



City of Yakima

# **News Release**

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**Subject: Yakima City Manager Finalists**

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## **Names of Three Yakima City Manager Finalists Announced**

The three candidates selected by the Yakima City Council to be included in the finalist pool for the Yakima city manager position will be in town next week for a community meet-and-greet event and interviews with the Council.

The finalist pool, in alphabetical order, includes Yakima Valley Conference of Governments Deputy Director Vicki Baker, Franklin County, Washington County Administrator Mike Gonzalez, and Wellton, Arizona Town Manager Richard Marsh, Jr.

The finalists will be part of a community meet-and-greet event on Monday, July 1<sup>st</sup> at the Yakima Convention Center beginning at 6:00 pm. On Tuesday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, the finalists will be interviewed by the Council during a special Council meeting beginning at noon in the Council Chambers at Yakima City Hall. The special meeting will be aired live on Y-PAC, Charter Cable channel 194, carried on the City's Zoom feed, and live streamed on the City's website ([www.yakimawa.gov](http://www.yakimawa.gov)).

Baker became the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments deputy director in April 2021. Before that, Baker served as a Yakima County commissioner from January 2020 through November 2020. From 2006 to 2009, Baker operated Vicki Baker Public Relations in Yakima. Since 1999, Baker has owned and operated a Grocery Outlet store in Yakima. Gonzalez was appointed Franklin County administrator in March 2023. Before that, he served as the economic development manager for the City of Pasco (2021-2023) and as the public relations/government affairs director for Franklin PUD (2020-2021). Gonzalez worked as a reporter and anchor for several TV stations from 2002 to 2020 in Missouri, Nebraska, Spokane, North Carolina, Kennewick, and Phoenix. Marsh has been the town manager in Wellton, Arizona since January 2022. Before that, he served as special aid to the mayor in River Rouge, Michigan (2021-2022), city administrator in Ecorse, Michigan (2017-2021), city manager in Bisbee, Arizona (2016-2017), city manager in Inskster, Michigan (2013-2016), city manager in Bangor, Michigan (2013), city administrator in Benton Harbor, Michigan (2008-2009), and assistant city manager, operations in Jackson, Michigan (2005-2008). Marsh was also the president of a private-sector consulting firm and has held leadership positions in community and economic development roles for two cities in Michigan.

In January of this year, the City Council terminated the contract of Bob Harrison, who had served as Yakima city manager since September 2020. The City Council appointed Dave Zabell as interim city manager in January of 2024. He will continue to serve until the installation of a new city manager. Zabell was not an applicant for the city manager position.

From a total of almost 50 applicants, the City's Human Resources staff presented the Council with a pool of 7 semi-finalists. During a June 17<sup>th</sup> special meeting, the City Council interviewed the semi-finalists and selected the three finalists.