

1.0 PLAN FOUNDATION AND VISION

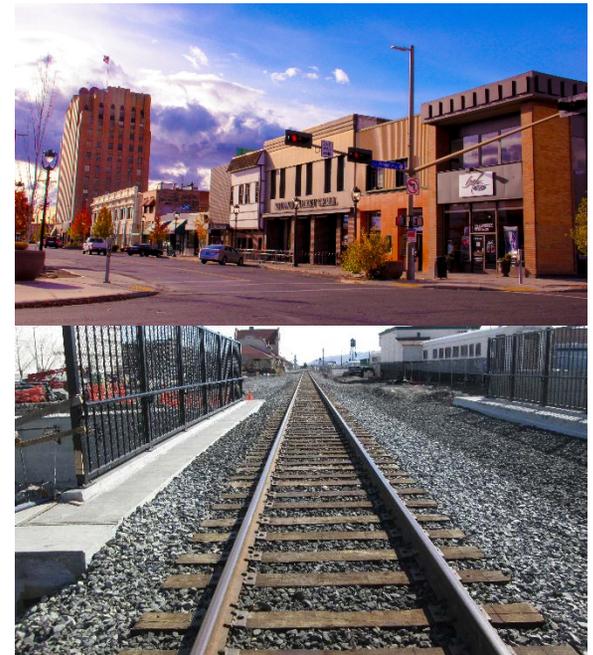
1.1 Purpose of this Comprehensive Plan

This Comprehensive Plan guides Yakima’s physical development over the 2017-2040 period. It describes community values, directs municipal activities and services, and provides a statement of policy about Yakima City’s desires for growth and character.

This 2017 Comprehensive Plan fulfils the periodic review requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA; RCW 36.70A) and replaces the 2006 Comprehensive Plan and associated annual amendments.

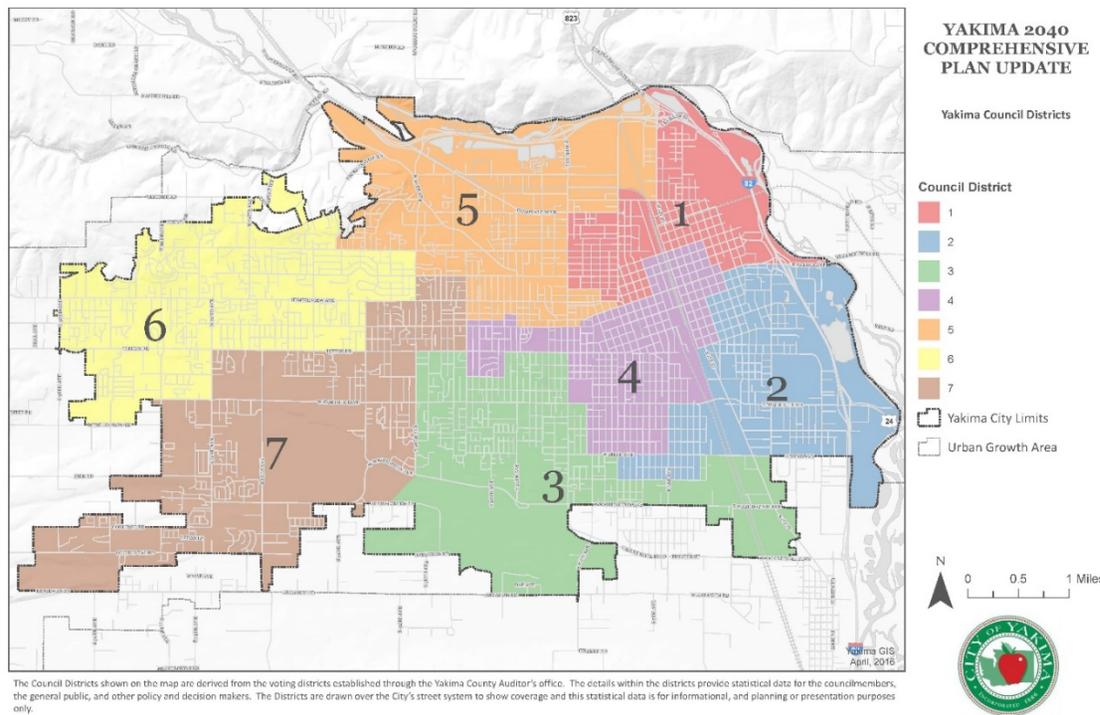
1.2 Yakima’s Planning Area – Past and Future

Yakima City was incorporated in 1883 with **XX acres**. About a year later, a dispute between land owners and the Northern Pacific Railway Company led the railroad to establish a new town about 4 miles north of the original site. More than 100 buildings were moved. The new town was called North Yakima and was officially incorporated in 1886. The old town was then renamed Union Gap. The Washington State Legislature officially renamed the city “Yakima” in 1918. ((City of Yakima, 2016); (Becker, 20016))



Today, Yakima’s city limits encompass 27.16 square miles or about 17,385 acres. (Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2016) See Exhibit 1-1.

Exhibit 1-1. Yakima Council Districts



*Yakima Town Site 1886
Historic Downtown Yakima (year)*

Source: City of Yakima GIS 2016

The City of Yakima has been assigned an Urban Growth Area (UGA) by Yakima County consisting of unincorporated land suited for urban development due to present urban patterns or ability to serve urban development in the future. The focus of the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations is the

Yakima incorporated city limits. Yakima County is planning for the Yakima UGA in consultation with the City of Yakima.

Exhibit 1-2. Yakima UGA and City Limits Map [Reserved]

Growth Management Act Goals

State goals guide the City's comprehensive plan and development regulations. These goals address in summary:

- Guide growth in urban areas
- Reduce sprawl
- Protect rural character
- Encourage an efficient multimodal transportation system
- Encourage a variety of housing types including affordable housing
- Promote economic development
- Recognize property rights
- Ensure timely and fair permit procedures
- Protect agricultural, forest, and mineral lands
- Retain and enhance open space
- Support parks and recreation
- Protect the environment
- Ensure adequate public facilities and services
- Encourage historic preservation
- Foster citizen participation

1.3 We are Yakima

Our People

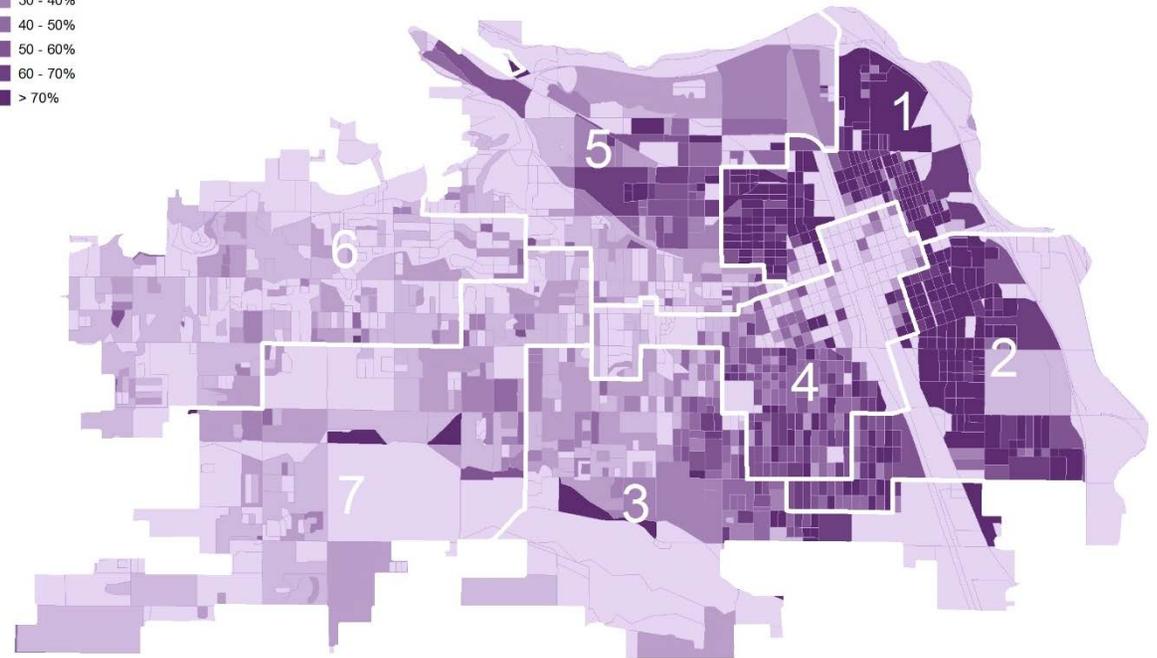
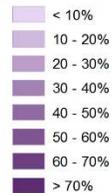
This Comprehensive Plan serves the needs of the Yakima community today and through 2040. The plan is designed to build on community strengths and assets, and guide growth and public investments that advance Yakima as an inclusive and prosperous place.

Yakima's people are its strength. The City is ranked 11th in the state in total city population. Yakima is due to take 25% of the future county growth. Yakima can be a leader in the region. See population information in the next section. *Our Land Use, Element promotes equitable and sustainable development that brings housing and job opportunities. These opportunities are supported by our Capital Facilities, Transportation, and Parks Elements that promote investments in quality parks, multimodal transportation, and infrastructure.*

Yakima is diverse. Yakima has become more diverse, growing from 34 percent Hispanic in 2000 to 41 percent Hispanic in 2010. About 79 percent of Yakima's growth in population between 2010 and 2014 was Hispanic, with overall Hispanic population making up 44 percent of the City in 2014. Based on 2010 Census blocks the figure at right shows the percent of blocks with Hispanic population. While found in all parts of Yakima, eastern Yakima has a concentration of Hispanic residents. *The Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Historic Elements include policies that promote the cultural needs of the whole community.*

A majority of Yakima households have no children. Over half of the City's households have single or coupled adults and no children as of 2014. *The Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Housing Elements encourage a variety of home sizes and styles to meet the needs of small households.*

Percent Hispanic
(2010 Census Blocks)



Yakima is a community for the young and old. The City’s population is getting older on average, with more retirees than any other community in the County. Yet, the City is also seeing an increasing number of children, particularly in east Yakima. Both seniors and children grew by 5 percent between 2000 and 2010 citywide. *The Comprehensive Plan Housing Element addresses housing and services for seniors such as aging in place, health, and mobility.*

The City of Yakima has the most persons with a disability in the county. The City of Yakima has the most persons with a disability in the county at 13,897, and the second highest share of the population at 15.3 percent, behind Union Gap as of 2014. *The Housing Element includes policies regarding universal design of housing and supportive services to meet the needs of this population; the Transportation Element addresses multiple modes to promote the mobility of all abilities.*

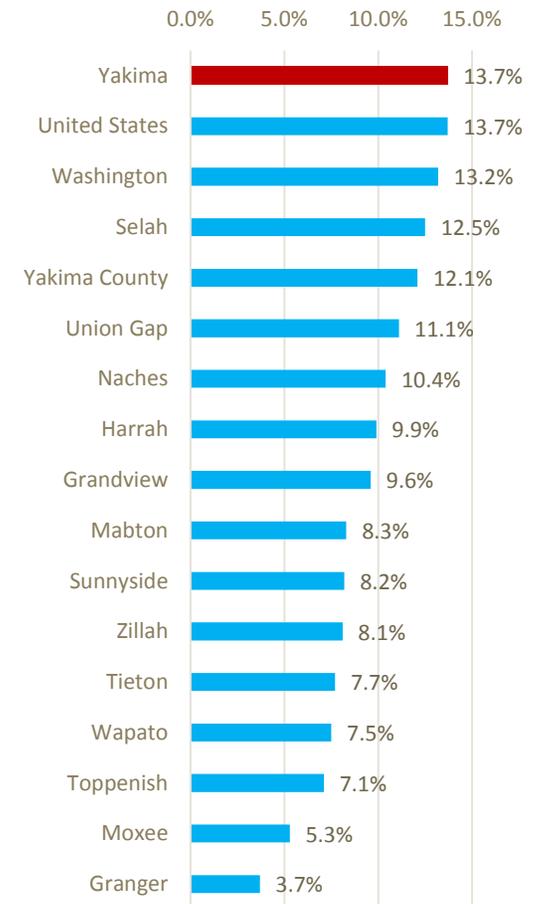
Yakima residents earn lower incomes. Based on 2014 information, Yakima’s median household income is 27% lower than the State median income. About 22.8% of the City’s population earns incomes below the federal poverty level, higher than the state as a whole at 13.5%. *New opportunities for family wage jobs through appropriate zoning and capital investments, and partnerships with agencies that provide workforce training, are part of the Land Use and Economic Development Elements.*

Nearly half of Yakima’s homeowners are cost burdened and nearly one third of renters are cost burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing and earning at low and moderate incomes as of 2012. *Considering how family wage jobs can be attracted to the community, and providing a range of housing opportunities can address some of the hurdles faced by households; see the Economic Development and Housing Elements.*

Yakima residents have a lower rate of achieving higher education. About 17.3 percent residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher compared to the State level at 32.3 percent or the US at 29.3 percent. (ACS, 2014) *Coordinating with higher education providers and determining appropriate supportive services is part of the Economic Development and Capital Facility Plan Elements.*

The City’s jobs are diverse. The City contains 40,390 jobs as of 2014. Top sectors include health care, retail, agriculture, and manufacturing. Jobs are concentrated in the Downtown and near US 12. *Investing in redevelopment such as the Cascade Mill Site, supporting a unique retail experience in Downtown, expanding the Airport, and other activities will be important to catalyzing job opportunities. Planning for*

Aged 65 and Older (2014)



capital facilities and infrastructure and supporting partnerships in workforce training are other important City activities. See the Land Use, Economic Development, Historic, and Capital Facilities Elements.

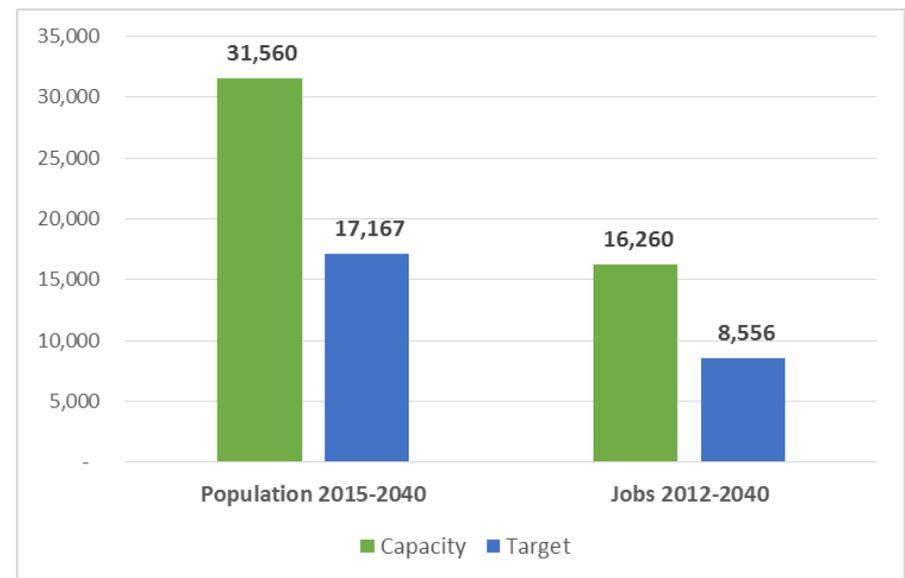
Our Future Growth

Yakima is the most populous city in the County, and the County Seat. In 2016, there were 93,410 residents in Yakima, which is a 30 percent increase in population since 2000 at 71,845 people. (OFM, 2016) Some of the growth has been due to annexations. The compound annual growth rate between 2000 and 2010 was 2.4 percent, which slowed to 0.4 percent between 2010 and 2015.

The Comprehensive Plan addresses a 20-year planning period and must demonstrate an ability to accommodate future growth targets adopted in the Countywide Planning Policies. Based on collaborative planning with the County, the City of Yakima is due to take 25% of the future growth. The City growth targets would mean 17,167 new persons and 8,556 jobs between now and 2040.

The City has more than adequate capacity to meet its growth targets at almost double the allocated population and jobs. Exhibit 3-15 shows the citywide capacity for additional housing units, population, and jobs under 2016 land use designations and zoning districts. Alternative land use plans are studied in the integrated EIS and similarly show greater capacity above growth targets. (Appendix X)

Exhibit 3-3. Population and Jobs Capacity and Targets 2016



1.4 Comprehensive Plan Inclusive Public Outreach and Engagement

In May 2015, the City Council adopted a Resolution endorsing the Comprehensive Plan 2040 Horizon—Public Participation Plan, in which the City laid out a collaborative effort to engage the public, businesses, governmental agencies, and other interested groups. The City website, public postings, community events, public meetings, and workshops have been used to reach out to interested parties and get them involved in the process.

In January 2016, the City began to implement the plan with a more specific set of strategies. Outreach strategies were carried out in four phases. They include:

- **Phase 1 Building Awareness** focused on creating a dedicated web page and developing outreach materials and tools while also spreading the word on upcoming outreach activities and ways to participate. The City's dedicated website is: <https://www.yakimawa.gov/services/planning/comprehensive-plan-update/>. "We are Yakima" became the theme of the Update.
- **Phase 2 Visioning** focused on public comment and feedback on Yakima's vision statement. A City Council workshop, public workshop, and online survey were conducted over February and March 2016, and results posted on the City's website. In May 2016, a Planning Commission hosted public open house and workshop addressed the Vision Statement and Land Use Plan. The key themes of visioning are identified in Section 1.5 below.
- **Phase 3 Draft Plan** has collected feedback and comments on the draft plan update. The Planning Commission has held continuous study sessions on the Land Use Plan and various Preliminary Plan Elements between May and November 2016. **A full release of the Draft Plan occurred in December 2016 with a 60-day comment period.**
- **Phase 4 Proposed Plan** involves the Planning Commission and City Council public hearings and deliberations to help wrap up the update process. This is scheduled for the first half of 2017. Plan adoption is due by June 30, 2017.



1.5 Yakima Comprehensive Plan Vision and Values

The process of developing a new vision for Yakima involved the engagement of residents and employees throughout the City over a five month period in the winter-spring of 2016. Open houses, public meetings, social media, and surveys, provided opportunities for the community to comment on assets and challenges and define what they desire for Yakima in 2040.

At the February 23, 2016 Visioning Open House, vision themes included:

- A **thriving and vibrant** city.
- Yakima as a place where **tourists and visitors** want to stop to wine taste, shop, eat and enjoy downtown and the City of Yakima as a **gateway to the Yakima Valley**.
- A place that is framed by **natural beauty** and **agricultural vistas**.
- A city that is **family friendly** with **good public spaces** and **quality education** for children.
- A place that provides many ways to be **active and healthy** as **young or old residents**, including walking, biking, entertainment, greenways, fishing, access to healthy food, etc.
- A city with a more **diverse economy** with job opportunities in a variety of industries, including tech.
- A **downtown** with more retail shops, restaurants, and the Yakima Central Plaza.
- **Streetscapes and public** areas that are **historic, revitalized**, and attractive.
- A city that is **inclusive to all types of residents** with **different cultures** and backgrounds.

An online vision survey with 185 participants elicited the following key goals most important for inclusion in the 20-year vision statement: **quality of life, a prosperous community, a healthy economy, and safe neighborhoods**.

The Planning Commission reviewed the outreach results and hosted a public workshop on May 25, 2016 and offered direction on the vision statement.

The City of Yakima is growing larger and more diverse. As Yakima progresses, the following vision will help our community achieve the livability, prosperity, and inclusiveness that it desires.



- **Youth and Family** – Our plan is a roadmap to a high quality of life for our youth and families. We seek to have:
 - ❖ A strong partnership with our schools.
 - ❖ Places that promote healthy and active lifestyles.
 - ❖ Opportunities for entertainment and recreation for both young and old.
 - ❖ Quality job and housing opportunities to ensure our children can be lifelong residents of Yakima.
- **Being A Unique Destination** – Yakima is a unique destination. We strive for:
 - ❖ A vibrant and revitalized historic downtown that retains long-standing businesses and attracts new businesses and residents.
 - ❖ Maximizing tourism and retail opportunities.
 - ❖ Providing attractive spaces and public art.
- **Neighborhoods** – Yakima’s neighborhoods are attractive places to live, shop and play, offering:
 - ❖ A hierarchy of commercial and mixed use centers.
 - ❖ Attractive streetscapes and well-designed public and private recreation and open spaces.
 - ❖ Historic character.
 - ❖ Diverse housing choices for owners and renters.
 - ❖ Preserved homes that have been rehabilitated and maintained.
 - ❖ A spirit of friendliness where neighbors gather for celebrations, clean-up events, and block watches.
 - ❖ A development pattern that promotes public safety and deters crime through environmental design.
 - ❖ Growth managed with transitions in density and building design, landscaping, and adequate infrastructure.



- **Natural Beauty** – The natural beauty of the river valleys and agricultural vistas frame Yakima. We will be stewards of our natural resources by:
 - ❖ Protecting the ecological resources of our region.
 - ❖ Maintaining and expand the Yakima Greenway.
 - ❖ Encouraging sustainable design of development.
- **A Prosperous Future** – Yakima creates a thriving and vibrant community. We will encourage:
 - ❖ A diverse economy that sustains and attracts a variety of business sectors including agriculture, health care, manufacturing, tourism, new energy and others.
 - ❖ Small local businesses.
 - ❖ Targeted investments in capital facilities.
 - ❖ Partnerships with higher education providers to support workforce training to attract new employers.
- **Connectivity** – We offer a range of transportation modes, and our community is connected. Our transportation system will:
 - ❖ Maintain and create a complete street network, including new multimodal connections.
 - ❖ Ensure efficient and balanced movement of freight and goods through the community.
 - ❖ Improve safety throughout the system.



1.6 Using this Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan Vision and Framework Goals are carried forward into each Plan Element with topic-specific goals and policies. Since there are complex issues around land use, growth, public infrastructure investments, and services, this Comprehensive Plan is divided into the following elements:

Plan Foundation and Vision

Elements

- Land Use ¹
- Economic Development ²
- Housing ¹
- Transportation ¹
- Capital Facilities ¹
- Utilities ¹
- Parks and Recreation ²

- Natural Environment ¹
- Shoreline ¹
- Energy ³
- Historic Preservation ³

Appendices

Capital Facilities Plan

Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Each Element summarizes key conditions and trends that are driving policy proposals. Each Element includes **goals** – or broad aims – and **policies** – principle, protocol, or proposal for action – relevant to addressing a condition or trend. Goals and policies in turn are implemented by specific regulations and programs. The goals, policies, regulations, and programs are designed to encourage outcomes that meet the City’s Vision.

An Existing Conditions Report was prepared and is adopted by reference, providing a base of information to support the preparation of the Yakima Comprehensive Plan and integrated State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

Terms

- **Vision:** A community’s best desired future.
- **Value:** A standard or judgment of what is important for the community.
- **Goal:** A broad, general statement of the desired long-term future state or outcome, toward which the Plan aims. Goals indicate what ought to exist in a community or what is desired to be achieved in the future.
- **Policy:** A principle, protocol, or proposal for action that implements a related goal. Decision-oriented statements that guide the legislative or administrative body while evaluating a new project or proposed change in ordinance.
- **Regulation:** A rule or directive found in City ordinances or the municipal code.
- **Program:** Ongoing delivery of municipal services to the public, funded with the municipal budget, or public investments guided by a capital improvement strategy.

Notes:

¹ Required by GMA or other state law.

² Required when the state provides funding; though funding is not available these elements help Yakima seek grants.

³ Optional.

1.7 Amending the Comprehensive Plan

This Comprehensive Plan will evolve and be reviewed and revised over the next 20 years due to changes desired by the community, trends, and information. The Growth Management Act limits Comprehensive Plan amendments to no more than once per calendar year, except for certain exemptions and emergency actions. Whenever the plan is amended it is important to verify that it is “internally consistent” and that development regulations are consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan.