



City of Yakima

NEWS RELEASE

Subject: Three Key City Positions Filled

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Experienced Leaders Fill Key Positions

Yakima City Manager Tony O'Rourke has selected Sean Hawkins to become Yakima's Economic Development Manager, Steve Osguthorpe to serve as Community Development Director, and longtime City staff member Joan Davenport to serve in a new role as Strategic Projects Manager.

The appointments of Hawkins, Osguthorpe, and Davenport are part of an ongoing City reorganization plan approved by the City Council earlier this year. The three are expected to begin their new jobs on November 5th.

Hawkins is familiar to many people in Yakima because from 2007 to 2009 he served as the first Executive Director of the Committee for Downtown Yakima ("CDY"), spearheading startup of the non-profit organization's economic development, business support, and "clean and safe" efforts in Yakima's 16-block Business Improvement District ("BID"). Since then, he has worked as Project Manager and Regional Vice President for Block by Block, a private company based in Louisville, Kentucky that provides BID management services to 46 cities across the nation. Block by Block took over CDY's responsibilities here in Yakima earlier this year. Hawkins, who has a B.A. in marketing from the University of Kentucky and an M.B.A. from the University of Montana, was the Director of Visitor Experiences/Community Development for the Harrison County Convention and Visitors Bureau in Corydon, Indiana from 2002 to 2007. He served as a Program Assistant for the Missoula Downtown Association in that Montana city from 2000 to 2001. As Yakima's Economic Development Manager, Hawkins will work primarily on improving the business environment in the downtown area and at the Yakima airport.

Osguthorpe, who has both a B.S. in urban planning and a B.S. in economics from the University of Utah, began his career as a planner in Park City, Utah in 1989. Two years later, he moved to Washington State to become a downtown development planner in Bremerton. In 1992, Osguthorpe began a seven-year stint in Gig Harbor as an associate planner. From 1999 to 2002, he worked for the City of Puyallup as a senior planner. Osguthorpe returned to Gig Harbor in 2002 to serve as that city's Planning and Building Manager. In 2005, he was hired by the City of Shelton as its Community and Economic Development Director. Since 2007, Osguthorpe has been the Planning and Housing Director for the City of Ames, Iowa. In his role as Yakima's Community Development Director, Osguthorpe will oversee the City's planning, neighborhood development, code administration, animal control, and City Hall maintenance operations.

Davenport has worked for the City of Yakima in several capacities since she was hired as an Associate Planner in 1987, including as a Senior Supervising Planner, Supervising Traffic Engineer, Planning Manager, and as Acting Community and Economic Development Director since earlier this year. As Strategic Projects Manager for the City, Davenport will coordinate the Mill Site project, the North 1st Street revitalization project, and other land use and economic development initiatives.

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