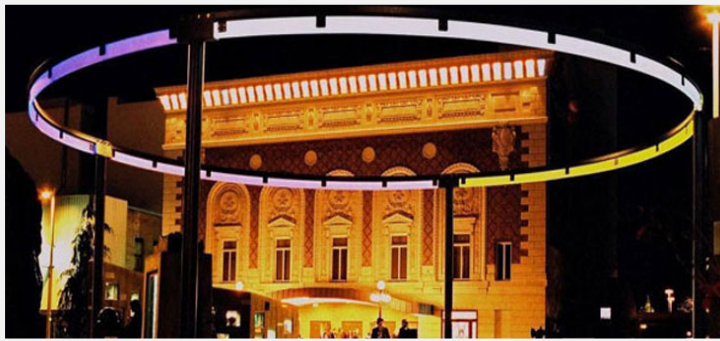


# *City of Yakima*



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*This Strategic Planning document contains the strategies, key initiatives, performance measures, and expected outcomes the City will focus on over the next few years.*

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# City Manager's Introduction



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
129 North Second Street  
CITY HALL, Yakima, Washington 98901  
Phone (509) 575-6040

Dear Mayor and City Council Members:

I am pleased to present to the City Council for final adoption the City of Yakima Strategic Plan based on City Council changes recommended on October 23, 2012. The Strategic Plan is a collaboration of the City Council, City staff, and the community to create a dynamic set of strategies and key intended outcomes to move the community and City organization forward over the next several years.

The foundation of the Strategic Plan is built on the following strategic priorities:

- \*Economic Development
- \*Public Safety
- \*Improve the Built Environment
- \*Public Trust and Accountability
- \*Partnership Development

These Strategic Priorities are the collaborative result of a Citizen Survey and City Council assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the community and organization. The Strategic Plan offers direction and focus on issues that are critically important to improving Yakima. The Plan sets priorities, establishes strategies, and most importantly includes performance measures to monitor and measure Plan progress. The Strategic Plan will require the City Council and staff to consider the Plan when developing policies, delivering city services, preparing the City's budget, developing department business plans, and assessing the performance of the City Manager and staff.

The following critical steps describe how we will move from words to action and ensure alignment of the City's Strategic Plan, departments and staff work plans, policies, and budget.

- \*Each City department will create an annual Business Plan with specific action-oriented goals, work activities, and performance measures to align with and make progress on the Strategic Priorities.
- \*City Council policy initiatives and discussions will focus on the Strategic Priorities.
- \*Senior management and employee performance evaluations will be linked with the Strategic Priorities.
- \*Strategic Priorities performance measures will be monitored and reported on to hold ourselves accountable for making measureable progress in achieving the strategic commitments.
- \*Communicate quarterly to the City Council and annually to the public through a Strategic Plan Progress Report.
- \*Periodically review the Strategic Plan to ensure that it continues to focus City government resources on the issues most important to the community.

Upon adoption, the Plan will be communicated to the community and city staff. Quarterly progress reports will be provided to the City Council and an annual progress report will be provided to the public.

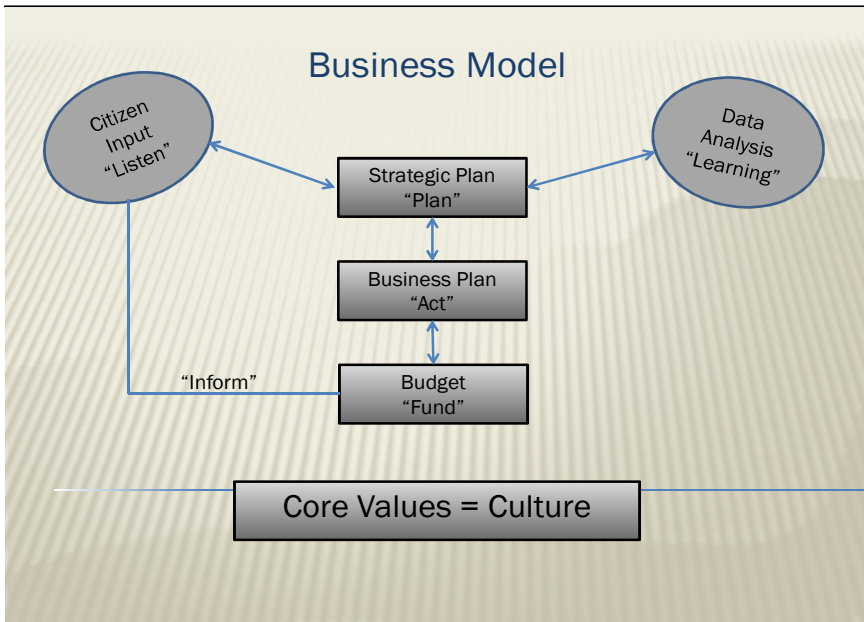
I would like to thank the community, City Council, and staff for having the foresight and dedication required to develop a shared purpose and plan to achieve significant and sustainable success for the City of Yakima.

Sincerely,



# Strategic Planning Process

*“Strategic vision provides direction to both the formulation and execution of strategy. It makes strategy proactive, rather than reactive, about the future. Strategy is the crossover mechanism for moving from the work as forecasted to the work of our vision.” - Colonel Bruce B.G. Clarke*



Understanding the needs of the City's customers is the foundation upon which this Strategic Plan has been developed. The City undertook a variety of processes to assess community needs, interests, and expectations.

The City surveyed the local community, gathered baseline data from which to develop meaningful performance standards, conducted workshops with the City Council to assess strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and conducted a comprehensive strategic planning development review with the City Council.

## COMMUNITY INPUT—"Listening" to the Customer

The City mailed a customized National Citizen Survey to 3,000 Yakima residents in June 2012. The survey provided information to allow the City Council to establish priorities in direct response to the needs of the citizenry. Survey results are highlighted throughout this document.

## DATA ANALYSIS—"Learning" What the Facts Are

Information from various sources was utilized to provide background for the development of the Strategic Priorities and will be utilized to plan and execute initiatives to drive the Strategic Priorities.

## DEVELOPING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

On August 28, 2012, the City Council met and evaluated the information gathered and recognized and validated **"The Case for Change"** had been made to move away from "government as usual" and toward a local government that is customer focused, data driven, and results oriented. Toward this end, the City Council established the five Strategic Priorities identified in this Strategic Plan, which are designed to address the serious economic conditions, meet community expectations, build on the community's strengths and interest in the City, restore the community's trust, and move the City from **recession to recovery**.

# Economic Development

*Through collaboration and partnerships with other public, private, and non-profit entities, the City will aggressively support economic development efforts that will create quality, living wage jobs to ensure a diverse economic base, a resilient and growing City tax base, and long-term economic vitality for the City of Yakima. To move the City economy from recession to recovery, the City will commit to the following initiatives to foster a dynamic and diverse economy for Yakima.*

## **STRATEGIES**

1. Build upon our existing signature businesses and industries by attracting complimentary business clusters in healthcare, business and professional services, industrial machinery, food processing and distribution to expand and strengthen the local economy.
2. Continue the physical revitalization of the City to promote a strong first impression and community attractiveness to businesses.
3. Build on the community's history, heritage, natural resources, and livability to promote Yakima as a tourist and business destination.
4. Collaborate with downtown businesses to foster the growth and enhancement of the downtown as a destination through development of a Downtown Master Plan, enhanced public safety, customer-friendly parking, marketing, additional special events, an attractive physical environment, pedestrian-oriented design standards, and review of regulations to encourage investment while ensuring health and safety.
5. Execute a plan for the environmental restoration of the Mill Site along with consolidated ownership and infrastructure improvements to position the Mill district site as a prime economic development site for private sector development.
6. Develop a partnership with the Yakima Airport Board and Yakima County to optimize business development, capital improvements, and additional commercial air service at the Yakima Airport.
7. Community arts, culture, and recreational opportunities are valued by both residents and prospective employers as a measure of the community's quality of life. Accordingly, these sectors of the community must be enhanced.
8. Increase City involvement and partnerships with the Chamber, Hispanic Chambers, Visitors & Convention Bureau, Rural Community Development Resources, Central Washington State Fair Board, Capitol Theatre, and New Vision to stimulate economic development.
9. Solidify Yakima's reputation as the Gateway to Washington Wine Country with the development of boutique hotels, tours, and wine tasting rooms.
10. Ensure a balanced regulatory environment that facilitates business retention and growth.

## **PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

	<b>Current</b>	<b>2013</b>
Increase the citizen survey rating of those who rate the City's employment opportunities as excellent/good	15%	18%
Lower unemployment rate	10%	9%
Increase number of business licenses	6,176	6,300
Increase annual sales tax growth	5%	1.5%
Increase annual lodging tax growth	3.2%	1.5%
Increase the citizen survey rating of those who feel safe in the downtown after dark	23%	30%

# Public Safety

*The City is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for its residents, businesses, and visitors. However, random acts of gang violence, property crime, and auto theft have created growing concerns about public safety in Yakima. To ensure healthy and vital neighborhoods free of crime, the City needs to increase its community based partnerships in crime prevention, fire and life safety, code inspection, preparedness, and community policing. To that end, we are committed to the following initiatives.*

## **STRATEGIES**

1. Promote and increase community based partnerships in crime prevention through:
  - Neighborhood Block Watch
  - Crime Stoppers
  - Neighborhood Associations
  - Schools
  - Businesses
  - Citizens for Safe Communities
  - Service Clubs
2. Ensure appropriate service levels for public safety services as the community population grows.
3. Explore the most cost-effective jail expansion opportunities.
4. Proactively address gang violence through Gang Free Initiative strategies.
5. Reestablish fire code inspection program of all 4,000 commercial structures in the City.
6. Develop a Citizens Police Academy and expand Police Explorer and Reserve Officer programs.
7. Enhance downtown safety by operating visible and routine police bike and foot patrols.
8. Establish an effective graffiti abatement program focused on notification, clean-up, investigation, and enforcement.
9. Improve neighborhood safety by installing more street lights along arterial streets and poorly lighted areas.
10. Strengthen cooperation and partnership with Yakima County Sheriff's Office.

## **PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

	<b>Current</b>	<b>2013</b>
Citizen rating of safety in their neighborhood after dark (very safe/somewhat safe)	50%	55%
Citizen rating of safety in downtown after dark (very safe/somewhat safe)	23%	28%
Crime prevention citizen rating (excellent/good)	23%	28%
Violent crime rating (very safe/somewhat safe)	26%	30%
Property crime rating (very safe/somewhat safe)	17%	20%
Fire response travel time under five minutes	90%	90%
Fire department rating (excellent/good)	84%	86%
Police department citizen rating (excellent/good)	54%	57%
Number of commercial structures inspected	0%	3,000+
Percent of robberies per 1,000 residents (UCR 1) / crimes cleared	1.81 / 33%	1.79 / 35%
Citizen rating of police contact (excellent/good)	50%	55%
Percent of burglaries per 1,000 residents (UCR) / crimes cleared	17.7 / 7%	17.5 / 9%
Contain all fires to the area of origin 86% of the time after fire dept. arrival	No data	86%

# Public Trust & Accountability



Based on the 2012 Yakima Citizen Survey, the residents and businesses of Yakima want a City government that delivers higher value and quality in City services. They have also made it clear they want to be more informed and engaged in solving this community's problems and setting its future course. Listening to and responding to the concerns of citizens fosters mutual trust and cooperation. They also want accountability and accessibility from our City leaders as they make decisions that will affect the lives of current and future generations in Yakima.

To achieve greater public trust and accountability, the City is committed to increased citizen information, involvement, and delivering exceptional and meaningful results. To achieve this we pledge to doing the following.

**Residents of the City of Yakima gave the highest evaluations to City government when asked to rate services provided by Local, State, and Federal Government**

## STRATEGIES

1. Create and implement a comprehensive Public Communication Strategy and function to inform and encourage participation in civic affairs for the entire community.

- Monthly electronic newsletter
- Annual State of the City report
- Budget-in-Brief report
- Enhanced web site
- Social media outreach

2. Enhance public engagement in the City by:

- Supporting more community events
- Celebrating the community's rich history and heritage
- Conducting community surveys/focus groups
- Leveraging media partnerships
- \*Promoting volunteer opportunities (e.g. Block Watch, etc.)

3. Increase citizen involvement through the creation of volunteer opportunities, such as:

- Code Enforcement Rangers
- Neighborhood clean-up days
- Block Watch
- Crime Stoppers
- Partners in Parks
- \*High School service projects

# Public Trust & Accountability (con't)

## STRATEGIES (con't)

4. Create a 24-hour online and voicemail service to receive citizen concerns, ideas, and suggestions. The City will respond to all inquiries within 48-hours.
5. Ensure the public the City is a wise steward of the public's resources by "living within our means" and restructuring the organization's business model for long-term fiscal sustainability and improved customer satisfaction.
6. Invest in the City's appearance and infrastructure.
7. Maintain a minimum 16% general fund operating reserve for valid financial emergencies and one-time capital expenses.
8. Optimize City services by identifying long-term cost savings and cost containment opportunities, including:
  - Managed competition
  - Consolidation
  - Joint partnerships
  - Operational efficiencies
  - Level of service adjustments
9. Adopt written financial management policies concerning revenues, debt, capital improvements and fund depreciation to reduce debt burden for vehicle and technology replacements.
10. Develop balanced five-year financial plan forecasts.
11. Prioritize programs and services based on the City Strategic Plan priorities.
12. Operate within budgeted expenses 100% of the time.
13. Construct capital improvements on time and within budget.
14. Implement a Financial Trend Monitoring System comparing key financial and economic indicators as an "early warning system" regarding the financial and economic health of the City.
15. Evaluate customer satisfaction with City services on a regular basis and implement appropriate service improvements.

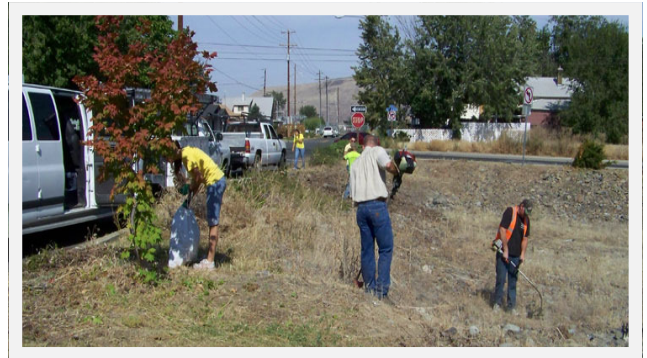
PERFORMANCE MEASURES	Current	2013
Improve citizen excellent/good rating on direction City is taking	28%	32%
Improve citizen excellent/good rating on the value of services for taxes paid	27%	31%
Improve citizen excellent/good rating of services provided by the City	45%	50%
Conduct annual citizen survey	Yes	Yes
Improve citizen rating of City welcoming citizen involvement	30%	35%
Maintain general fund operating reserve balance as percentage of general fund expenses	16%	17%
Percentage of citizens who volunteer to some group or activity	54%	57%
Improve citizen opportunities to participate in community matters	45%	50%
Provide annual State of the City report	No	Yes
Increase percentage of citizens who visit the City's website	36%	40%
Improve citizens rating of City public information services	48%	52%



# Partnership Development

The City of Yakima will build cooperative and reciprocal partnerships with local, regional, state, federal, non-profit, and private entities to enhance the vitality and quality of life of City residents, businesses and guests to leverage resources with other organizations to accomplish what the City otherwise couldn't.

- Work with Yakima County, State of Washington, and Federal Government to secure funding and approval for necessary transportation and infrastructure improvements to enhance access to the Mill Site.
- Create a legislative and administrative strategy and partnership with the Association of Washington Cities, State and Federal legislative delegations and administrative agency staff to address City needs and opportunities.



**LDS volunteers during a community cleanup**

- Partner with private, public, and non-profit organizations in creating more downtown Yakima events and activities that enhance community and downtown engagement, inclusion, and pride.
- Create a Yakima Cleanup and Revitalization Effort (CARE) community partnership with faith-based organizations, service clubs, and neighborhood associations to improve Yakima's appearance and vitality.
- Partner with the Downtown Merchants, Capitol Theatre, Visitors & Convention Bureau, Central Washington State Fair Board, and media in creating more community events and activities that foster more community and downtown engagement, involvement, and pride.
- Partner with the Hispanic and Latino communities to address the needs and expectations of the growing Hispanic/Latino population in the community.
- Partner with Yakima County and support funding of the Yakima River Basin Plan.
- Collaborate with the Gang Free Initiative in eradicating gang violence.
- Create neighborhood service teams to provide residents and businesses the opportunity to partner with City operations and departments including police, fire, public works, community development, parks and recreation, and code enforcement in addressing neighborhood concerns and opportunities for improvement.
- Enhance volunteer opportunities for community groups.
- Ensure the City Council is represented and/or meets regularly with the governing board of the following Yakima organizations:
  - Yakima County
  - Yakima School District
  - Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce
  - Capitol Theatre
  - Central Washington State Fair Board
  - Memorial Hospital
  - Yakima Valley Community College
  - Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (Yakima County and Central WA)
  - YCDA—New Vision
  - Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences
  - Heritage University
  - Yakima Regional Hospital
  - Service Clubs
  - Sister City program

# Partnership Development (con't)

*"Our success has really been based on partnerships from the very beginning" - Bill Gates*

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Current

2013

Establish Yakima Cleanup and Revitalization (CARE) program	No	Yes
Create legislative/administrative strategy for state and federal issues	No	Yes
Create downtown event partnerships	0	5
Create Neighborhood Service Teams	0	3
Create park improvement partnerships	No	Yes
Secure federal and/or state funds for Mill Site	No	Yes

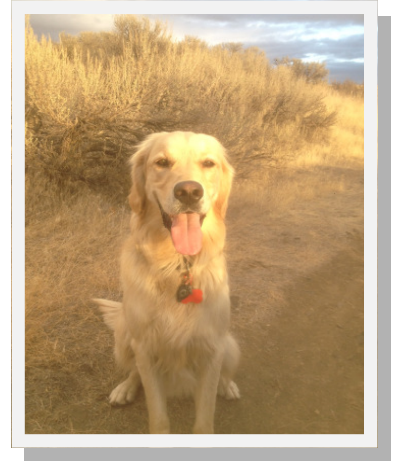


**Dignitaries cut the ribbon during opening ceremonies  
for new ball fields at Kiwanis Park**

# Improve the Built Environment

*The City's overall appearance and infrastructure are critical components of the public's perception of the community's quality and vitality. The current physical environment does not meet the public's expectation. The restoration of the built environment is a necessity. There is a compelling need to resolve and unify the visual quality of the community, as well as, ensure the provision and maintenance of essential infrastructure.*

- Jump start investment in City roads with a \$5 million bond issue in fiscal year 2013.
- Invest annually to improve City roads subject to a special election to consider a car tab fee to generate dedicated funds for City road improvements.
- Enhance the appearance of the City through:
  - Community-based clean-up programs
  - Volunteer code enforcement rangers
  - New downtown design and signage standards
  - Comprehensive graffiti abatement program
  - Business facade and streetscape improvements
- Create a strong first impression of the City through entry statements at key City entrances off of US Hwy.12 and I-82.
- Create Neighborhood Service Teams consisting of all City operational departments. and neighborhood associations to enhance neighborhood appearance and community pride.
- Enforce signage and code standards to ensure the aesthetics, integrity, and safety of the City. Review and streamline existing City codes related to appearance and signage.
- Leverage a partnership with the Cowiche Canyon Conservancy, Yakima Greenway, and other community organizations to create more bike and hiking paths.
- Maintain and support public infrastructure facilities for drinking water, irrigation, sewer service, and sewer capacity.



**Murphy in Cowiche Canyon**

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	Current	2013
Improve citizen rating of the <b>City's overall appearance</b> as excellent/good	29%	32%
Improve resident rating of the <b>City's cleanliness</b> as excellent/good	31%	35%
Improve citizen rating of <b>City's code enforcement</b> as excellent/good	15%	20%
Create new downtown design standards	No	Yes
Improve citizen rating of <b>City streets</b> as excellent/good	21%	25%
Expand existing bike and hike paths—Phase 1 right-of-way acquisition	0	10 miles
Increase the lane miles of roads overlaid	0	28 miles