



City of Yakima

News Release

Subject: Economic Development Strategic Plan Meeting

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Community Invited to Provide Input in Yakima Economic Development Strategy

Yakima community members will have a chance to provide input on ideas on how to grow the local economy at three public stakeholder sessions next week.

Two sessions will be hosted at the Yakima Convention Center (10 N. 8th Street) on Wednesday, October 19th at 4:00 . 5:30 p.m. and 6:00 . 7:30 p.m. A third session will be hosted at the Ramirez Child Care Center (305 W. Lincoln Avenue) on Thursday, October 20th from 6:00 . 7:30 p.m. A translator will be available at this session.

Earlier this year, the Yakima City Council approved a contract with TadZo, a Yakima-based economic development and site selection firm, to create a community based strategic plan that can be followed by not just the City of Yakima, but by various other area organizations involved in economic development.

The project is divided into three phases. The first phase is *where we are now*+which highlights the City's current economic situation. The second is *where do we want to be*+which begins the process of developing strategic priorities and the third phase *how do we get there*+which will result in the community action plan.

The first phase was introduced at the October 7th kickoff project meeting where TadZo Principal Allison Larsen highlighted a comprehensive analysis on where the City is at currently in its economic development competitiveness. This presentation included an analysis of variables such as the City's transportation system, available real estate sites, utilities, human capital, workforce training opportunities and permitting and regulatory environment.

"These community stakeholder sessions are an excellent opportunity for community members to provide ideas on how to grow our local economy," said City of Yakima Economic Development Manager Sean Hawkins. "These sessions are not a lecture so be prepared to be involved in answering some thought provoking questions on our local economy," said Hawkins.

The concept of an economic development strategic plan was first discussed by the Yakima City Council's Economic Development Committee (Mayor Kathy Coffey, Councilmember Avina Gutiérrez, and Councilmember Holly Cousens) earlier this year.

The economic development strategic plan is expected to be completed by the end of this year.