



City of Yakima

# **News Release**

**Subject: Annual Yakima Citizen Survey**

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## **City Launching Third Annual Yakima Citizen Survey**

Two years ago the City of Yakima began asking the community to help identify its most important challenges and opportunities by taking part in an annual citizen survey. Results of the first two Yakima Citizen Surveys have contributed significantly to decisions made by the City Council as the City's programs and services were redesigned to make them better aligned with the needs of the community.

Phase 1 of the 2014 Yakima Citizen Survey will begin on Thursday, August 28<sup>th</sup> when 3000 randomly-selected community members will start receiving postcards notifying them they have been chosen to fill out this year's questionnaire. The actual surveys, which will be available in both English and Spanish, will be mailed out between Thursday, September 4<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, September 11<sup>th</sup> and have to be returned by Thursday, October 9<sup>th</sup>.

National Research Center, Inc., which has conducted the first two Yakima Citizen Surveys, is also overseeing this year's survey. Results of Phase 1 of the 2014 Yakima Citizen Survey are expected to be available in late October or early November.

As has been the case the past two years, an online version of the survey will be posted on the City's website following the completion of Phase 1 on October 9<sup>th</sup>. Links to both the Spanish and English versions of the online survey will be included in a news release issued by the City once they are available.

This year's Yakima Citizens Survey contains virtually the same questions that have been included in both the 2012 and 2013 questionnaires. Survey takers are asked to rate various aspects of Yakima including quality of life, safety, events and activities, City services, local government performance, and specific programs or projects the City should focus on. Survey takers are also asked to provide certain demographic information including age, employment status, income, and ethnicity.

Results of each year's survey are compared to the findings of previous surveys to determine if progress is being made in meeting the needs of the community and if issues identified by community members as requiring improvement are being addressed by the City. Results are also compared to those of other cities to see how Yakima measures up to national benchmarks.

The survey also allows the City to ask three custom questions. In previous years the City has included custom questions concerning recycling, car tabs, potential property and sales tax increases, and which programs and services the City should invest in. This year's custom questions focus on events people would like to see at the Capitol Theatre, funding a potential aquatics facility, and which programs or projects the City should invest in including, specifically, parks and recreation facilities.