

# DOWNTOWN YAKIMA – RETAIL SWOT ASSESSMENT

## STRENGTHS

- + Downtown Yakima is a core area for business, government and as an employment centre.
- + Downtown has some significant architectural heritage that will contribute to its attractiveness for retail investment.
- + A variety of food and beverage outlets already operate in Downtown Yakima suggesting appeal for downtown dining.
- + Good accessibility to larger cities including Seattle and Portland, with journey times of two and three hours, respectively.
- + Yakima Avenue provides Downtown Yakima with excellent visibility for street retail.
- + Yakima is emerging as a high quality wine making region that is attracting international attention and tourism potential.
- + Recent urban design improvements have enhanced Downtown Yakima's retail environment (eg. Performance Square, pocket parks and plazas).

## OPPORTUNITIES

- + Yakima Mall presents good redevelopment opportunity.
- + Yakima's growing status as a wine tourism destination is an opportunity for attracting additional investment into the Downtown retail landscape.
- + Vacant lots and buildings immediately available for occupancy.
- + Downtown Yakima Committee has initiated support for Downtown improvements and maintenance
- + Recent new developments, such as Orion Theatre and a newly completed mixed use development in the Downtown will provide additional attraction and contribute to injecting increased demand in Downtown retail.

## WEAKNESSES

- High number of empty shops, particularly along Yakima Avenue.
- Lack of cohesive identity to Downtown Yakima.
- Limited selection of comparison retail and national brands in downtown.
- Significantly lower than average per capita income than Washington.
- Yakima Avenue traffic volumes and flow could pose conflicts with increase in pedestrian and street level retail activity.
- Lack of upscale hotels within Yakima contributes to tourist leakage to other locations.
- Retail environment in Yakima is widely dispersed over a wide area which encourages car use.
- Downtown core is peppered with a number of large blocks of industrial/institutional developments and car parks that disrupt a tightknit cohesive retail environment.

## THREATS

- Proposed Boise Cascade Mill Development as a lifestyle centre could compete directly with Downtown Yakima.
- Other cities such as Walla Walla, Tri Cities and Spokane have a strong tourist draw and detract interest away from Yakima.
- Construction of new retail developments in primary trade area would threaten Downtown Yakima.
- Seasonal nature of tourism presents challenge to local businesses.

# YAKIMA RETAIL SUPPLY

## Competitive Map

The Yakima Retail Supply map as seen to the right denotes 5 colour codes;

**Fuchsia** - Supermarkets

**Green**- Big Box Retailers

**Yellow**- Entertainment Centres

**Orange**- Valley Mall

**Turquoise**- Neighbourhood Centres

The majority of Yakima's retail supply is made up of automobile dependent retailers, such as big box stores, neighbourhood strip malls and the primary comparison retail destination, Valley Mall.



# YAKIMA RETAIL SUPPLY

## Downtown Yakima Retail

The map to the right denotes the existing retail within Downtown Yakima. The highlighted area shows both the study area and the study influence area.

Existing retail has been divided into five categories;

**Fuchsia** – Mixed Use

**Green**- Comparison

**Pink** – Convenience

**Red**- Food & Beverage

**Turquoise**- Services

Stores and services are concentrated along Yakima Avenue, with two distinct precincts;

-An antique/ home wear district, shown highlighted on the left of the map.

-A food and beverage centre shown on the right of the map, consisting of a variety of primarily independent outlets.

