



City of Yakima

News Release

Subject: Downtown Yakima Central Plaza Questionnaire

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Lots of People Filling Out Downtown Plaza Questionnaire

Since it was launched about two weeks ago, more than 1000 people have filled out an online questionnaire about what the community might like to see in a proposed Downtown Yakima Central Plaza. Only a few days remain for people to fill out the questionnaire, the responses to which will play a key role in deciding what the design concepts for the plaza will look like.

The last day to fill out the questionnaire is Friday, May 9th.

The two-page questionnaire can be filled out electronically on the City's website. The link to the Spanish version of the questionnaire is <http://www.yakimawa.gov/services/downtown/plaza-central-cuestionario/>. The English version of the questionnaire can be accessed on the City's website at <http://www.yakimawa.gov/services/downtown/central-plaza-questionnaire/>.

The Downtown Yakima Central Plaza design team is headed by Gustafson Guthrie Nichol (GGN), a Seattle-based landscape architecture firm. Kathryn Gustafson is a founding principle of GGN and is originally from Yakima. On Tuesday, May 13th, the design team will make its second visit to Yakima to meet with the Downtown Yakima Master Plan Implementation Committee and hold a public meeting to share some of the preliminary results from the questionnaire. The implementation committee will meet at noon that day at the Yakima Convention Center. The public meeting will be held at the Seasons Performance Hall and will begin at 6:30 pm.

It's very encouraging that so many people have filled out the questionnaire so far, said City of Yakima Economic Development Manager Sean Hawkins. That high level of participation tells us that people are very interested in the plaza concept. The more people who fill out the survey, the better the design concepts will represent a broad cross section of the community, said Hawkins. The design team is relying on input from people who live in Yakima so the plaza plans reflect what our community wants.

In addition to GGN staff, the plaza design team also includes Graham Baba Architects (GBA), an architecture firm from Seattle. Brett Baba, a founding principle of GBA, is also a Yakima native. Magnusson Klemencic Associates, a civil and structural engineering firm headquartered in Seattle, is also part of the plaza design team.

GGN and GBA representatives were in Yakima in mid April to take a look at the two potential sites for a Downtown Yakima Central Plaza. One of the sites is a parking lot adjacent to the Millennium Plaza on 3rd Street. The second site is a parking lot southeast of the intersection of 2nd Street and S Sgt Pendleton Way. Eventually, one site will be chosen to focus on.

Preliminary plans for a plaza could be done by late summer with final designs ready for review in early fall of this year.