



ISSUES BRIEF

February 2021 - Vol. XI, Issue 2, Number 102

City Council approves second round for small business COVID-19 grants

Program for businesses in the City of Yakima expected to launch week of Feb. 15th

The Yakima City Council has approved \$266,406 for a second round of assistance for micro-businesses (five or fewer employees) for reimbursement of expenses related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The application process for this second round is being finalized, with the program expected to launch the week of Feb. 15th.

A contract with the Yakima County Development Association (YCDA) to administer the grant funds is being prepared and will be presented to Council during its February 16th regular meeting.

The City Council on January 19th approved making the funds available to support the smallest businesses in the City.

The money comes from a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), a Federal program intended to expand economic opportunities for low and moderate-income persons.

Previously, in July 2020, the City Council set aside \$480,000 in CDBG funds to assist micro-businesses with expenses associated with COVID-19.

YCDA also assisted the City in administering that application process.

Call 575-1140 or visit [Yakima County Development Association | Choose Yakima Valley](https://www.yakimawa.gov/development-association) for more about YCDA.

Click <https://www.yakimawa.gov/> for more about the City of Yakima and its response to COVID-19.

Public invited to comment during Council meetings

The community can provide live public comment during regular Yakima City Council meetings beginning with the meeting on Tuesday, February 2nd.

Council approved remote public comment during its meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 19th.

Click [Public Comment | City Council \(yakimawa.gov\)](https://www.yakimawa.gov/public-comment) to find information and requirements for signing up to provide public comment. The link includes a Public Comment Request Form.

Requirements for remote public comment during regular Council meetings include:

- Only public comment regarding an item on the Council's regular meeting agenda for that day will be accepted.
- Community members who complete and submit a Public Comment Request Form by 3:00 pm on the day of a Council regular meeting will be called on by the Zoom host in the order in which forms are received.
- Make sure your name or phone number is visible to the Zoom host so you can be called on to address the Council. When it is your turn to speak, the host will allow you to unmute your microphone and turn on your video.



- Each speaker during public comment will be provided two-and-a-half minutes to address the City Council.
- A total of 35 minutes will be provided for public comment during Council regular meetings.
- Council members will not respond to or interact with speakers during the public comment period.

Regular City Council meeting agendas are typically available the Friday afternoon prior to the Tuesday meeting. Meeting agendas are posted online at [Agendas and Minutes | City Council \(yakimawa.gov\)](https://www.yakimawa.gov/agendas).

Other options to provide public comment to the City Council include:

- Email the Council (preferred) at ccouncil2@yakimawa.gov
- Send comments by postal mail to Yakima City Council
129 N. 2nd Street, Yakima, WA 98901
- Call 509-575-6050 (during business hours).

Yakima City Hall has been closed to the public since March 2020, when the state instituted safety protocols due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result, City Council meetings are not open for public attendance in person.

Meetings since then have been held via telephone and Zoom.

Visit <https://www.yakimawa.gov/media/point-s-of-interest/online-city-services/> for options to connect with City departments online and by phone.

New City Attorney selected

Watkins previously served as Senior Assistant City Attorney for City of Yakima

Yakima City Manager Bob Harrison announced Sara Watkins is the City's new City Attorney.

Watkins replaces Jeff Cutter who retired this month after 23 years with the City of Yakima.

"Sara brings a wealth of experience to the position and I am confident she will continue the outstanding work of the Legal Department," said Harrison.

Watkins' first day as City Attorney was February 1st. She has been with the City of Yakima since 2016, serving as Senior Assistant City Attorney.

Prior to that she worked for Halverson Northwest Law Group (formerly Halverson Applegate) as an attorney working in the areas of municipal law, real estate and litigation.

Watkins earned her bachelor's degree in International Law and Political Science with an emphasis in international environmental policy from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities in 1999. She earned her JD from the University of Oregon in 2002.



She is a sustaining member and past-president of the Junior League of Yakima, and a past president of the Washington State Association of Municipal Attorneys.

Watkins and her husband Travis enjoy traveling and hiking.

As City Attorney, Watkins will oversee the City of Yakima Legal Department and a staff of 16 employees. Click [City Attorney \(yakimawa.gov\)](http://yakimawa.gov) for more about the City of Yakima Legal Department.

Mayor Patricia Byers receives Certificate of Municipal Leadership



City of Yakima Mayor Patricia Byers recently received a Certificate of Municipal Leadership from the Association of Washington Cities (AWC).

AWC's Certificate of Municipal Leadership program recognizes city and town elected officials for accomplishing training in four core areas:

- Roles, responsibilities and legal requirements
- Public sector resource management
- Community planning and development
- Effective local leadership

"Cities and towns around the state are continually transforming in light of changing laws and the need to meet new challenges and opportunities," said AWC Chief Executive Officer Peter B. King. "Our Certificate of Municipal Leadership program helps mayors and councilmembers sharpen the tools they need today to understand the legal landscape, plan for the future, manage their resources, and foster strong relationships.

Mayor Byers completed more than 30 hours of training credits to earn this distinction.

She represents District 3 on the Yakima City Council. She was elected to City Council in November 2019 and the Council appointed her mayor in January 2020. Previously, Mayor Byers served nearly six years on the City of Yakima Planning Commission, serving as chair her last two years on the commission.

Click [City Council \(yakimawa.gov\)](http://yakimawa.gov) for more about the Yakima City Council.

AWC serves its members through advocacy, education and services. Founded in 1933, AWC is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan corporation that represents Washington's 281 cities and towns before the state legislature, the state executive branch, and with regulatory agencies.

Click [AWC Home Page \(wacities.org\)](http://wacities.org) for more about AWC.

Briefly...

Emergency declaration extended

During its regular meeting on February 2nd, the Yakima City Council extended an emergency proclamation due to COVID-19. It extends the mayor's declaration through March 2nd.

It allows the city to potentially be eligible for state and federal assistance needed to meet costs associated with the COVID-19 emergency and to make purchases necessary to respond to the emergency without usual procurement procedures.

Mayor Patricia Byers signed the initial emergency declaration March 12, 2020. It took effect immediately.

Under state law, the full Council needed to ratify the declaration in order for it to remain in effect long term. Council did so during a special meeting held March 13, 2020.

Council has since extended the order each month.

Miller Park project continues

An effort to improve the City of Yakima's Miller Park continues.

Community members are partnering with City of Yakima Parks & Recreation on park improvements.

Click [Miller Park Improvement Project \(restoremillerpark.org\)](http://restoremillerpark.org) for more about the project's goals and fundraising efforts.

Center hosts blood drive on Feb. 12

The City of Yakima Harman Center is hosting a Valentine's Blood Drive on Friday, February 12th.

The blood drive is from 11 am to 4 pm.

Call 575-6166 to schedule your appointment for the blood drive.

City seeks input on housing needs

Housing Action Plan survey available in English and Spanish through June

The City of Yakima continues to seek the community's input on housing needs through a survey in English and Spanish.

The City received a \$100,000 grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce to develop a Housing Action Plan (HAP). The survey will assist the City in creating the plan.

"Help us develop a great plan by telling us about your housing needs," said Planning Manager Joseph Calhoun. "This plan will support and encourage new housing production for more housing choices and to address local housing needs."

Click <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YakimaEng> for the survey in English.

Click <https://es.surveymonkey.com/r/YakimaSpan> for the survey in Spanish.

Learn more about the HAP at <https://www.yakimawa.gov/services/planning/hap/>



Work to develop the HAP began in 2020 and will continue through June.

When completed the HAP, with input from the community through the survey, will consider the housing needs of current residents and workforce, as well as projected future population growth.

There are four primary areas of focus:

- Provide more housing types and opportunities within existing neighborhoods

- Home ownership opportunities for low- and moderate-income families
- Housing solutions for seniors and elderly residents
- Temporary and permanent supportive housing for those struggling with homelessness.

To be added to the Planning Division's contact list regarding development of the HAP, please send your email and mailing address to ask.planning@yakimawa.gov

Airport receives new rescue, firefighting apparatus



Staff from the Yakima Airport and Yakima Fire Department received training last month on operating the new aircraft rescue and fire fighting apparatus. It replaces a 1987 fire apparatus.



Yakima Air Terminal-McAllister Field (YKM) is home to a new Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) apparatus.

The purchase price is \$760,898, with another \$208,000 required for apparatus items such as hoses, nozzles, first aid kits, radios, data terminals and firefighter Personal Protective Equipment suits.

"No local tax dollars or City of Yakima general fund dollars were used to acquire the apparatus and the additional items," said Airport Director Rob Peterson. "A grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) covered 90 percent of the total cost. The remaining 10 percent was funded through the Passenger Facility Charge program."

Details about the apparatus include:

- A vehicle gross weight of 54,800 lbs., with the capability to carry up to 1,500 gallons of water/Aqueous Film Forming Foam and 450 lbs. of dry chemical to combat fires.
- It has Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) camera to identify small internal fires while having the capability to produce 750 gallons of water per minute.
- FAA safety standards highlight this apparatus is capable of carrying rescue and firefighting equipment adequate to help combat fires on large aircraft such as a Boeing 737.

The apparatus was ordered last year and delivered last month by Oshkosh Airport Products, LLC. Staff from YKM and the Yakima Fire Department (YFD) received training on the ARFF last month.

It replaces a 1987 Oshkosh T-1500 fire apparatus.

Protecting You. Protecting Us.



Protegiéndote Protegiéndonos



Yakima Air Terminal - McAllister Field



#UseCubreBocaParaVolar

Evite la propagación de COVID-19 usando mascarilla o cubre bocas.

Se proporcionan cubre bocas gratuitas a todos los pasajeros, visitantes y miembros de la comunidad para garantizar el cumplimiento con las leyes federales y estatales.

Las leyes federales y estatales exigen el uso de una mascarilla mientras se encuentre en el edificio de la terminal, el puesto de control de seguridad de pasajeros y en el avión. El incumplimiento puede resultar en la denegación de embarque o remoción.

Negarse a usar una mascarilla es una violación de la ley federal; los pasajeros pueden estar sujetos a sanciones según la ley federal.

flyykm.com

Prevent the spread

Free masks at the
community relations

passenger security
Refusing to wear a

Yakima Airport updates signage

In the month of February, Yakima Air Terminal-McAllister Field updated its signs at the airport reflecting new federal interstate travel mandates requiring masks.

The signs serve as reminders that Yakima Airport offers free masks to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Connect with the City of Yakima

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Airport: | 575-6149 | Parks | 575-6020 |
| Animal Control: | 575-6038 | Planning: | 575-6183 |
| City Clerk: | 575-6000 | * Police: | 575-6200 |
| City Manager: | 575-6000 | Refuse: | 575-6005 |
| Codes/Licenses: | 575-6126 | Streets: | 575-6005 |
| Engineering: | 575-6111 | Transit: | 575-6175 |
| * Fire: | 575-6060 | Utilities: | 575-6080 |
| Human Resources: | 575-6090 | Wastewater: | 575-6077 |
| Legal | 575-6030 | Water/Irrig: | 575-6154 |
| Municipal Court: | 575-3050 | YCTV/YPAC: | 575-6092 |

*** NON-EMERGENCY only. Call 911 in an emergency.**

The City of Yakima *Issues Brief e-Newsletter* is published monthly by the Community Relations Office. Contact Community Relations Specialist John Fannin at 249-6858 or John.Fannin@yakimawa.gov with suggestions for future *Issues Brief* articles.