and understand the key influences, trends, and dynamics that will shape the region over the next 10 to 15 years
- Create and describe four plausible long-term scenarios for the region
- Explore alignment around a shared future vision for the region
- Develop priorities and strategic pillars that may be used to guide regional action

The scenarios developed during this Scenario Planning process and outlined in this report are important to provide a framework to discuss future possible outcomes and implications for economic development in North Central Idaho. In addition, the Think-Tank deliberations can assist in identifying key actions for the region and in exploring how various groups might collaborate to best contribute to future economic development.

Think-Tank participants were guided through a Scenario Planning process to develop four plausible scenarios for the future of the region. The process involved exploration of local and global trends and forces of change; development of a scenario matrix defining four plausible scenario spaces for the future; and, the development of descriptive narratives of each scenario created by the participants. The event concluded with discussion of the scenarios, selection of a preferred scenario, consequences of action / inaction, and prioritization of initial strategic pillars for regional action.



FutureInsight

### FUTURE INSIGHTS:

- The future will increasingly be defined by technological disruption and accelerated change, within a highly connected world.
- Scenario planning helps local stakeholders preempt change and position the region for future opportunities. This helps build 'future readiness'.

The scenario planning process allowed stakeholders to examine the implications of choices about future direction in a deep and thoughtful manner. This scenario thinking approach helps people develop agile thinking and prepare for the future.



## 4.1 FORCES SHAPING THE FUTURE

The Think-Tank provided a forum for participants to explore the forces of change shaping the future of North Central Idaho. Participants at the Think-Tank explored four areas of emerging macro trends and forces of change. Perceptions around the nature of impact of these trends, both in terms of size and timing of impact, were explored to gauge how important participants consider the trends. Participants discussed the emerging trends on global, regional and local scales, and related them directly to North Central Idaho in terms of how well prepared they considered themselves.

Specifically, the trend areas were:

- Demographics, population and mass urbanization
- Changing macro-economics and societal values
- Energy, food, water and changing climate
- Technology and the next industrial revolution

Of particular relevance to the discussion on trends is the speed and scale of change occurring. Newly developed innovations are being implemented globally and locally at all scales, thereby changing the face of industries and society in a rapid and profound way. Manufacturing is at the forefront of this transformation, but other industries are also quickly developing such as agriculture, health care, biomedical research, infrastructure, energy, transportation and mobility, shipping and logistics, food services, retail, financial services, and tourism.

The emerging macro trends impacting regional areas represent both 'headwinds' and 'tailwinds' for North Central Idaho.

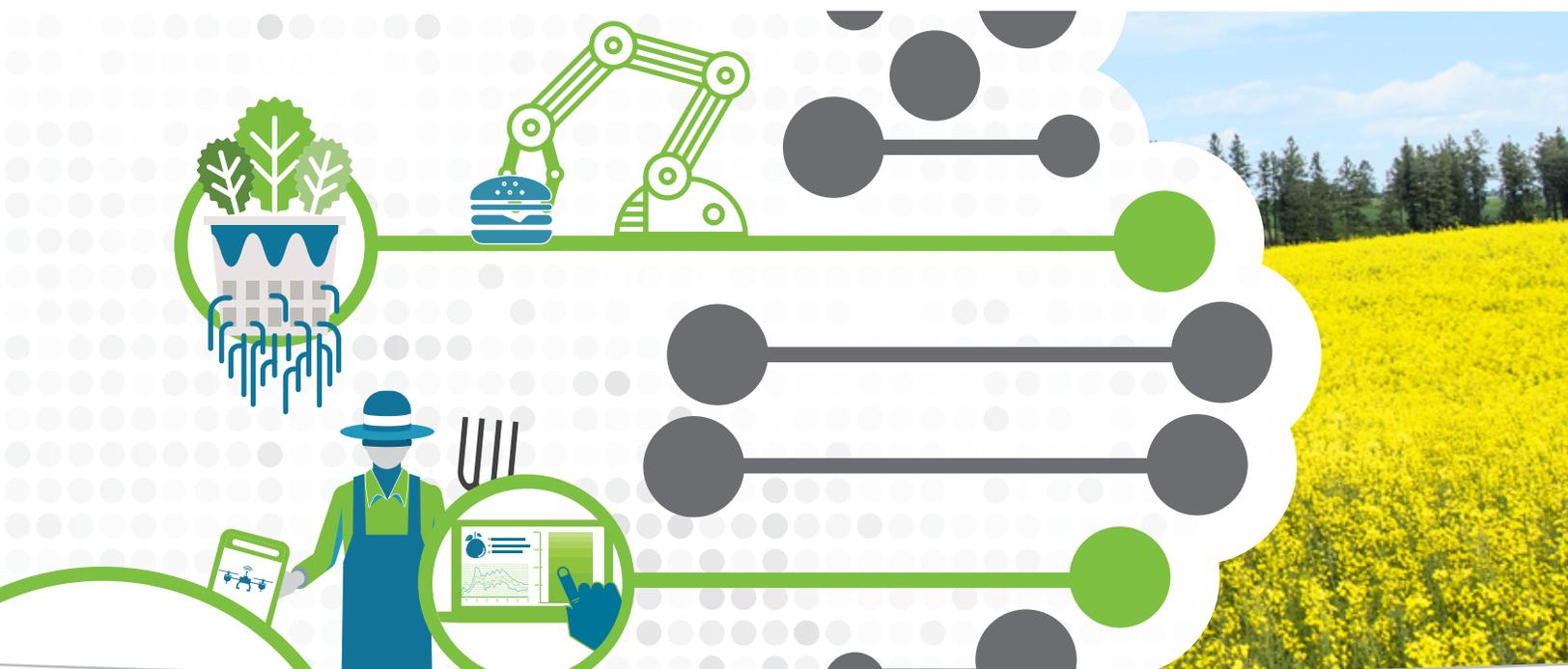


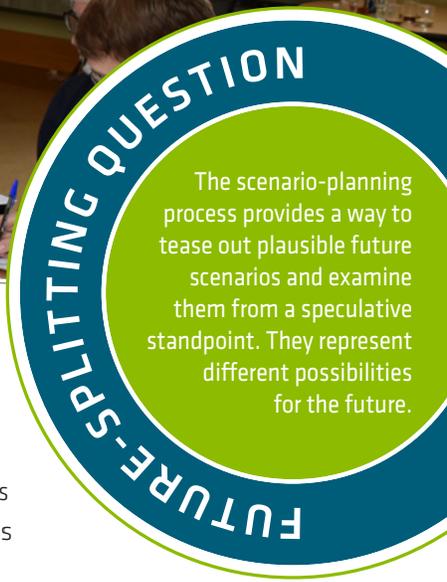
### FUTURE INSIGHTS:

- Given the global trends happening in the Energy, Food and Water sectors, North Central Idaho's geographic location and resource economy, provides great opportunities to leverage these assets for economic development.

### FutureInsight

- In the face of accelerating speed of change, the key to resiliency is the ability to anticipate change and remain agile.

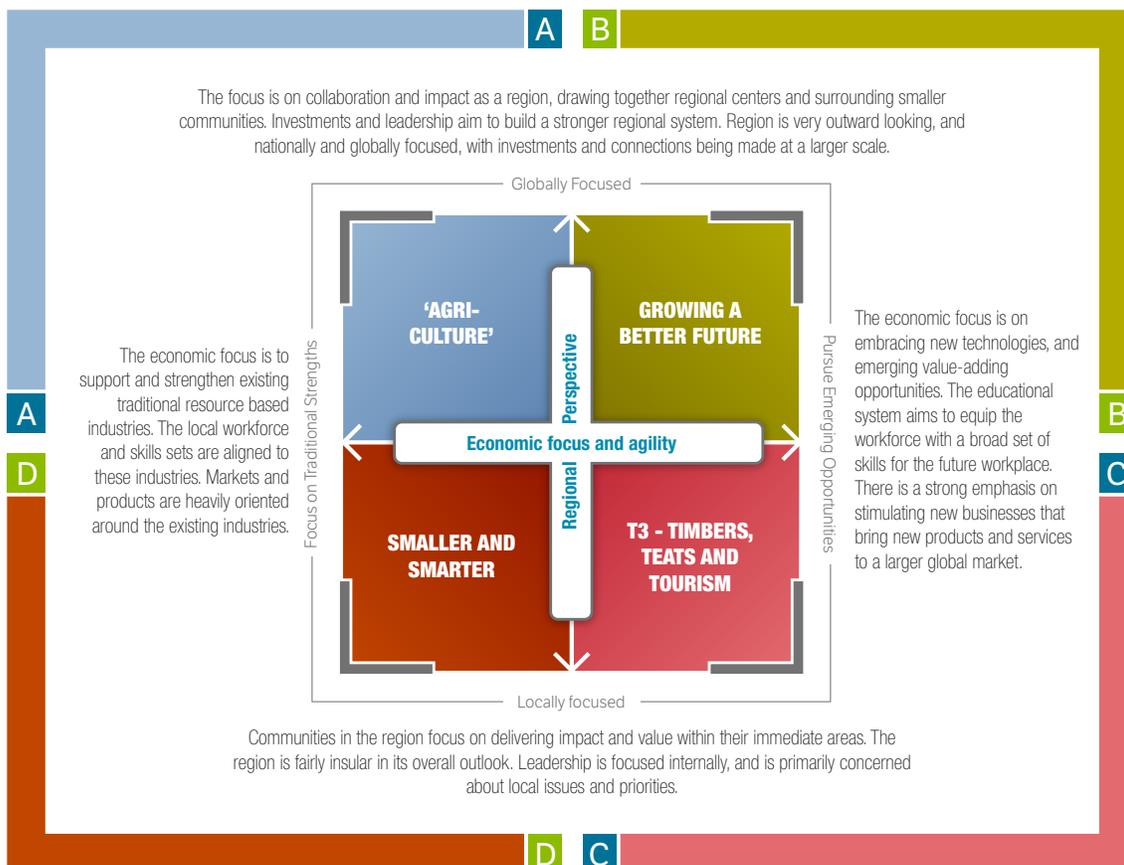




## 5.0 CREATING THE SCENARIO FRAMEWORK

Based on the Pre-Think-Tank survey responses and key input from CEDA staff, themes were identified to become the basis for two axes on the scenario matrix. The two axes identified were **Economic Focus and Agility** and **Regional Perspective**.

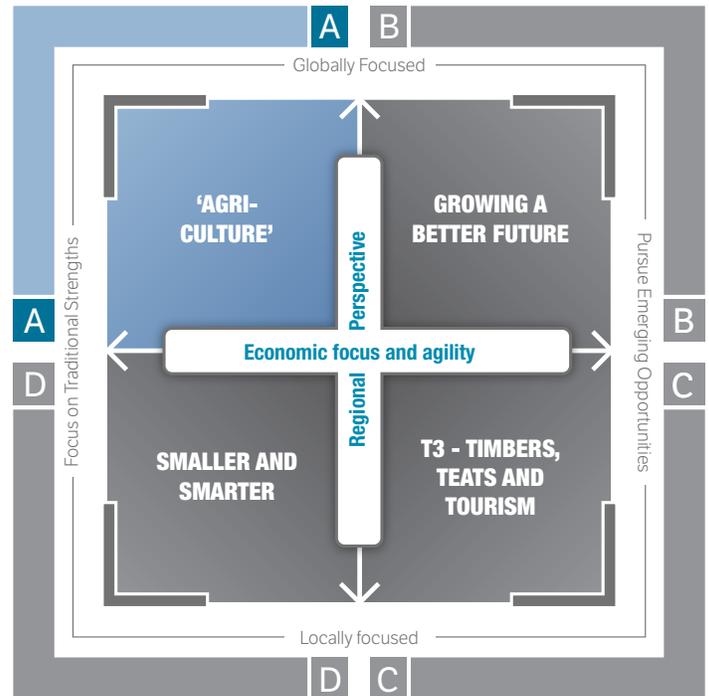
Think-Tank participants were presented with the scenario matrix, defined by the two major axes of 'Economic Focus and Agility' and 'Regional Perspective' (see diagram). Brief descriptions were also attached to the end points of each driver axis. Participants were divided into four groups to develop a narrative for each scenario. Each group was asked to describe the characteristics of the North Central Idaho region in 2030 under the conditions of the scenario quadrant that they had been given. After the characteristics were established, Think-Tank participants were asked to devise major events or headlines of how the scenario occurred using the years 2020, 2025, and 2030, and to give their scenario a descriptive name. Narratives and descriptions of each scenario as developed by the workshop participants are included in the following sections.





## 5.1 SCENARIO A: AGRI-CULTURE

This scenario forecasts a future where the traditional local industries of timber, agriculture and tourism remain key pillars of the North Central Idaho economy. The region embraces a global approach to economic development and markets expand rapidly. An increase in global middle-class incomes helps the regional tourism industry and the Nez Perce Tribal history and culture become a draw for international visitors. Over time, increased automation and technology advancements in the traditional industries create greater efficiencies, causing a decrease in traditional jobs and a polarization of workforce needs from basic to highly skilled jobs. Lack of new opportunities cause entrepreneurs to leave the region and industry casts a wider net to attract workers. Housing remains an issue for lower paid workers and income disparities grow. The environment suffers with the rapid expansion of traditional industry and the region becomes vulnerable to the exploitation of natural resources by lack of collaborative ventures between industries.





## POTENTIAL SCENARIO CHARACTERISTICS - 2030

### Economic and Trade impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- Need for cereals and legumes for food-based food stuffs
- Increased grain transportation including container shipments
- Logs to Lewiston travel up Columbia River to Japan
- New dry land agricultural farming focus
- Products change from wheat to canola, etc.
- Hemp is on its way to being grown in Idaho
- Need for maintenance personnel for combines/parts

### Reputation and Branding impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- Lifestyle is a big draw in N. Central Idaho - Low crime, neighborhood communities
- Easy input into local school board and local government
- Spirit Center for quiet retreats
- Marketing hiking, fishing and recreation draws more people to the area
- Social media markets to the millennials
- Nez Perce personnel/tribal and economic development council is incorporated
- Need for government and public sector to commit to affordable housing
- Government serves as convener of community to resolve issues and provide activities addressing fears regarding change

### Community and Workforce impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- Workforce training in summer covers housing costs
- Training grants for U of Idaho and LCSC students incentivize students to incentivize students to learn skills applicable to regional industries
- Employers link high school apprenticeships and 3D printing
- Technology school is built
- Increasing wages for supporting families and keeping folks in the area
- Businesses encouraged to invest in government agencies to train personnel
- Marketing to hire wider circle of employees and selling to wider world markets

### Resource and Environmental impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- Certain industries negatively affect rivers and recreation (landscape effects)
- Resource allocation for increased tourism promotion
- Need information about recreational opportunities e.g. rails to trails, trestles to trails
- Lack of good signage for trails and natural hot springs
- Collaboration ventures between tourism, agriculture and timber resource interests are needed



## AGRI-CULTURE - HEADLINE NEWS

2020

2025

2030

### Economic and Trade Impacts

*"Hemp introduced to the region!"*

*"Tourism improved via marketing"*

*"Network defined for international trade"*

### Reputation and Branding Impacts

*"Nez Perce Tribal Development Council integrated"*

*"Fears addressed regarding change"*

*"Reputation for integrated vision in community a collaboration among sectors"*

### Community and Workforce Impacts

*"Plans to develop telecommunication in area increase"*

*"Government and business link to develop telecom, healthcare and schools"*

*"Technical high school trains a sustainable workforce"*

### Resource and Environmental Impacts

*"Collaborations between business-tourism-agriculture!"*

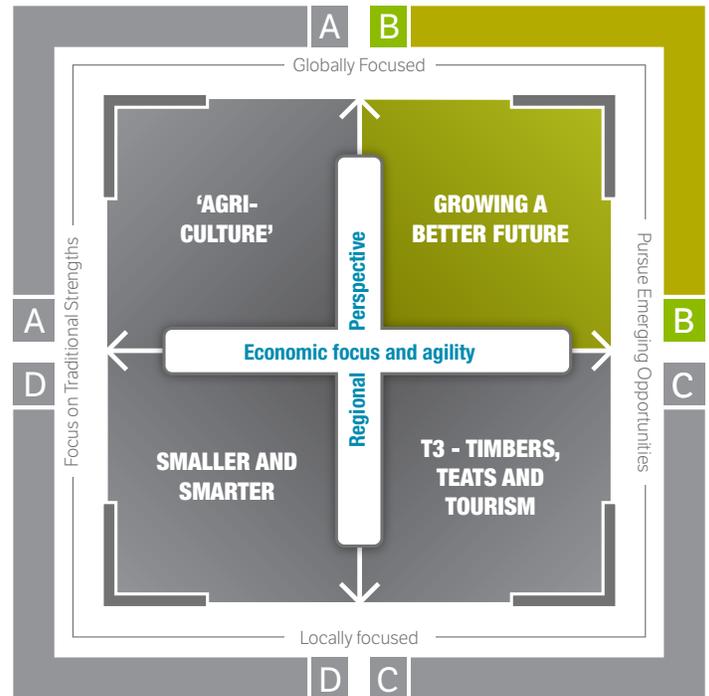
*"Resources allocated for tourism promotion and funding"*

*"Region promotes awareness and education campaign on effects of industry on environment"*



## 5.2 SCENARIO B: GROWING A BETTER FUTURE

This scenario forecasts a future where economic development is regionally collaborative and outward looking and North Central Idaho becomes globally renowned for its openness to innovation and emerging opportunities. The economic focus is on embracing new technologies and emerging value-added opportunities within and outside of traditional industry. University partnerships (particularly land-grant universities) with both public and private entities expanding globally and research into new agricultural products such as vegetable proteins add transformational value. This new openness attracts and retains a diverse, younger, and more inclusive workforce. The educational system supports this approach by providing a broad set of skills training for the future workplace. Online educational options including STEM-based vocational opportunities expand for all age groups and telecommuting increases as the region pivots to a gig economy. Housing is strategically created to meet the community's needs, and quality of life amenities are emphasized. There is a concerted effort to preserve resources, improve infrastructure, and expand public land-recreational activities.





## POTENTIAL SCENARIO CHARACTERISTICS - 2030

### Economic and Trade impacts / Characteristics – 2030

- Taking advantage of global markets
- Tourism – especially Agri-tourism
- Vegetable protein crops increase
- Entrepreneurial climate grows
- Improved communication system
- Expanded marketing
- Value-add agriculture
- Increased recycling
- Products add transformational value

### Reputation and Branding impacts / Characteristics – 2030

- Region is seen as clean and welcoming
- No crime
- Shift of power/outward looking
- Top telecommuting community reputation

### Community and Workforce impacts / Characteristics – 2030

- Higher skilled jobs available
- Pivot to gig economy/broadband; emergency services; e-911
- More STEM based-vocational opportunities
- Focus on place-making, livability, good schools
- University partnerships, esp. land-grant universities
- Upgraded parks
- Hunting options
- Housing to meet community needs
- Satellite campus option

### Resource and Environmental impacts / Characteristics – 2030

- Expanded public land-recreational activities
- Preserve agriculture lands
- Strategic with housing
- Improved road system
- Focus on resource preservation



## GROWING A BETTER FUTURE – HEADLINE NEWS

2020

2025

2030

### Economic and Trade Impacts

“First additive manufacturing expo hosted on the prairie”

“2nd Annual Agri-tour brings in 10,000 people to the Palouse”

“From Beef to Beans”

### Reputation and Branding Impacts

“Bikers for ARF – Poker Run”

“N. Central Idaho recognized globally for exceptional hospitality”

“Successful private-public partnership recruits international manufacturer”

### Community and Workforce Impacts

“2 new cancer tech-ed centers open! / LESC and LHS purchase 50 3D printers!”

“150 new apartments with fiber in Idaho/Lewis County”

“Idany/Lewis County becomes top telecommuting community in Idaho!”

### Resource and Environmental Impacts

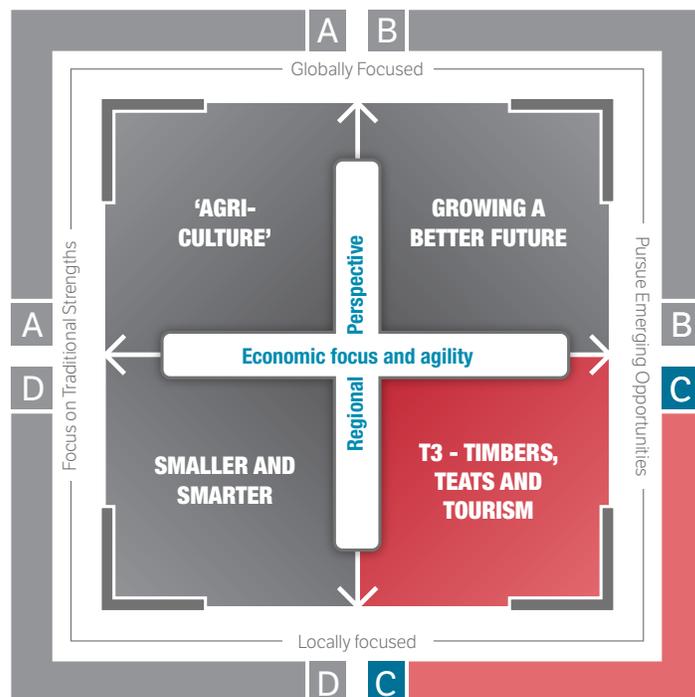
“Fiber connection complete between Riggans e-Grangeville”

“ARMS manufacturer relocates from CA to Riggans”



### 5.3 SCENARIO C: T3 (TIMBER, TEATS AND TOURISM)

This scenario forecasts a future where the three T's (Timber, Teats and Tourism) reign. The focus is on developing local industries with innovative ideas and new technologies, and the local areas that promote these industries experience extraordinary economic growth. Educational opportunities expand to include learners of all ages in order to accommodate new workforce needs. However, businesses have difficulties attracting and retaining new employees to the area because the community remains insular and unwelcoming to newcomers. Infrastructure improves for those communities connected to the three T industries and broadband is readily available. Eventually, the local economic focus is limiting without access to national and global markets, and the inward-looking nature of economic development misses out on larger trends. Communities that aren't strong in one of the three T industries suffer as do those who aren't collaborating with others locally.





## POTENTIAL SCENARIO CHARACTERISTICS - 2030

### Economic and Trade impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- Find new opportunities to support our already flourishing strengths and businesses (timber, Ag diversification, organic, value added)
- Broadband and fiber – get infrastructure in, build it
- Strengthen transportation system (highway/rail)
- Agriculture – unique crops and ability to grow
- Tourism and recreation – organic sense of place
- Healthcare – collaborative and best care

### Reputation and Branding impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- Focus on our unique strengths (tourism)
- Businesses maximize tourism by training employees for customer service, staying open during high season use, etc
- Make Idaho the place to be for work from home, technology use
- Sense of place – Idaho is the place to be
- Consistent tourism training

### Community and Workforce impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- Continued and enhanced workforce training for local youth so they can stay in the area (college credits in high school, online...)
- Career fairs, 'K-Gray' classes for all, continuing education for all ages
- Housing needed if new employees, families are to be attracted
- Communities that aren't collaborating will suffer

### Resource and Environmental impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- More collaboration needed between government entities to obtain funds
- Flexibility in zoning, land-use planning
- High social media use – Google Maps, Facebook, Instagram, etc



## T3 (TIMBER, TEATS AND TOURISM) - HEADLINE NEWS

2020

2025

2030

### Economic and Trade Impacts

*"Broadband connects us all"*

*"Organics on the rise"*

*"Idaho, Lewis counties attract international businesses through connectivity and quality of life"*

### Reputation and Branding Impacts

*"Broadband redundancy increases 75%"*

*"Our future becomes the past in agriculture"*

*"Locally grown fiber known worldwide"*

### Community and Workforce Impacts

*"On-line learning takes the lead"*

*"Idaho, Lewis counties recognized for development of plant-based proteins"*

*"Idaho, Lewis counties food co-op internationally recognized"*

### Resource and Environmental Impacts

*"Connectivity saves lives in North Central Idaho"*

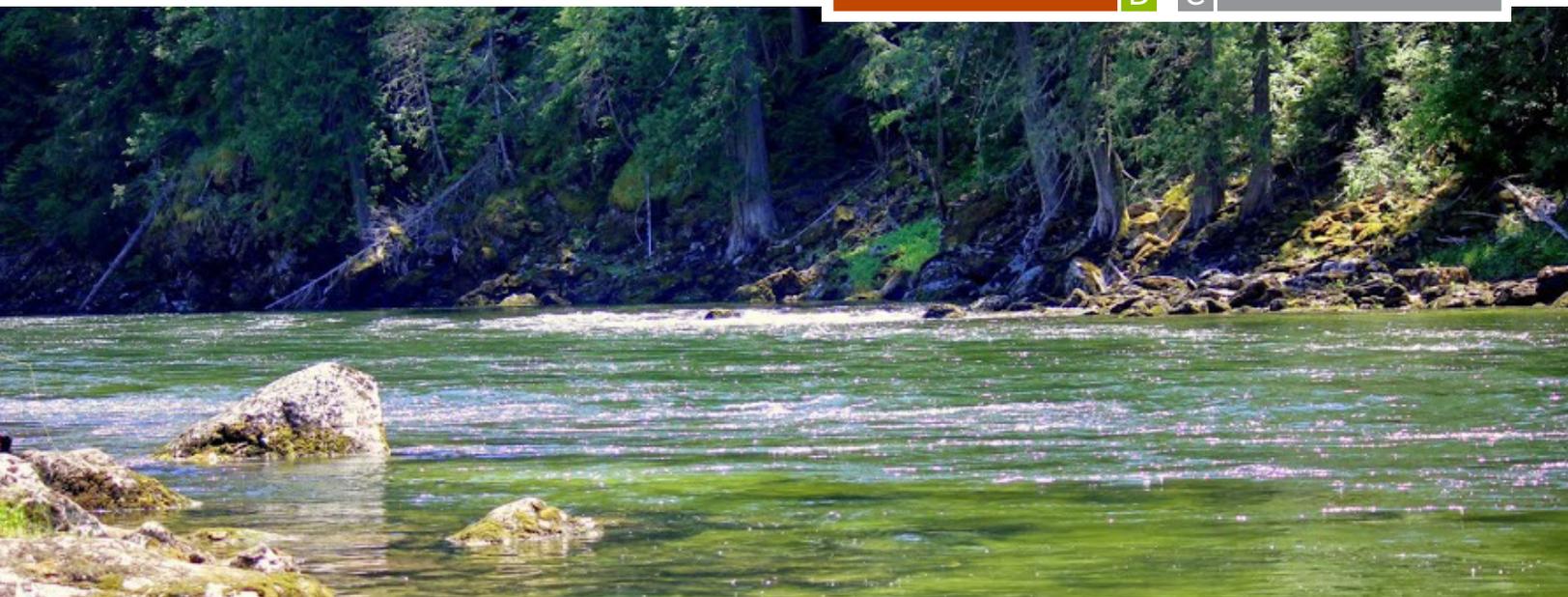
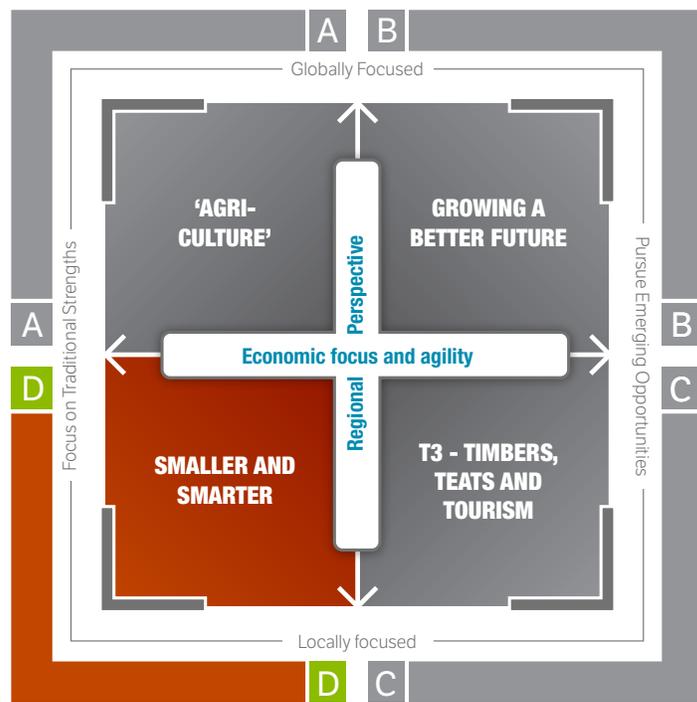
*"Camas Prairie becomes the new Napa Valley"*

*"Natural resources and progressive business practices increase tourism"*



## 5.4 SCENARIO D: SMALLER AND SMARTER

This scenario forecasts a future where all economic development is focused inward on the traditional industries of timber, agriculture and tourism. Initially, the local focus causes the regional economy to thrive, with all resources allocated to supporting traditional industry. Technology and automation enable greater production with fewer people, but high tariffs have a negative effect on local farmers. Recreational areas are expanded to provide a full array of hunting, fishing and camping options, however access to clean water becomes an issue. The lack of connection to national and global markets limits innovation and growth potential and local natural resources are slowly exhausted. Community fabric deteriorates because of the seasonal nature of the Ag and Tourism industries and this causes the community population to decrease and become more transient. The area has difficulty retaining teachers and doctors creating a loss of quality of life, and the region faces significant financial challenges.





## POTENTIAL SCENARIO CHARACTERISTICS - 2030

### Economic and Trade impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- Ag/Livestock - diversification and automation
- Increasing water issues due to climate change
- Tariffs have negative effect (political climate)

### Reputation and Branding impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- Wine industry has a comeback (tourism)
- Support for arts and culture community grows
- Recreation emphasized - rivers, hunting, fishing, camping
- Nez Perce Tribe history focus (local employment base)

### Community and Workforce impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- Working from home increases - for self/other businesses
- Fiscal crisis/financial challenges for the region
- Difficulty retaining teachers (potential move to online education)
- Smaller population, but technology (automation) enables production

### Resource and Environmental impacts / Characteristics - 2030

- Timber management is organized locally
- State management of lands
- Focus on agriculture quality and production



## SMALLER AND SMARTER - HEADLINE NEWS

2020

2025

2030

### Economic and Trade Impacts

*"Tariffs curtail local Ag production"*

*"Sabra opens hummus production company - 200 employed"*

*"Hemp fiber deal inked with Nez Perce tribal enterprise creating 150 jobs"*

### Reputation and Branding Impacts

*"Local effort to expand wine production"*

*"Nez Perce offers tourism opportunities for local businesses"*

*"1% for Public Arts implemented locally"*

### Community and Workforce Impacts

*"CTCC career tech facilities under construction"*

*"Advanced welding hires 2025 graduation class"*

*"Empire Lumber 'employs' robotics in facility"*

### Resource and Environmental Impacts

*"Eco Tourism launched"*

*"5 sites dedicated to E.T."*

*"Grangeville becomes first city powered by methane gas"*

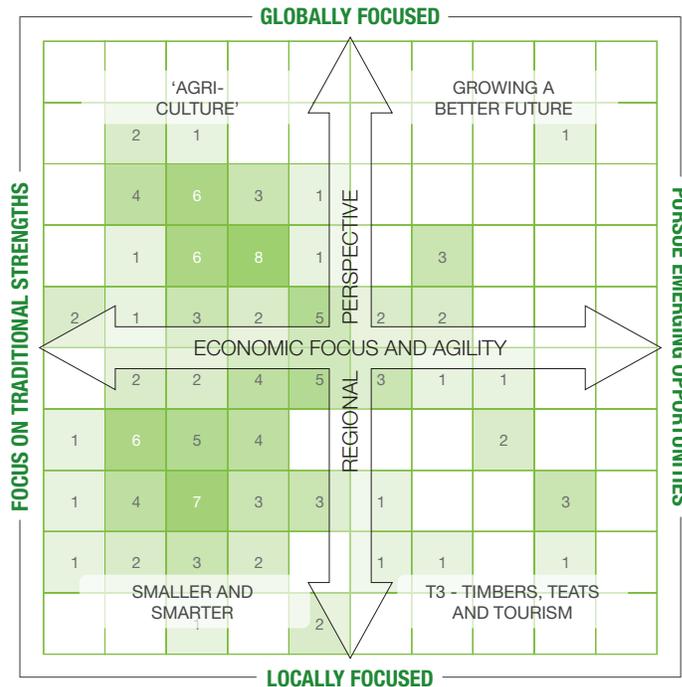


Stakeholders were aligned around the common view of the expected future if no actions are taken towards a collective approach to economic development in the region.

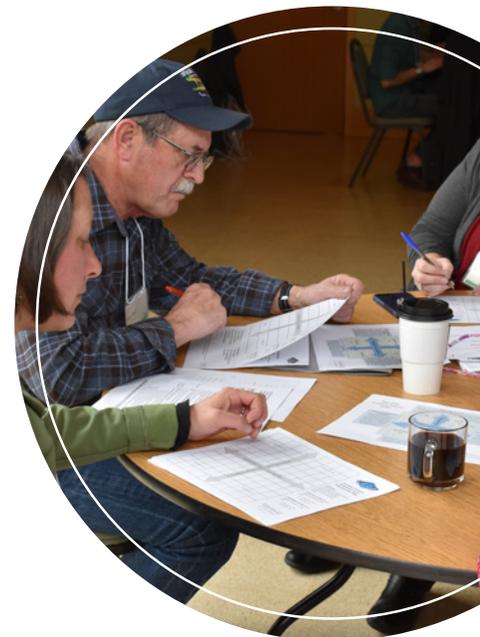
## 6.0 EXPECTED AND PREFERRED FUTURES

### 6.1 EXPECTED FUTURE: SCENARIO D - SMALLER AND SMARTER

The expected future is the one deemed most likely to happen if there is no change in the current trajectory of economic development in the North Central Idaho region. Workshop participants indicated that Scenario D - Smaller and Smarter - is the scenario they believed most represented the current direction for economic development in the region. Think-Tank participants noted that operating entirely with a local development focus would close off emerging opportunities and eventually cause severe population loss and overall decline in quality of life in the region.



CEDA Think-Tank Workshop - March 28, 2019



DataInsight

#### DATA INSIGHTS:

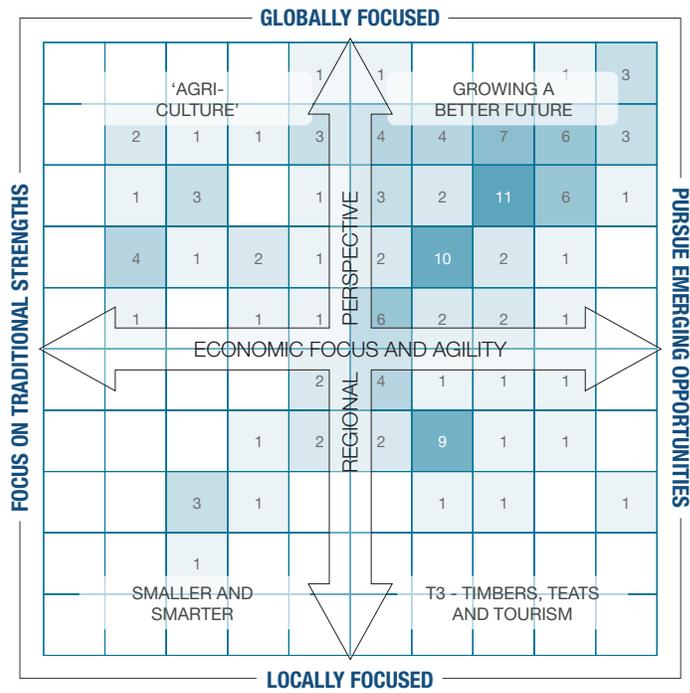
- The expected future may hold short term gains in growth and development of local regional industries however automation and technological advancements will require fewer workers and the lack of jobs will drive people away from the region.
- Non-action risks placing the North Central Idaho region in an unsustainable position.



## 6.2 PREFERRED FUTURE: SCENARIO B - GROWING A BETTER FUTURE

While each of the scenarios were viewed as plausible, Think-Tank participants expressed a preference for one of the presented outcomes, Scenario B, “Growing a Better Future”. Participants discussed the need for government, economic development leadership and industry to act definitively and collaboratively to move the region towards the preferred future. The role of educational institutions and the need for connectivity to global markets were flagged as key components of enabling economic development strategy.

A definite preference for one scenario indicates a clear mandate for leadership to take actions that support that vision for the future.



CEDA Think-Tank Workshop - March 28, 2019



DataInsight

### DATA INSIGHTS:

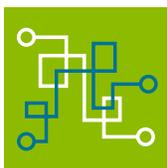
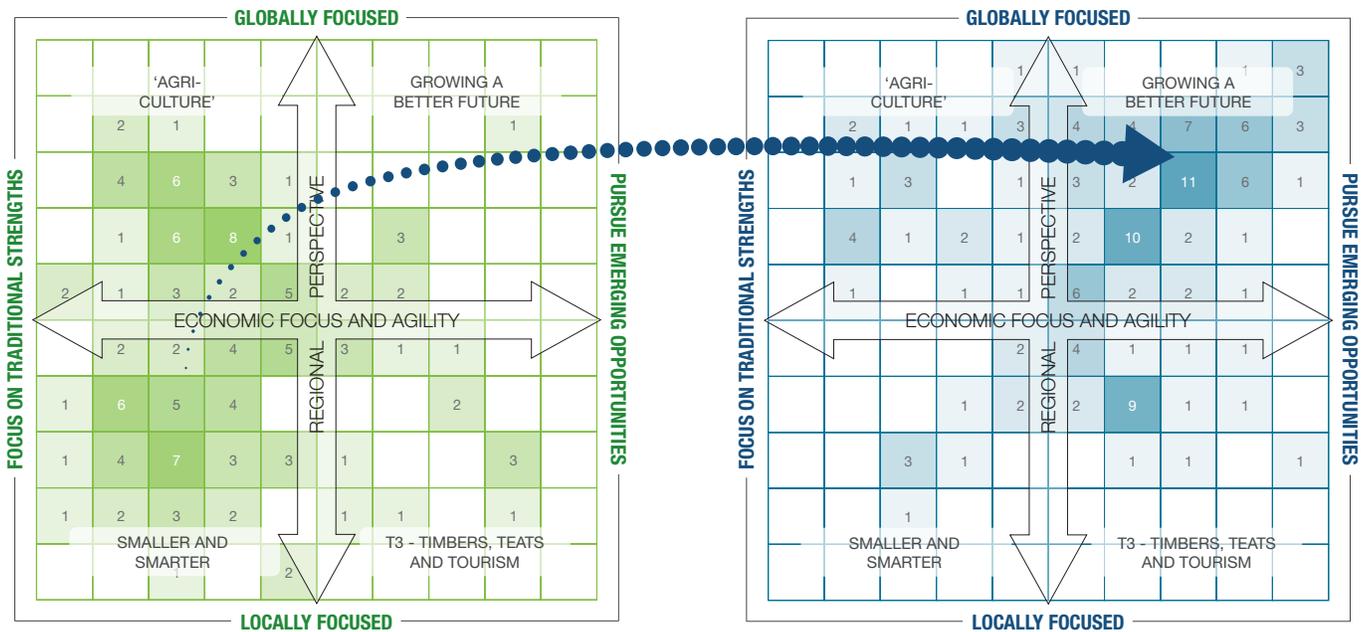
- The tight concentration of color in Scenario B, 'Growing a Better Future' indicates a close alignment of thinking among economic development leaders in North Central Idaho.
- North Central Idaho will need to show strong thought leadership in order to rally strong collaborative action that moves the region towards the preferred future.



Because of the long-term nature of the Scenario Planning methodology, stakeholders often see the 'distant future vision (2030)' as unattainable and unrealistic. However, this underestimates the progress that can be made during the intervening years, and the cumulative positive impacts of change.

## 7.0 NEXT STEPS – GETTING TO THE PREFERRED FUTURE

Think-Tank participants discussed the ramifications and implications of failing to achieve the preferred future. There was strong alignment among participants that Scenario B, 'Growing a Better Future' represented the preferred future scenario for the North Central Idaho region, with a recognition that collaborative actions and an increased global orientation needed to be adopted to preempt some of the potential negative impacts of maintaining an inward-looking local orientation. The scenario framework created by the Think-Tank participants gives voice to the vision for North Central Idaho's economic development. It is this framework that will guide the region's leaders as it pursues a sustainable comprehensive economic development strategy.



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### FUTURE INSIGHTS:

- Getting to Scenario B, 'Growing a Better Future' will require a deliberate adoption of a more global approach to economic development in the region.
- The North Central Idaho region is well positioned to move towards the preferred future by leveraging its ready access to plentiful natural resources in sustainable ways.



## 8.0 STRATEGIC PILLARS

### 8.1 STRATEGIC PILLAR DEVELOPMENT

With the Preferred Future scenario of “Growing a Better Future” as a backdrop, Think-Tank participants were asked to collectively develop strategic pillars. These strategic pillars are what participating Think-Tank stakeholders considered as critical issues to be addressed in order for the region to move from its ‘Expected Future’ (one that would occur if no change happens within the region) to its ‘Preferred Future’.

In four small groups, participants developed strategic pillars and each group reported out its top priorities. Once all groups had a chance to report, the participants as a whole discussed the need to add or merge some pillars.

The eight Strategic Pillars developed by the Think-Tank Participants are:

1. Build high speed internet across the region
2. Build critical transportation infrastructure
3. Bring global attention to tourism in North Central Idaho
4. Explore value-added agriculture
5. Increase regional influence at State/legislative level
6. Provide knowledge transfer on emerging future trends
7. Promote synergistic partnerships between regional stakeholders
8. Build or repurpose a building to create an innovation incubator

Strategic Pillars are defined as the key building blocks that will help the region move to the preferred future. The eight pillars identified aim to build a strong regional economy.



The Think-Tank participants' development of eight strategic pillars that build the path to the preferred future gives a critical leadership role to play in developing economic development strategies for the region.

## 8.2 STRATEGIC PILLARS – PRIORITIZATION

Once the strategic pillars had been shared among participants, they were asked to prioritize each strategic priority over the next five years. In a hypothetical exercise, each participant was given ten dots worth \$100,000 each and asked to assign two to each year. The goal of this exercise is to understand what Think-Tank participants viewed as immediate priorities for the North Central Idaho region as it moves towards its Preferred Future of 'Growing a Better Future'.

Strategic Pillars	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Build high speed internet across the region	22	13	9	7	5	62
Build critical transportation infrastructure	5	8	8	9	13	43
Bring global attention to tourism in North Central Idaho	7	8	7	8	5	35
Explore value-added agriculture	7	5	5	7	4	28
Increase regional influence at State/legislative level	6	4	6	4	4	24
Provide knowledge transfer on emerging future trends	7	5	4	3	3	22
Promote synergistic partnerships between regional stakeholders	4	4	3	4	2	17
Build or repurpose a building to create an innovation incubator	4	4	2	3	4	17



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### FUTURE INSIGHTS:

- The two top pillars, high speed internet and transportation infrastructure, highlight the critical need for more connectivity in the region.
- The region has the opportunity to be at the forefront of Tourism destination management as an economic development tool by collaborating and leveraging value-added resources.





## 9.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The North Central Idaho regional representatives engaged in the Think-Tank workshop and discussions with great enthusiasm. Their passion and interest ensured the discussions were thoughtful, and the outcomes reflective of the region's perspectives. This dedication is reflective of the deep commitment Think-Tank participants have to the future of their communities and local industries.

Future iQ would like to acknowledge the substantial support from CEDA staff. Their outstanding support at the Think-Tank was greatly appreciated. We would also like to thank Idaho Tourism as many of the photos used in this report were courtesy of Idaho Tourism.

### Think-Tank Participants

- Tonya Kennedy, City of Grangeville
- Morgan Drew, City of Grangeville
- Jenny Hemly, Idaho Department of Commerce
- Lorie Palmer, Idaho County Free Press
- Gavin Lewis, Ida-Lew Economic Development
- Kayleen Canup, City of Craigmont
- Barbara Brewster, City of Craigmont
- Gary Ball, City of Craigmont
- Deena Heath, City of Lewiston
- Helen LeBouef, CEDA Board
- Dave Brown, City of Potlatch
- Glenna McClure, City of Riggins
- Gary Miller, City of Riggins
- Justin Lockett, City of Cottonwood
- Rhonda Schmidt, City of Nezperce
- Liz Hess, City of Nezperce
- Sister Mary Forman, OSB, Monastery of St. Gertrude
- Jerry Elven, City of Nezperce
- Patti Brockman, City of Winchester
- Bob West, Lewis County
- Shelley Ponozzo, Lewis County
- Karin Vetter, Animal Rescue Foundation
- Dr. Kim Wolfrum, Animal Rescue Foundation
- Julie Fowler, Idaho County
- Dr John Rusche, City of Lewiston
- Angie Edwards-Kuskie, CEDA Staff
- Christine Frei, CEDA Staff
- Deb Smith, CEDA Staff
- Dodd Snodgrass, CEDA Staff
- John Lane, CEDA Staff

The dedication, professionalism and collaboration of North Central Idaho leadership and stakeholders are big assets to the organization.





## 10.0 CONTACT DETAILS

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## 11.0 ABOUT FUTURE IQ

Future iQ specializes in applying innovative tools and approaches to assist municipalities, organizations, regions and industries shape their economic and community futures. With nearly two decades of experience, the company has a global clientele spanning three continents. To learn more about Future iQ, and our recent projects [visit www.future-iq.com](http://www.future-iq.com) or by email at [info@future-iq.com](mailto:info@future-iq.com)

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Create Future Intelligence<sup>®</sup>

