



City of Yakima

News Release

Subject: Public Market and Food Business Incubator

Contact: Economic Development Manager Sean Hawkins – 575-6274

Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler – 901-1142

Release Date: Friday, August 8th, 2014

Interest in Public Market and Food Business Incubator Being Gauged

The City of Yakima has launched two online surveys to gather input about whether the community would support the idea of creating a space that would be shared by a public market and a food business incubator. A meeting is also scheduled for August 11th specifically to explore the feasibility of a food business incubator and provide community members with a chance to weigh in on the idea. Both the public market concept and the idea of a food business incubator were mentioned as possible economic enhancement elements as part of the Downtown Yakima Master Plan, which was adopted by the Yakima City Council last year.

The surveys can be filled out in either English or Spanish on the City's website at the following link - <http://www.yakimawa.gov/services/economic-development/>. The surveys will remain active until 5:00 pm on Friday, August 29th.

“A public market and a food business incubator are a natural pairing,” said Economic Development Manager Sean Hawkins. “Pike Place Market in Seattle and Pybus Public Market in Wenatchee are good examples of how the concept can work and are at opposite ends of the spectrum when it comes to size. A combined public market and food business incubator is the perfect place for artists, food vendors, specialty products producers, farmers, and other emerging small businesses to meet customers face-to-face, generate sales, and refine their products,” said Hawkins. “A dual market and incubator, which would also include a commercial kitchen, serves the local community as well as acting as a tourist draw.”

The feasibility of a food business incubator in Yakima will be discussed during a **community meeting on Monday, August 11th from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at 901 Pasta** (910 Summitview Avenue, #7). The meeting, hosted by the non-profit Food Artisan Collective of Yakima Valley, will be led by staff from BDS Urban Planning & Design, a Seattle-based firm hired by the City to help refine elements of the Downtown Yakima Master Plan. All potential food business incubator users and businesses that could benefit from a cooperative commercial kitchen are encouraged to attend the meeting.

“The City is continuing to explore ways to enhance the experience of being in Downtown Yakima and to make it an attractive destination,” said Hawkins. “The feedback that comes from both the community meeting on August 11th and the online surveys will play an important role in helping to decide whether a public market and food business incubator should be part of the ongoing effort to reshape and reinvigorate Downtown Yakima.”