



1 Plan Foundation

1.1 Purpose of this Comprehensive Plan

This Comprehensive Plan guides Yakima’s physical development over the 2026-2046 period. It describes community values, directs municipal activities and services, and provides policy direction about Yakima’s desire for growth and character. This 2026 Comprehensive Plan fulfills the periodic review requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA; RCW 36.70A) and replaces the 2017 Comprehensive Plan and associated annual amendments.

1.2 Chapter Overview

The Comprehensive Plan includes plan elements required under the GMA, and additional elements to reflect the unique vision and priorities of Yakima. It includes Land Use, Housing, Historic Preservation, Economic Development, Transportation, Capital Facilities, Utilities, Parks and Recreation, Natural Environment, Shoreline, and Energy Elements in individual chapters. Each chapter includes goals and policies. Climate Element required under the GMA is integrated throughout the document. Each element includes goals and policies.





LAND USE

- Balanced growth between various uses and natural environment
- Land for future needs, varied uses and housing densities
- Economic vitality of downtown and mixed-use centers



HOUSING

- Various housing types for all income groups, families, individuals, special needs
- Preservation and maintenance; prevention of displacement and discrimination



HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- Preservation of Yakima’s history and culture
- Details in the Historic Preservation Plan
- Rehabilitation and heritage projection in downtown Yakima



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Quality and well-paid jobs for Yakima’s economy
- Promotion on businesses from diverse sectors



TRANSPORTATION

- Safe, efficient and reliable multimodal transportation
- Multimodal levels of service
- Consistency with land use plan



CAPITAL FACILITIES

- Public facilities and services to improve quality of life
- Accommodating future growth
- Financing of facilities through capital budget

Growth Management Act Goals

State goals guide the City’s comprehensive plan and development regulations:

- Guide growth in urban areas
- Reduce sprawl
- Encourage an efficient multi-modal transportation system
- Encourage a variety of affordable housing types
- Promote economic development
- Protect property rights
- Ensure timely and fair permit procedures
- Protect agricultural, forest, and mineral lands
- Retain and enhance open space, protect habitat and develop parks and recreation
- Protect the environment
- Foster citizen participation
- Ensure adequate public facilities and services
- Encourage historic preservation
- Adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate
- Integrate shoreline master program (SMP) goals and policies





UTILITIES

- Collaboration with non-city owned utilities
- Safe, reliable and resilient services



PARKS & RECREATION

- Consistency with 2022-2027 Parks and Recreation Division Comprehensive Plan
- Maintenance of existing, and plan for future park facilities



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Natural environment and critical areas protection
- Protection of infrastructure, and life and safety of the community



SHORELINE

- Compliance with the Shoreline Management Act
- Protection of Yakima's shoreline, uses, access and activities



ENERGY

- Sustainable and affordable energy sources
- Efficiency and conservation of energy



CLIMATE

- Climate resilience integrated with all elements
- Resiliency against climate related hazards
- Protection of assets

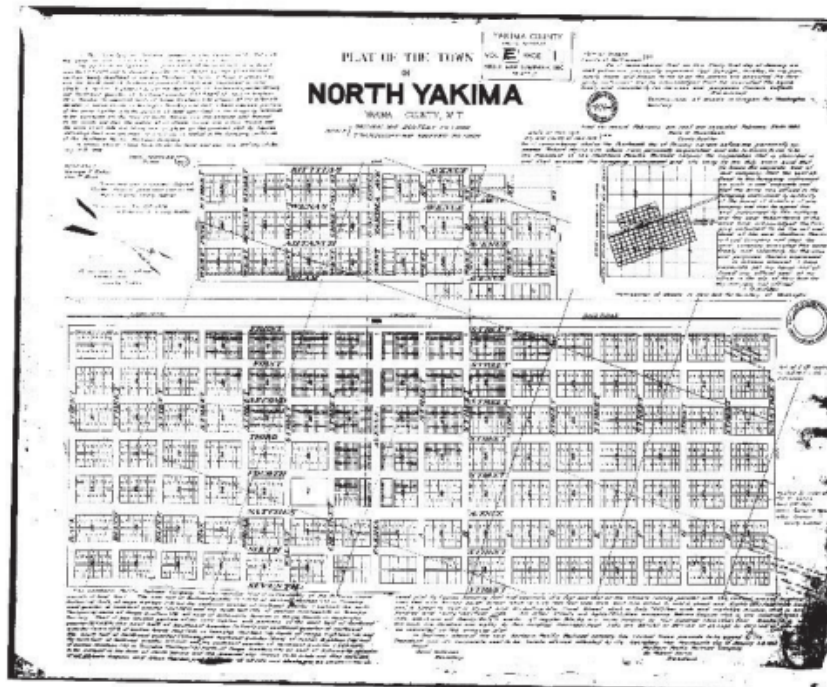




1.3 Yakima’s Planning Area - Past and Future

The City of Yakima was incorporated in 1883. 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 created by the “Plat of the Town of North Yakima” in June 1885 by the Northern Pacific Railroad Company (see Exhibit 1-1). These 136 blocks and streets, alleys, and railroad corridors were 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, 2016)

Exhibit 1-1 Original Plat of the Town of North Yakima



Source: City of Yakima, 1885



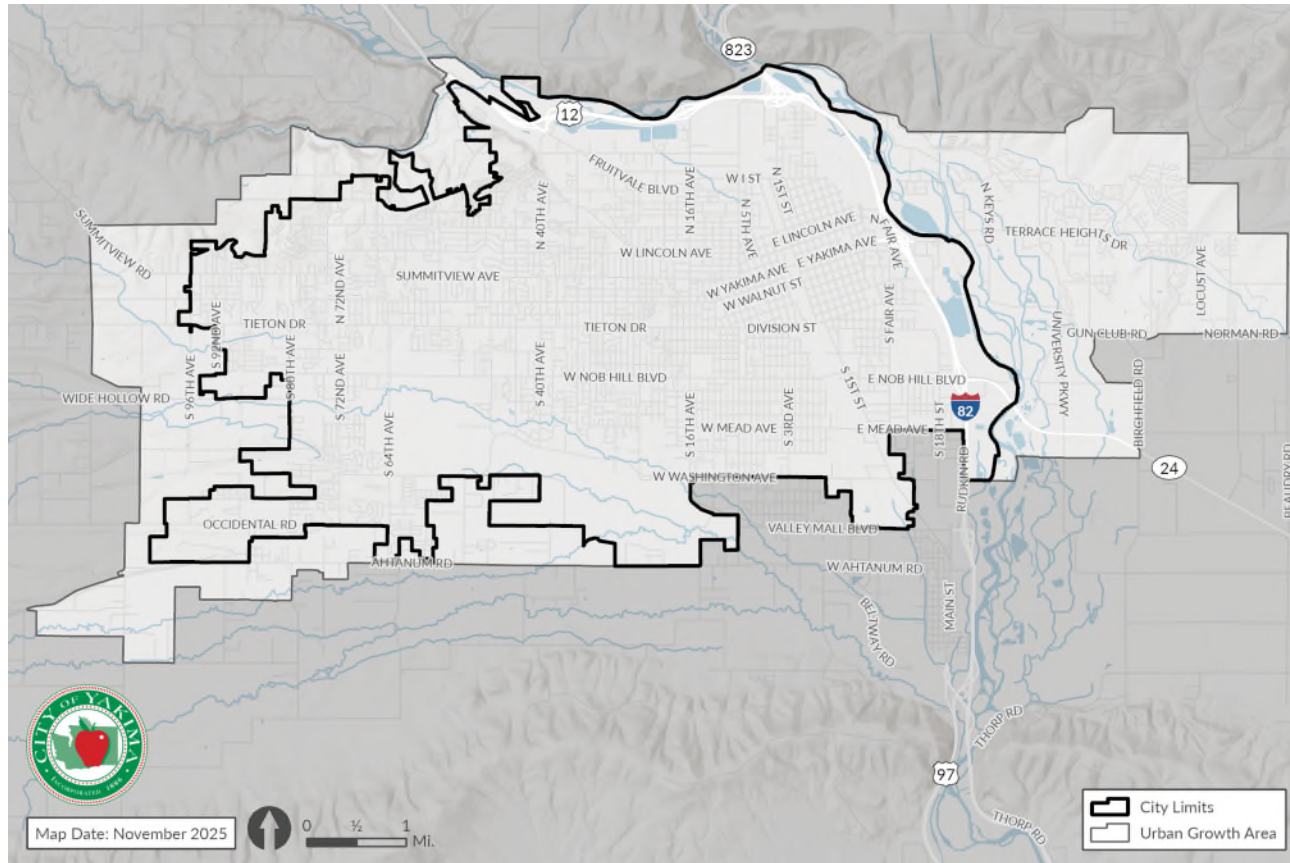
Top: Yakima Town Site 1886

Bottom: Historic Downtown Yakima



Yakima has grown substantially from its original 1,221 acres. Today, Yakima’s city limits encompass 28.8 square miles or about 17,974 acres. (Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2025) See Exhibit 1-2.

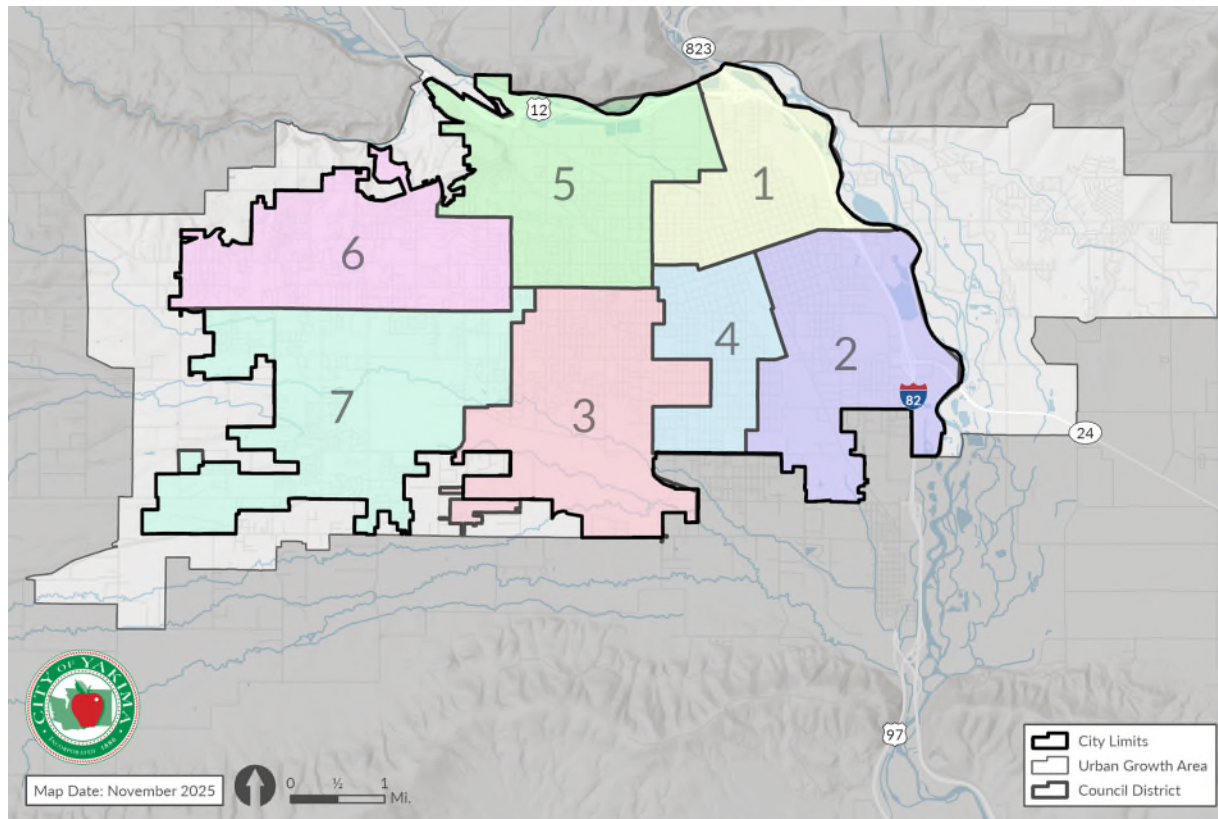
Exhibit 1-2 Yakima UGA and City Limits Map



Source: City of Yakima, 2025; BERK, 2025.



Exhibit 1-3 Yakima Council Districts



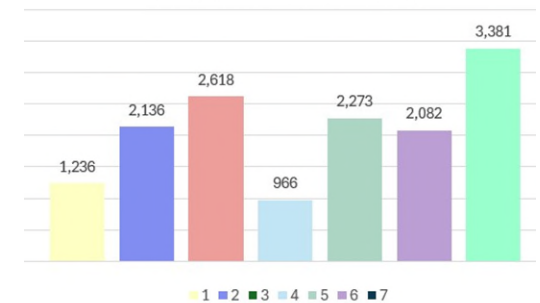
Source: City of Yakima, 2025; BERK, 2025.

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 actively plans for the Yakima UGA in consultation with the City of Yakima.

Yakima Facts

- Population in 2025: 100,000
- City limits: 28.8 square miles
- Council districts: 7
- Household size: 2.61
- Median Household Income in 2023: \$59,228

Council Districts - Area in Acres





1.4 We are Yakima

Our People

This Comprehensive Plan serves the needs of the Yakima community today and through 2046. 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. In 2025, the City reached an estimated population of 100,000 residents and County had an estimated population of 264,650. Yakima population is 38% of the total County population (OFM, 2025). By 2046, Yakima is expected to grow to 107,443 people within city limits and 16,816 in the unincorporated urban growth area (UGA), making it a home for 124,259 people in the entire UGA. See population characteristics in the next sections. As the largest city in the county, Yakima provides services and employment opportunities accessed by the entire region. It is also a focal point for many cultural and civic events. Yakima’s Land Use Element promotes equitable and sustainable development primarily by creating housing and job opportunities for the community. Creating additional housing and job opportunities (Chapters 2 and 3) are supported by the City’s Capital Facilities (Chapter 7), Transportation (Chapter 6), and Parks Elements (Chapter 9) promoting investments in infrastructure, multimodal transportation, and quality parks.

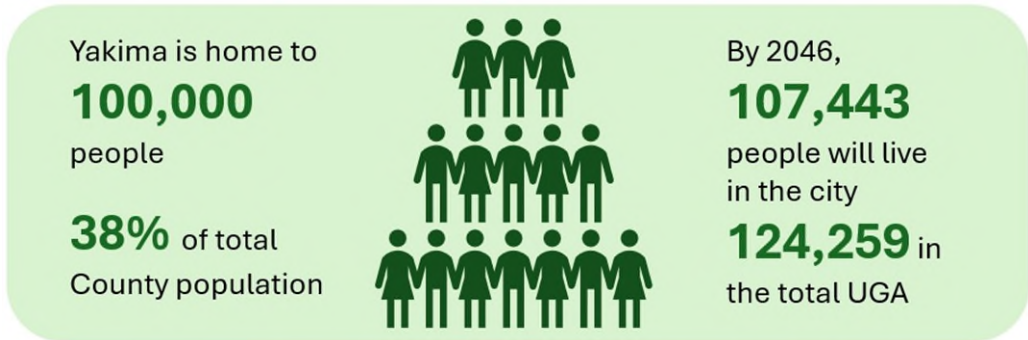
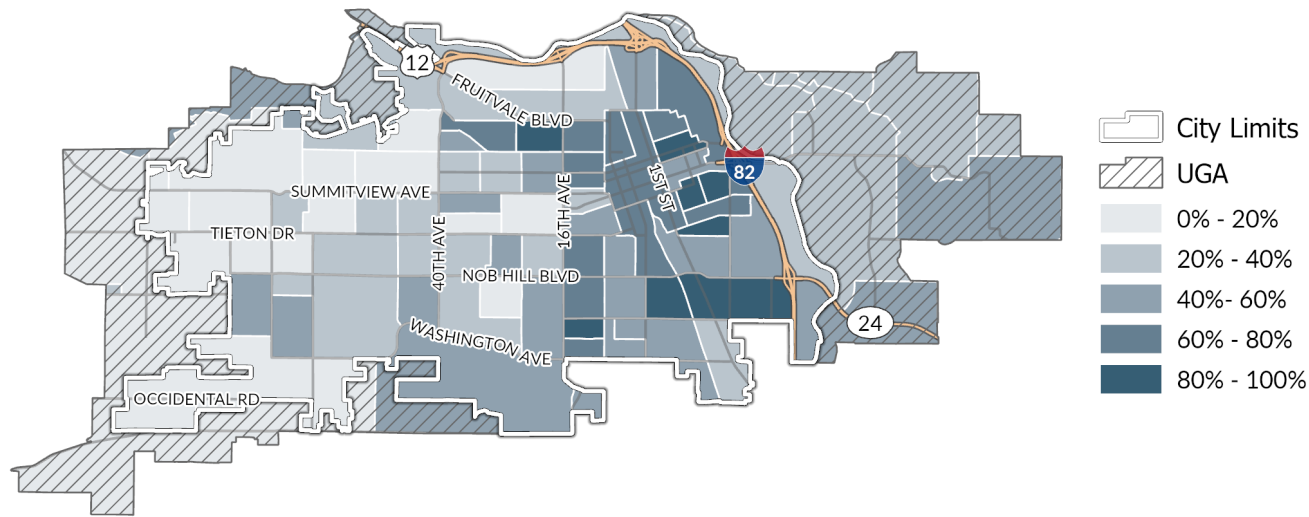




Exhibit 1-4 Percent of Residents that Identify as Hispanic or Latino, City of Yakima, 2022

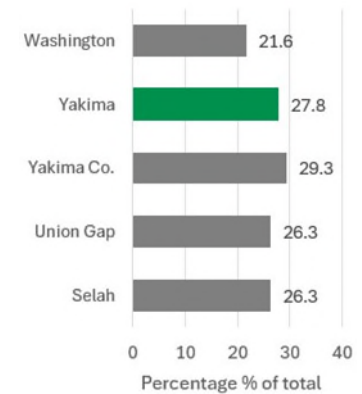


Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Yr Estimates, 2018-2022; BERK, 2025

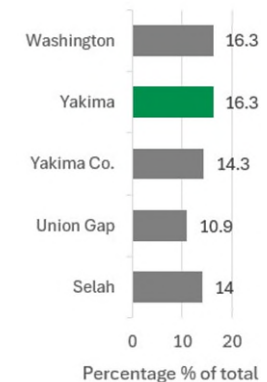
Yakima is diverse. Yakima’s population has grown more diverse, driven largely by an increase in Hispanic residents. In 2022, 45,586 people, about 47% of the city’s population, identified as Hispanic, up from 33,808 in 2010 and 43,041 in 2017. Between 2017 and 2022, roughly 71% of Yakima’s overall population growth was Hispanic. Exhibit 1-4 shows areas on the east half of the city and near downtown have the largest population of residents of Hispanic or Latino. The Comprehensive Plan Land Use (Chapter 2) and Historic Preservation (Chapter 4) Elements include policies that promote the cultural needs of the whole community.

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. As of 2021, about 16% of the population, or 15,250 residents in Yakima are aged 65. The number of young population

Age Under 18



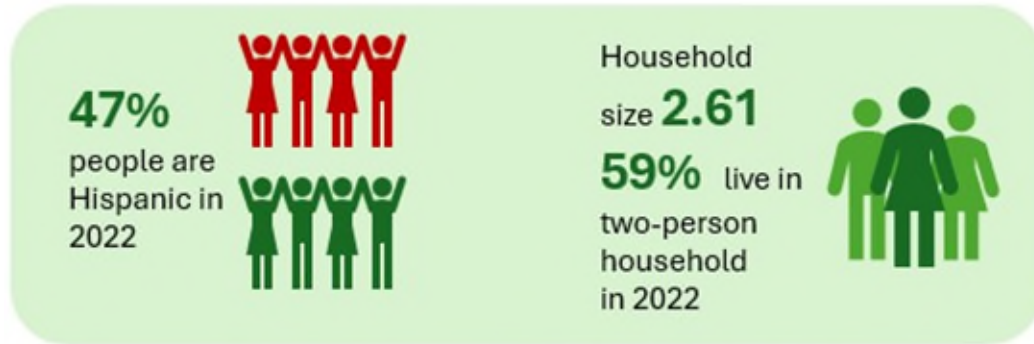
Age 65 and Over



Source: ACS 2023 5-yr estimates, BERK 2025



under 18 is higher in Yakima than the state and cities in the region. The Comprehensive Plan Housing (Chapter 3) Element addresses housing and services for seniors such as aging in place, health, and mobility.



Household size is decreasing in Yakima. More than half (59%) of the city’s residents live in single or two-member households as of 2022. The average household size in Yakima is 2.61 people, down slightly from 2017’s average size of 2.71.

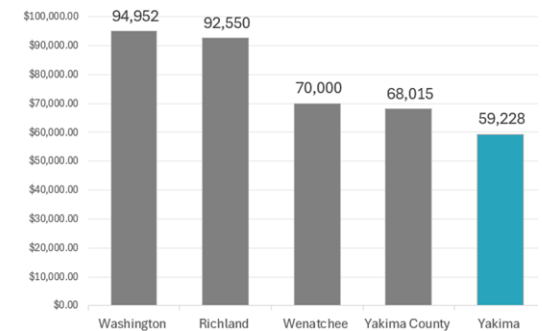
The City of Yakima has more persons with disabilities among lower income households. Among 21,035 renters in the City, about 11,000 are persons with a disability. The most common disabling conditions include ambulatory limitations and hearing or vision impairments. People with disabilities often have special housing needs, and benefit from accessible layouts, supportive design, and proximity to healthcare services. The Housing Element portion of the Comprehensive Plan includes policies regarding design of housing and supportive services. Services are intended to meet the needs of this population; the Transportation Element (Chapter 6) addresses multiple modes to promote the mobility of all abilities.

Yakima residents earn lower incomes. In 2023, Yakima’s median household income was \$59,228. This is only 62% of the State median income, and incomes in Yakima are rising more slowly than they are statewide. New opportunities for family wage jobs through appropriate zoning and capital investments, and partnerships with agencies providing workforce training, are part of the Land Use (Chapter 2) and Economic Development (Chapter 5) Elements.

Area Median Income (AMI) and Cost Burden

Area median income (AMI) refers to the area-wide calculation provided by the US. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for a county or metropolitan region. It is based on the median income of family households. In contrast, **Median household income** is based on the incomes of all households, including non-family households that often have only one member.

Cost burden is when a household pays more than 30% of their gross income on housing., including utilities.



Source: ACS 2023 12-month 5-year income estimates (2023), BERK 2025



Nearly one-third of Yakima’s households were cost burdened, and almost half of renters were cost burdened, as of 2021. These households spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs, limiting their ability to afford other necessities like food and transportation. 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 relative to the State level at 36 (ACS, 2023). About 28 percent residents have a two years degree or higher relative to the State level at 48 percent (ACS, 2018 - 2022). Coordinating with higher education providers and determining appropriate supportive services is part of the Economic Development and Capital Facility Elements.

The City’s jobs are diverse. The City contains 50,087 jobs as of 2022. Between 2017 and 2022, the City gained about 2,799 jobs, averaging ~1.2% growth (560 jobs) per year. Top sectors include health care, retail, agriculture, and manufacturing. The City of Yakima's agricultural and manufacturing employers are diverse and include packaging production and fruit processors. The jobs in the health sector reflect the city’s role as a regional medical center, with a hospital and the nearby Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences (in Terrace Heights). The highest concentration of jobs in Yakima is in Downtown and in the eastern part of the city. Investing in redevelopment such as the Cascade Mill Site, supporting a unique retail, service, and living experience in Downtown, expanding the Airport, and other activities will be important to catalyzing job opportunities. Planning for capital facilities and infrastructure and supporting partnerships in workforce training are other important City



Source: Yakima Herald



Source: City of Yakima



activities. See the Land Use, Economic Development, Historic, and Capital Facilities Elements.

Yakima experiences extreme weather in the form of extreme heat, drought, wildfires, smoke, extreme precipitation and flooding. Climate related hazards affect Yakima’s people and infrastructure; they can negatively impact public health, water systems, roads, and utility infrastructure. **Extreme heat** and **drought** have been persistent problem in the City and throughout Washington State. Much of Washington State, including Yakima County and the City, has experienced seven years of drought conditions since 2014 and several recent summers have had devastating heatwaves including the 2021 “heat dome”. Yakima exists within a high desert ecosystem, but the persistent conditions have long term impacts both to the environment and the population. One impact of these conditions coupled with reduced winter snowpack is mass vegetation die-offs which in turn generates more fuel for **wildfires** when exposed to an ignition source, whether natural or human-made. These conditions result in longer fire seasons with more frequent fires, larger fires, and worse overall air quality.

In addition to the conditions listed above, including persistent drought, there is also a high likelihood that total annual precipitation in Yakima County (including the City) is projected to increase by 9.7% by 2070, and 13.2%, by the end of this century. This increase in overall precipitation is likely to continue on the current trend, meaning that the intensity and frequency of **extreme precipitation** events will increase in the winter leading to more flooding on the Yakima River and its tributaries, mass wasting events (i.e. landslide, rockslide, rockfalls), and worse water quality. The combination of drought conditions along with increased rainfall events results low flow conditions in the summer, further creating strain on our natural water systems .

Goals, policies, and strategies to manage climate impacts are incorporated throughout the elements of this plan and specific analysis of vulnerabilities and impacts can be found in the attached Appendix A (Vulnerability and Risk Assessment). Also see Capital Facilities (Chapter 7), Utilities (Chapter 8) and Natural Environment (Chapter 10) Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.



Source: City of Yakima

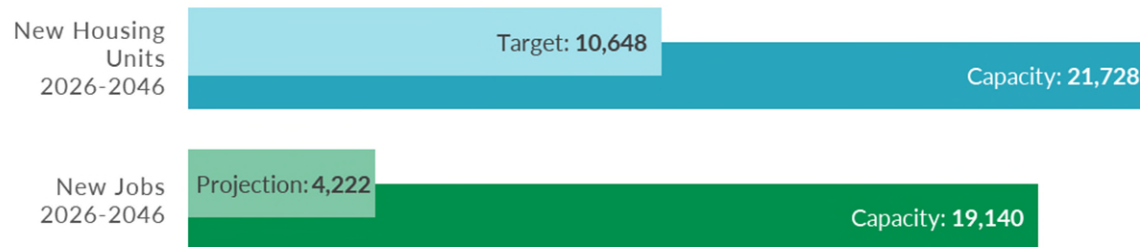


Our Future Growth

Yakima is the most populous city in the county, and the County Seat. Yakima County’s population was estimated to be 263,200 in 2024, up from the 248,229 county residents in 2014. As the county’s largest population center, the City of Yakima has also grown steadily in recent years. In 2025, the City reached an estimated population of 100,000 residents and County had an estimated population of 264,650. Yakima population is 38% of the total County population (OFM, 2025).

The City of Yakima has experienced steady growth at 5.5% per year between 2016 and 2024. This somewhat slower than most peer cities in eastern and central Washington. The City, including the UGA, is expected to continue growing. Between 2025 and 2046, Yakima is projected to gain 24,274 net new residents and 4,222 net new jobs. 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 expected to take 36% of the Countywide future population growth. The City has adequate capacity to meet its growth targets. Exhibit 1-5 shows the citywide capacity for additional housing units and jobs under 2025 land use designations and zoning districts. While there is capacity in the existing city limits, Yakima will continue to consider annexation requests, where appropriate.

Exhibit 1-5 Housing and Job Capacity and Projection 2046



Note: new housing units and jobs are calculated as the net increase from 2026 to 2046. Source: WA State Department of Commerce, Growth Management Services Housing For All Planning Tool (HAPT), BERK, 2025



1.5 Comprehensive Plan Process and Public Engagement

The City of Yakima started the Comprehensive Plan update process in 2024 with a review of the City’s existing conditions, plans and programs. The project launched with a discussion between City staff from all applicable departments including Community Development, Public Works, Utilities, and the consultant team. The consultant team were involved in reviewing and editing the contents of the existing plan with updated data analyses. This team was also responsible for identifying gaps between the existing plan and the new requirements of the GMA. A public participation plan was developed early in 2024 to engage the community early and often throughout the process. Exhibit 1-6 shows the overall Comprehensive Plan update process.

Exhibit 1-6 Yakima Comprehensive Plan Update Process



This Public Participation Plan incorporates two interrelated public engagements:

- Public engagement under the Climate Planning Grant to meet specific outreach goals while developing the new Climate Element; and
- Public engagement meeting specific GMA requirements for the overall Comprehensive Plan.

Additionally, a web-based information hub will be developed by the City to provide readily-available education and information services, as well as a two-way communication tool with community surveys. The Planning Commission workshop will be a venue for overall update review. Public engagement will focus on the **information** and **process objectives** as follows:





Information Objectives

- Broadly disseminate information to the public by providing easy and convenient access to project information on the City website.
- Ensure early and continuous outreach to Tribal governments and meet requirements of the Growth Management Act.
- Collaborate on a community vision for the Comprehensive Plan update.
- Identify local priorities to support social and economic activities.
- Build awareness of the comprehensive planning process, and next steps.
- Center policy recommendations on the lived experiences of all people in Yakima.

Process Objectives

- Provide transparency in process with community members, local officials, and city staff on key decision making opportunities.
- Build community capacity to participate in civic processes.
- Identify long-term strategies for community engagement with city staff, and engaged partners.
- Making the process accessible by allowing multiple methods of communication such as, in person, virtual and written communication and via English and Spanish translations.

Engagement Phases

Public engagement is employed in three phases for the duration of the project:

Phase 1: Interviews, Relationship Building and Visioning

The first phase of engagement is centered around building awareness of the comprehensive plan with local community groups. Goals of this phase include:

- Build awareness of the Comprehensive Plan process, and various tasks.



Source: BERK



- Develop metrics for successful engagement.
- Identify a successful vision for the Comprehensive Plan.
- Identify potential priority topics for the Comprehensive Plan.
- Ask for participation in an advisory committee for the Comprehensive Plan.
- Inform additional strategies as needed.

An in-person visioning workshop with community groups, and city staff was held to establish a vision statement, and framework for the comprehensive plan.

Phase 2: Advisory Committees Policy Engagement and Workshop

Phase 2 of the project will be centered on diving deeper into policy development. A Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC) will be made, comprised of city staff, residents, businesses, community organizations, social service providers, and neighborhood advocates. The CPSC met up to four times to review the Comprehensive Plan.

A second committee, called Resilient Yakima, also was formed to help the city meet new requirements for HB1181, which requires jurisdictions to develop a new Climate Element.

A second public workshop was hosted in the summer of 2025, to provide an overview of initial policy recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan update and inform the public of new requirements for GMA. This workshop will also gather input from public for any adjustments to make in the Plan.

Phase 3: Public Comment and Next Steps

Phase 3 of the project included a public comment process for the comprehensive plan, and to thank members of the CPSC and Resilient Yakima for their work. A final workshop held in September 2025 to share the Comprehensive Plan and inform next steps.



Source: BERK



1.6 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. A visioning workshop was held in April 2025 to publicly kick off the Comprehensive Plan periodic update and create a broad vision for the city.

The Open House started with a presentation, which provided an overview of what a Comprehensive Plan is and the key topics that will be discussed. After the presentation, meeting participants were divided into three small groups, with one group focused on individuals who spoke Spanish as a primary language. The majority of the meeting was centered around two exercises:

- A Map Exercise to identify opportunities for housing and job growth in Yakima, as well as the opportunities and challenges present.
- A Visioning Exercise to better understand what makes Yakima a unique place to live.

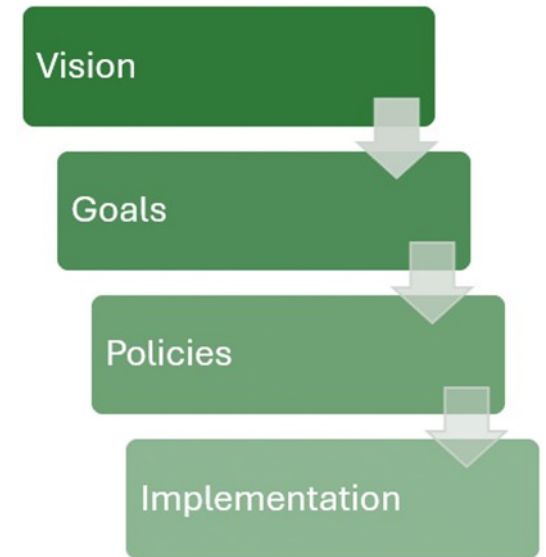
Feedback from the Open House was then presented to a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC), for further review and refinement. Yakima’s vision is below.

A Vision for Yakima’s Future

Yakima is the Heart of Central Washington and the Yakima Valley, defined by a rich history of culture, economic prosperity, and natural landscapes.

The City is defined by:

- A home, that lives harmoniously with the natural environment and agricultural vistas that surround the City.
- Downtown Yakima is a thriving district to live, work, and play.
- A family-friendly city with quality public spaces, for all age groups and education for children.
- An active environment for walking and biking.
- A city with a robust economy with job opportunities in a variety of industries.





- A well-connected and coordinated system of public infrastructure and services that meets the need of all residents, as well as providing capacity for future residential and commercial development.
- Safe, residential neighborhoods with affordable housing for all residents with different cultures and backgrounds, while preserving historic streetscapes and structures.

Today and in 2046 we see Yakima as a place that values:

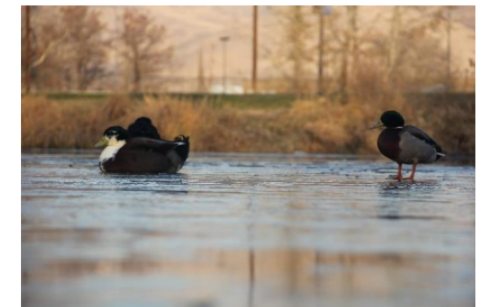
- **Yakima’s people** – We are inclusive to all people.
 - We promote quality design in new housing, businesses, and public buildings, and streets to be accessible to all.
 - We encourage public engagement and multicultural communication in our planning process.
 - We invest in and deliver needed public services in a manner inclusive to all types of residents, businesses, and cultures.
 - Yakima residents have access to high-quality education, living-wage jobs, safe neighborhoods, a healthy environment, quality parks and amenities, healthy food, and affordable housing.
- **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.



Source: City of Yakima



- 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 expanding the Yakima Greenway and other trail systems.
 - 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.



Source: City of Yakima



- 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.

VISIONING EXERCISE - OPPORTUNITIES

- weather ✓
- Parks
- within 1hr of mountains.
- outdoor exercise
- Traffic isn't bad.
- Gate of state.
- wonderful mix of people.

isolated from econ effects of nation
Hops + wine ✓

What makes Yakima unique
Yakima = being outside
↳ Do not take that away.

- job growth - airport + surrounding area.
- airport key for econ success.
- tourism (agritourism), etc.
- agri-automation + manual labor.

• education need for current population

• high tech jobs

• Affordable housing - providing for youth now.

CHALLENGES

- Fire: 5th season ✓
- Air quality.
- winter = stagnant air.
- filters in AC.
- Building a base that helps w/ fire is tough.

• we need better forest management.

• No car goes outside.

↳ kids get miserable.

• Dered n/ good soil

↳ Architects can do it.

• trees on the relative side

BIGGEST CHALLENGES - Housing.

• courtyard apts/cottages is a great idea.

Opportunities/Challenges

- River access (to improve)
- Airport
- Parks
- Transit
- Walkable Communities
- Riverwalk / Canal Trail / Brewery
- ↳ More Access to Services
- Community Gardens
- Urban Forest
- Transit / West Side
- Wine Tourism
- Rail
- Lack of Infrastructure
- Job Growth
- Senior Housing
- Heat Islands
- ↳ Add trees
- ↳ shade
- Changes in housing
- Yakima Ave
- Laws
- Downtown

NOTES (4/16/25)

- Be Objective w/ Comm. Standards. It's tough!
- Equalize quality of life. We need flexibility.
- ↳ we need to present our to Comm.
- 'Affordable housing' + Energy code.
- ↳ conflict + huge barrier for affordability.
- Density in downtown. Have investment needed.
- Know more about housing. Have more housing downtown.
- Probably to commercial use.
- Planning commission
- Home maintenance
- Connecting w/ volunteers who can help

Transit → low use of bus

- IRRIGATION CHARGES (winter time as well)
- Commerce is a challenge
- Lumber area fell through (Outlet mall)
- Yakima Ave mall closed
- Nothing up in the city
- Safety
- Wildfire - people wearing masks
- Drought
- Community gardens - less wasteful
- Business env. needs to improve - Safety
- More integration of Hispanic community
- More VOICE



1.7 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 volumes and elements:

Volume I. Yakima Comprehensive Plan—A Policy Document

1. Plan Foundation and Vision
2. Land Use ¹
3. Housing ¹
4. Historic Preservation ³
5. Economic Development ²
6. Transportation ¹
7. Capital Facilities¹
8. Utilities ¹
9. Parks and Recreation ²
10. Natural Environment ¹
11. Shoreline ¹
12. Energy ^{1,3}

Volume II. Technical Analysis

1. Planning Framework
2. Land Use
3. Housing
4. Transportation
5. Capital facilities

Notes:

- 1 Required by GMA or other state law. Climate resilience policies under Energy Element are required.*
- 2 Required when the state provides funding; though funding is not available, these elements help Yakima seek grants.*
- 3 Optional except for climate resilience policies under energy that are required..*

Volume I Comprehensive Plan contains topic-specific elements. Each element summarizes key existing conditions and trends. Each element identifies challenges and opportunities, future needs for Yakima, and plans to address these challenges and meet the needs. Plans for future needs drive policy proposals included in the goals – or broad aims – and policies –

Terms

- **Vision:** A community’s most desired future
- **Value:** A standard or judgement of what is important in 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.





principle, protocol, or proposal for action. 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.

Volume II Technical Analysis contains detailed and relevant analysis of the elements that are not included in the Comprehensive Plan. This includes land use and land capacity analysis, housing, detailed housing needs analysis and adequate provisions, transportation Levels of Service (LOS) analysis, capital facilities, and parks and recreation analyses.

Additional documents such as Climate Vulnerability Assessment (VA) memo will remain as an appendix. This analysis is also integrated in the Comprehensive Plan elements.

An **Existing Conditions Report** was prepared and information from the report is integrated in this Comprehensive Plan.



Source: City of Yakima

1.8 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. GMA limits annual Comprehensive Plan amendments to no more than once per calendar year, except for certain exemptions and emergency actions. The scheduled update to the Plan is due on or before December 31, 2026 (RCW 36.70A.130(5)(c)). 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. Updates to major development regulations are due on or before December 31, 2026 (RCW 36.70A.130(5)(c)). Annexation and changes to city limits or the unincorporated growth area may prompt future reviews of the plan. Future amendments will be processed in accordance with Yakima Municipal Code Chapter 16.10.



2 Land Use

2.1 Introduction

The Land Use Element is central to all other elements by providing for the distribution of land use meeting Yakima’s needs for housing, employment, recreation, public facilities and other land uses in development patterns that support the City’s vision for the future. This element also addresses how land use and supporting infrastructure and facilities are developed and maintained, particularly the image and character of Downtown and Yakima’s neighborhoods, the quality of its buildings, streets, and public spaces, and the community’s emphasis in honoring of the City’s history. The element includes policies that support a mixture of housing options, preservation, and enhancement of neighborhoods, pedestrian-friendly design, community gathering spaces, environmental stewardship, healthy living, and annexation.

The requirement for a Land Use Element in comprehensive plans is one of the key components of the Growth Management Act (GMA). The GMA requires cities to demonstrate the ability to accommodate 20 years of growth through sufficient buildable land that is zoned



Source: City of Yakima



appropriately. In addition to managing growth, the Land Use Element also sets goals and policies to shape the design and layout of cities.

2.2 Land Use Today and Tomorrow

Conditions and Trends

Yakima’s current land use pattern is dominated by single-family residential uses both in the city limits and in the urban growth area (UGA). Single-family Residential land uses make up 38.5% of the full UGA.

Yakima is an urban city with a rural character

With a population of 100,000 (2025 OFM), the City of Yakima is the eleventh largest city in the State of Washington. However, given this status the city still retains its rural character due to a strong agricultural base and a vibrant natural setting.

Low density residential is predominant

Single-family Residential accounts for 38.5% of the existing land use in the Yakima urban growth area in 2025. Its corresponding Future Land Use category, Low Density Residential, represents about 53% of the UGA in the Future Land Use Map. Single family housing accounts for around 61% of structures. However, recent years have seen an increase in units in multi-family structures. This is consistent with recent changes to the GMA requiring the City of Yakima to allow for at least four units per lot, and the unincorporated UGA to allow for at least two accessory dwelling units on any lot that allows for detached single family homes. For more information, see the Housing Element (Chapter 3).

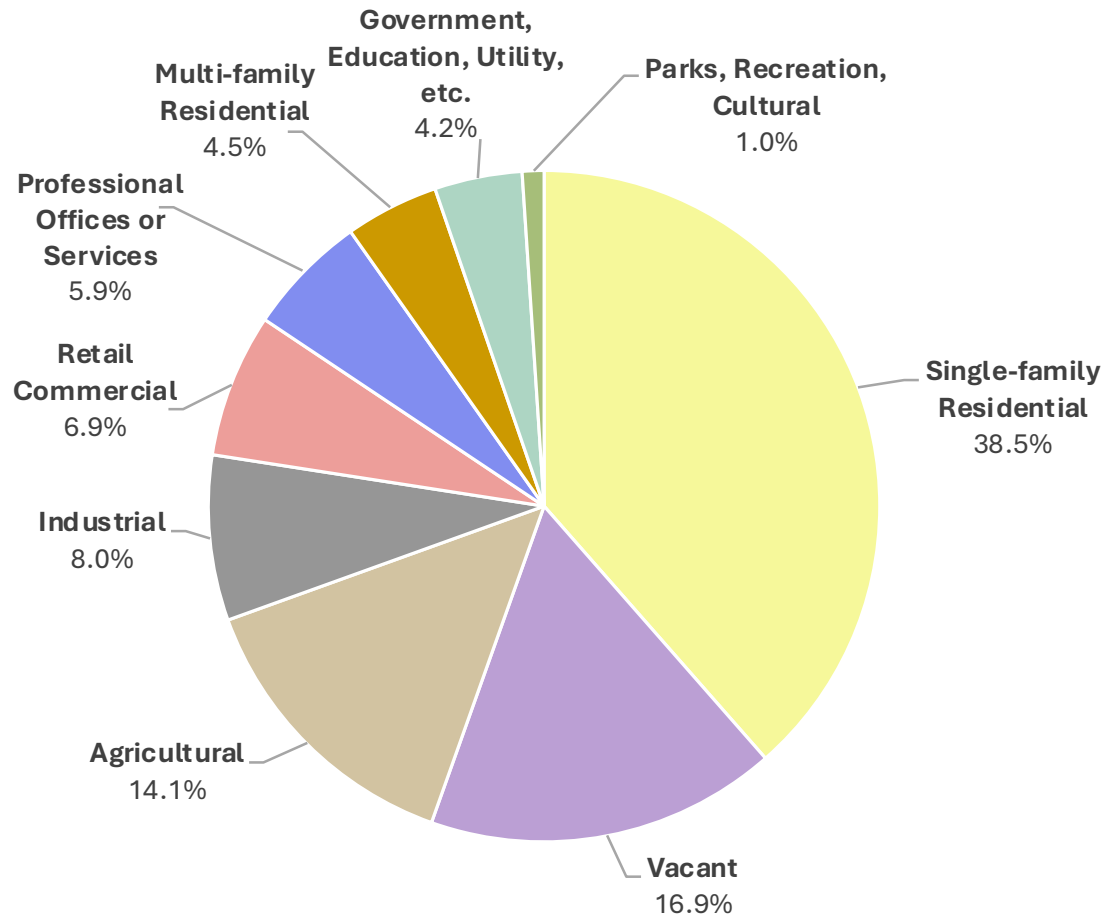
Land Use Element under Growth Management Act

Designate the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the uses of land, where appropriate, for agriculture, timber production, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, open spaces, general aviation airports, public utilities, public facilities, and other land uses. The land use element shall include population densities, building intensities, and estimates of future population growth. Provide for protection of the quality and quantity of groundwater used for public water supplies. Consider utilizing urban planning approaches that promote physical activity. Review drainage, flooding, and storm water run-off in the area and nearby jurisdictions and provide guidance for corrective actions to mitigate or cleanse those discharges that pollute waters of the state. Mitigate the risk to lives and property posed by wildfires by using land use planning tools. (RCW 36.70A.020(1))





Exhibit 2-1 Existing Land Use, Full Urban Growth Area, 2025



Source: City of Yakima, 2025; Yakima County Assessor, 2025; BERK, 2025.



Yakima’s Downtown revitalization is important

Downtown Yakima has suffered from a high retail vacancy rate and competition from other commercial centers with big box retail formats and strip maps inside and outside the city limits. It was further exacerbated by the COVID pandemic starting in 2020. Past improvement plans such as redevelopment of the Yakima Mall site were stalled during the pandemic. However, retail demand is estimated to grow in the city as a whole. The Downtown Association of Yakima maintains the Main Street program for downtown Yakima. Since 2015, the Downtown Association of Yakima has offered the Façade Improvement Grant Program funding 11 different projects. Multiple projects such as streetscape improvements combined with private investments, and new and renovated building projects have helped to improve the character and liveliness of Downtown. The 2013 Downtown Plan identifies investments in the “heart of Downtown” and catalyst sites to capture a share of this retail growth. The plan’s key actions intend to spur private investment focused around a multipurpose public plaza that provides a year-round gathering space. Further, Yakima Avenue enhancements prioritize pedestrians and emphasize intersection improvements. Additional greenery is proposed to help humanize the street. However, there were concerns from the public that the plaza would take away parking near businesses, and might not guarantee reviving the downtown (Donofrio, 2025). In 2018, residents voted against the plaza. The City completed other components of the master plan, such as a parking plan, and Chestnut Avenue improvement. The City is discussing to initiate a new strategic plan in 2026 to identify goals and actions for Yakima’s downtown.



Source: Yakima Herald

Yakima has development potential in the City, including its mixed-use centers

Yakima has several areas that contain large tracts of vacant land including the Cascade Mill Site and Congdon Properties. Areas near South 64th Avenue and Nob Hill Boulevard intersection, and south of Fruitvale Boulevard near North 16th Avenue have potential for developments with a mix of residential and commercial. Areas near North 40th Avenue and Summitview Avenue intersection, and South 40th Avenue and Nob Hill Boulevard already include a mix of residential and commercial developments. These areas offer a significant opportunity for Yakima to create new destination development(s) and create key economic development nodes. Incentivizing new development in specific industries will be important for



Source: City of Yakima



the long-term success of these areas. For the purpose of this Comprehensive Plan, these areas are referred to as mixed use centers for Yakima. There are also several redevelopment opportunities on smaller sites along key corridors such as North 1st Street, East Nob Hill Boulevard, and the West Washington/Ahtanum corridors around the Airport.

Yakima’s east-west arterial corridors are critical

Yakima has largely grown westward from Downtown. As a result, the city’s east-west corridors have taken on an increasing importance over the years. First, they function as essential transportation connections from residential areas to Downtown, other employment and shopping areas, and to Interstate 82. Second, they provide a wide array of commercial services. A combination of increasing growth, access management challenges due to the patterns or commercial development along the corridor, and rights-of-way width limitations are posing increased traffic challenges. Furthermore, since these corridors are so heavily used, the design of these corridors is very important. The quality and character of development that has occurred along these corridors can be improved with additional area specific planning and design guidelines.



Source: City of Yakima



Yakima’s climate is changing impacting communities, land and resources

Climate related hazards such as heat, drought, wildfire and smoke, extreme precipitation and flooding are impacting Yakima community, its land and resources. Areas with concentrations of sensitive populations, especially children and older adults, coincide with Urban Heat Island hotspots. Extreme heat in certain areas, and wildfire and smoke cause health hazards for people with certain health conditions, including children and older adults. Regional wildfires can also significantly damage local and regional infrastructure such as canals, roadways, and power lines. Infrastructure damage can increase costs and reduce resiliency and hurt the ability of emergency personnel to respond to these disasters. Extreme precipitation and flooding have a significant impact on sensitive populations, including older adults and youth (who are more likely to need assistance evacuating), and low-income residents, who have fewer resources to prepare and recover from flooding events. Floods can also threaten the water infrastructure in the floodplain, leading to flooding beyond floodplains if infrastructure is compromised. See the Climate Vulnerability Assessment Memo in Appendix A. Also see Capital Facilities, Utilities and Natural Environment Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

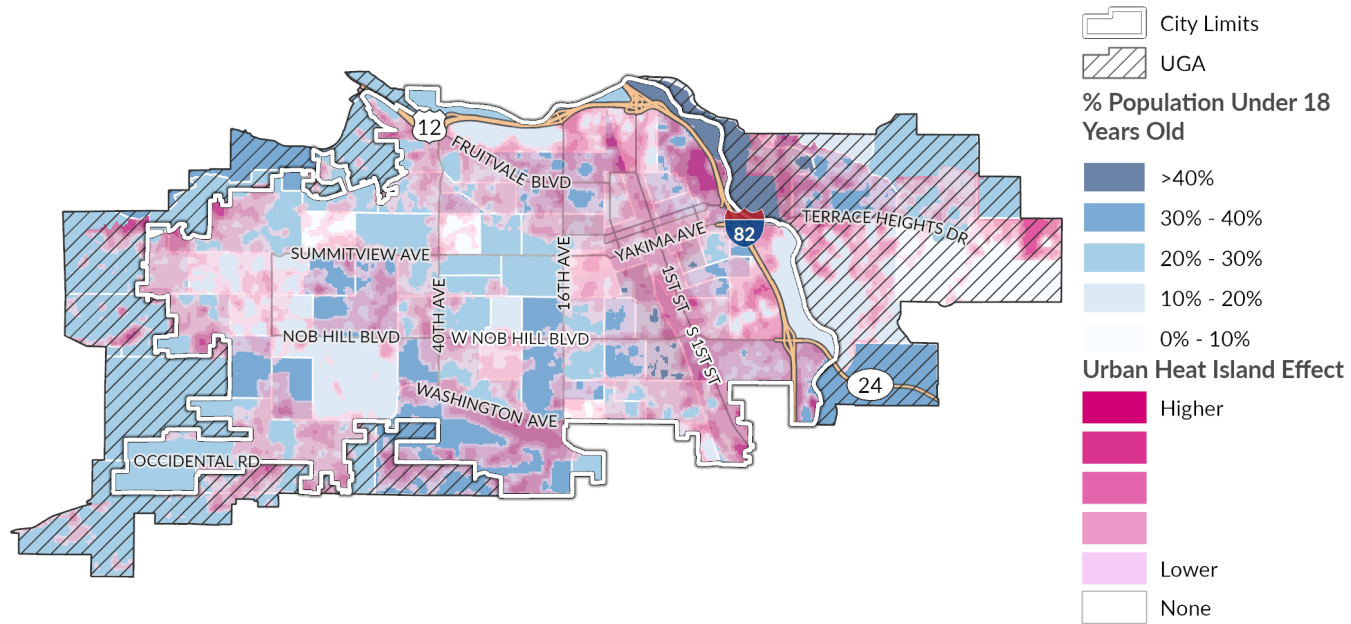
Urban Heat Islands

"Urban heat islands" occur when cities replace natural land cover with dense concentrations of pavement, buildings, and other surfaces that absorb and retain heat. Structures such as buildings, roads, and other infrastructure absorb and re-emit the sun’s heat more than natural landscapes such as forests and water bodies. Urban areas, where these structures are highly concentrated and greenery is limited, become “islands” of higher temperatures relative to outlying areas.





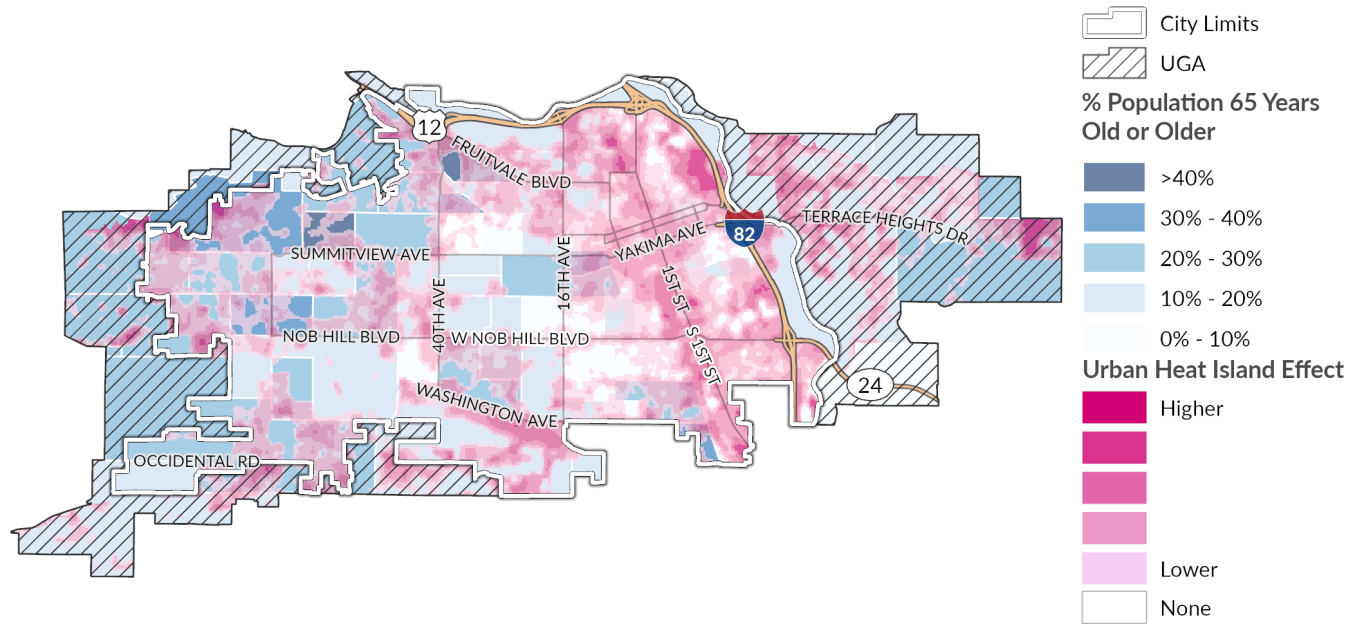
Exhibit 2-2. Urban Heat Islands and Block Group Youth Population, City of Yakima, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Yr Estimates 2018-2022; Trust for Public Land, 2025; BERK, 2025.



Exhibit 2-3. Urban Heat Islands and Block Group Senior Population, City of Yakima, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Yr Estimates 2018-2022; Trust for Public Land, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Challenges and Opportunities

Yakima is home to a wide variety of land uses, including low to high density residential, office and medical facilities, restaurants, retail and service establishments, parks and recreation facilities, and large-scale industrial and agricultural operations. With all of these available services, facilities, housing, and employment, residents do not typically need to leave the city to meet their needs. There is tremendous growth potential in Yakima that spans all sectors: Residential, Commercial, and Industrial. With opportunities for large-scale development on vacant land and infill development throughout the city, the future growth potential for Yakima is high.



Promoting additional types of housing to accommodate evolving population needs is a key component of this plan. As noted previously, the vast majority of residential uses are single family homes. The City needs specific policies to encourage more multi-family and middle housing development while stabilizing and enhancing older neighborhoods.

Modern redevelopment and adaptive re-use in downtown, new local breweries and wineries, and enhanced regional sports facilities have made Yakima a year-round destination for tourists. To keep up with demand, Yakima needs to promote tourism by implementing an enhanced design character and implement its downtown master plan that will attract investment and retain/attract talent.

Below are some key land use challenges and opportunities facing Yakima in the next twenty-plus years:

- Providing a greater mix of land use for housing sizes and types to accommodate Yakima’s evolving population.
- Enhancing design character of the City to promote tourism, attract investment and talent.
- Stabilizing and enhancing older neighborhoods.
- Mitigating land use incompatibilities.
- Coordinating land use and transportation efforts to enhance walkability and circulation.
- Planning for underutilized commercial and industrial lands.
- Consideration of annexation requests where appropriate.
- Consider optimal use of urban lands currently used for agricultural purposes.
- Protecting land and the community from climate related hazards.



Source: City of Yakima



Yakima Revenue Development Area (Cascade Mill)

The Yakima Revenue Development Area (YRDA) is adjacent to Interstate 82 from the US 12/North 1st Street Interchange through the Yakima Avenue/Terrace Heights exit. The YRDA is located entirely within the city limits and in one of the earliest plats of the City of Yakima. The primary development zone is approximately 211 acres which were formerly used as the Boise Cascade Sawmill and Plywood Plant.

The City supports continued development of the YRDA and on September 23, 2008 was awarded LIFT financing through a competitive award process which considered sites state-wide. State law requires that in order for LIFT funding to be applied to the YRDA local governments must ensure that all proposed projects are identified within their Comprehensive Plans and other supporting documents. City efforts include environmental clean-up, street and utility construction, and I-82 freeway access. In 2021, the City of Yakima removed the Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) and wood waste under the street corridor of Bravo Company Boulevard. The City is working with the State Department of Ecology related to options for environmental clean-up.

Future Needs

Yakima needs a variety of land uses to support housing, employment and recreation needs. Yakima has adequate land for future growth for the next 20 years to accommodate 10,648 new housing units and 4,222 jobs. Some reallocation and readjustment in the land use designation is required to ensure a variety of housing mix in close proximity to employment. Streamlined land use designations are needed for the ease of implementation.

2.3 Our Land Use Plan

Yakima’s Population growth will require additional housing, employment opportunities, and places to obtain goods and services in the city. These growth needs must be balanced with the preservation, enhancement, and restoration of the natural environment and habitats. This plan presents the community’s land use plan for future growth in in ten future land use categories across the City as shown in Exhibit 2-2. Land use categories are further



Source: City of Yakima



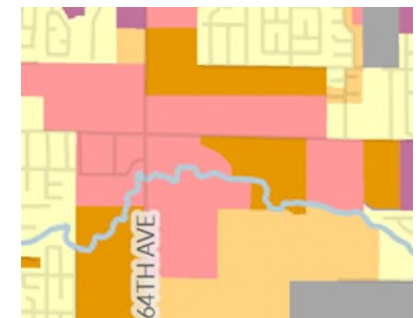
defined in Policies 2.2.1 through 2.2.7. Each land use designation is implemented by various zoning designations contained in the City’s zoning and development regulations and in other design, development, and environmental regulations. Land use implemented by zoning designations are identified in Exhibit 2-2. Some additional revisions to the development regulations in parallel are necessary to implement the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and meet future growth needs. These changes include but not limited to varied combinations of increased densities, lot size, coverages, and building heights, as well as expanded housing type options and reduced minimum lot areas.

The land use plan identifies mixed use centers as discussed under Conditions and Trends subsection of this Element. The Land Use Plan identifies these areas with capacity for future growth. The land use plan aims to put urban uses with the City limits with an aim to promote developments on vacant and underused lands including vacant agricultural lands.

2.4 Goals & Policies

GOAL 2.1 ESTABLISH A DEVELOPMENT PATTERN CONSISTENT WITH THE COMMUNITY’S VISION

- Policy 2.1.1 Designate the general distribution, location and extent of the uses of land for housing, commerce, recreation, open spaces, public utilities and facilities and other land uses.
- Policy 2.2.2 Establish land use designations, and densities and intensities for urban growth as shown under Goal 2.2.
- Policy 2.1.3 Review proposed Future Land Use designation changes for consistency with Yakima Municipal Code Ch. 16.10 and the following criteria:



Source: BERK





- Does the proposal conform to locational criteria set forth for the desired designation?
- Is the site physically suited for the proposed designation?
- Is the desired zone one of the implementing zones of the land use designation?
- Is the proposal a spot zone or a similar change that is incompatible with surrounding land use?

Policy 2.1.4 Manage and maintain the City’s Official Zoning Map to align with the Future Land Use Map (see Exhibit 2-1) to ensure that Yakima has adequate capacity for housing and jobs over the planning period.

Policy 2.1.5 Implement land use designations through a clear regulatory process that ensures transparency, fairness and predictability in the land development process.

Policy 2.1.6 Adopt coordinated development regulations that facilitate Yakima’s preferred land use pattern (e.g., allowed density, uses, and site provisions).

- Refine the land use code on an ongoing basis to make it user-friendly by employing simple language, easy to read charts, and illustrative graphics.
- Monitor and refine the land use code as needed to facilitate the preferred land use pattern and development character.
- Integrate an appropriate balance of predictability and flexibility when updating development regulations that allow ease of administration and interpretation and offer optional ways of meeting requirements when possible.

Policy 2.1.7 Allow new development only where adequate public services can be provided.

Policy 2.1.8 Work with other jurisdictions and agencies, educational and other organizations, and the business community to develop and carry out a coordinated, regional approach for meeting the various needs of Yakima

Spot Zone

Illegal spot zoning is arbitrary and unreasonable zoning action by which a smaller area is singled out of a larger area or district and specially zoned for a use classification totally different from and inconsistent with the classification of the surrounding land, not in accordance with a comprehensive plan.





County communities, including housing, human services, economic vitality, public safety, utilities, infrastructure, parks and recreation, transportation, and environmental protection.

Policy 2.1.9

Consider annexation requests in accordance with review criteria, including, but not limited to:

- Areas to be annexed are included in the UGA.
- The annexation boundary, where appropriate, should adjust any impractical or irregular boundaries created in the past.
- The annexation boundary should, where appropriate, provide a contiguous and regular boundary with current City limits.
- The annexation proposal should create and/or preserve logical service areas. Annexations generally should not have or create abnormally irregular boundaries that are difficult to serve.
- The annexation boundary should not impede the function of the natural environment and, when possible, should prioritize resilience to natural hazards
- The City should give priority consideration to annexation proposals that are financially self-sufficient or those where the fiscal impact can be improved. The City should develop a variety of service delivery or revenue enhancement options to increase the feasibility of annexation.
- The City will prepare a fiscal analysis of the annexation proposal prior to annexation

Policy 2.1.10

Continue to coordinate with Yakima County on future land use, shoreline, critical area, and infrastructure policies, plans, and permit reviews in the Yakima UGA.

Policy 2.1.11

Work in collaboration with Yakima County and cities through regional forums such as the Yakima Valley Council of Governments and the Yakima Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan.



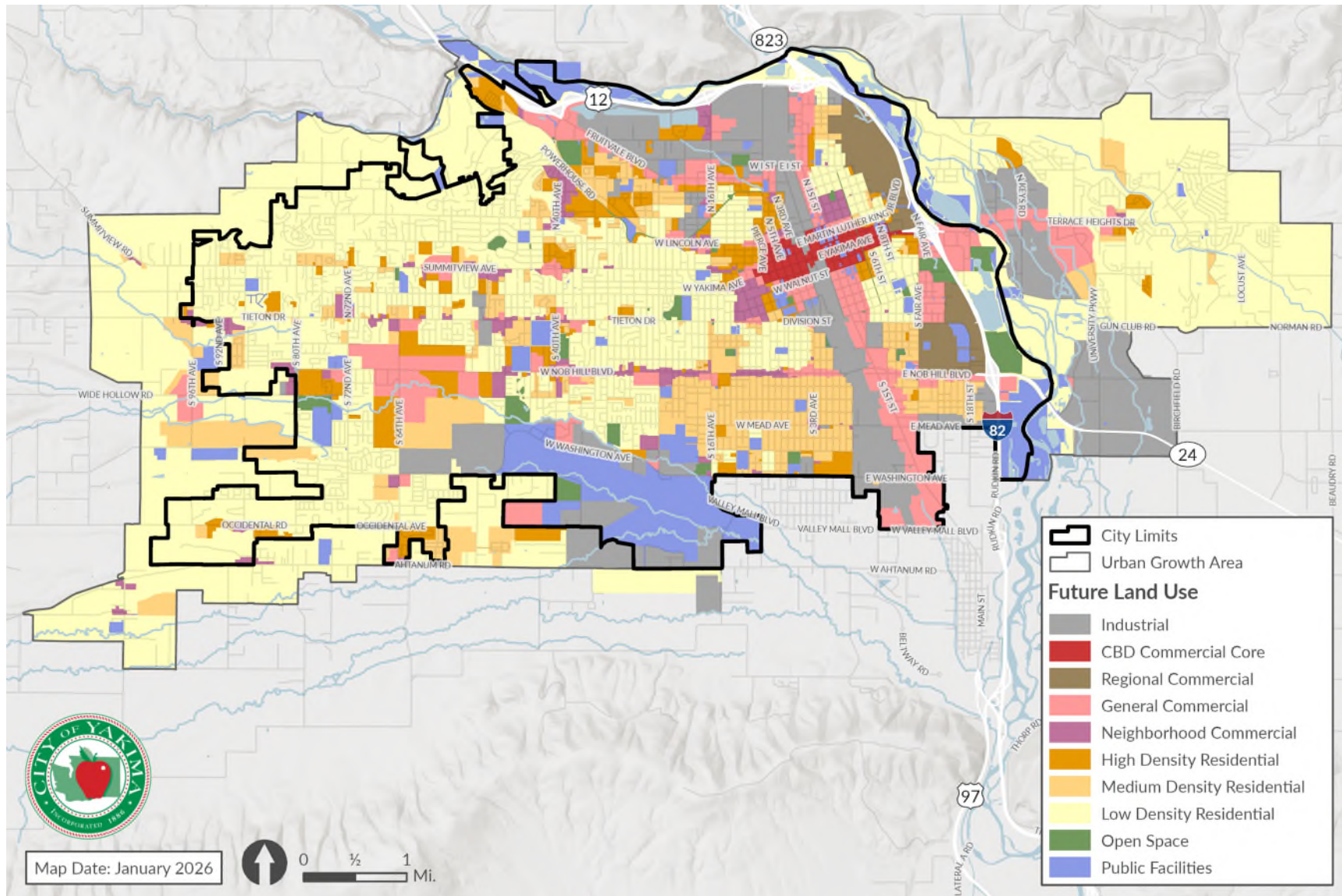


Policy 2.1.13 Use best available science when designating critical areas for protection and preservation within the City limits or the Yakima UGA.





Exhibit 2-4 Future Land Use Map



Source: City of Yakima, 2025; BERK, 2025



GOAL 2.2. PROVIDE A MIX OF LAND USE DESIGNATIONS TO MEET THE COMMUNITY’S NEED

Exhibit 2-5 Land Use Designations and implementing zoning districts

Zoning ↓	Low Density Residential	Medium Density Residential	High Density Residential	Neighborhood Commercial	General Commercial	CBD Commercial Core	Regional Commercial	Industrial	Open Space	Public Facilities
SR	X								X	
R-1	X								X	X
R-2		X							X	X
R-3			X						X	X
B-1				X					X	X
B-2				X					X	X
HB				X					X	X
SCC					X				X	X
LCC					X				X	X
GC					X				X	X
CBD						X			X	X
RD							X		X	X
M-1								X	X	X
M-2								X	X	X
AS								X		





Source: Yakima Municipal Code, 2025; BERK, 2025

Policy 2.2.1 Low Density Residential:

- a) Purpose: This designation provides for low density residential development.
- b) Locational criteria: Within established low density residential communities and in other parts of the City that are inappropriate for more intensive urban development due to topography or other land suitability challenges and/or the desire to create a lower intensity transitional area between the city and the surrounding unincorporated rural pasture, foothills, and agricultural land.
- c) Principal uses & density: Single-family detached dwellings are the predominant dwelling type. Other dwelling types allowed include single-family attached, accessory dwellings (ADUs), duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and cottage housing. The permitted density ranges between four to seven net dwelling units per acre . On larger sites (over two acres), more flexibility in lot sizes and layout are envisioned, provided overall density standards are met.
- d) Implementing zoning district: R-1.

Policy 2.2.2 Medium Density Residential:

- a) Purpose: This designation provides for areas with a mixture of moderate density housing types.
- b) Locational criteria: Intended for areas now characterized by, and/or appropriate for, a mixture of housing types between low density residential areas and commercial services, transit access, and/or parks and other public recreational amenities. This designation is intended to create a transition from high density to low density residential areas.
- c) Principal uses & density: A mix of single-family, duplex, townhomes, multiplexes, and multifamily dwelling units. The permitted minimum

Dwelling Units

- **Net Dwelling Units/Acre:** The number of dwelling units allowed per acre less the area for right-of-way, streets, and access easements.
- **Gross Dwelling Units/Acre:** The number of dwelling units allowed per acre including the area for right-of-way, streets, and access easements.





density is 8 net dwelling units per acre and maximum 12 dwelling units per acre. For developments electing to conform to site and building design standards promoting pedestrian-oriented development, density is primarily limited by allowable building height, integration of required parking, market conditions, and conformance with applicable site and building design provisions. Specifying the maximum number of dwelling units in one building may be appropriate in some areas to ensure compatibility and to limit building massing and density.

d) Implementing zoning districts: R-2

Policy 2.2.3

High Density Residential:

- a) Purpose: This designation provides for areas with high density residential use.
- b) Locational criteria: Intended for areas characterized by and/or appropriate for high density housing such as multiplexes and apartments, within a close proximity to commercial services, transit access, and/or parks and other public recreational amenities.
- c) Principal uses & density: A mix of multiplex and multifamily dwelling units. The permitted minimum density is 13 net dwelling units per acre or more. For developments electing to conform to site and building design standards promoting pedestrian-oriented development, density is primarily limited by allowable building height, integration of required parking, market conditions, and conformance with applicable site and building design provisions. Specifying the maximum number of dwelling units in one building may be appropriate in some areas to ensure compatibility and to limit building massing and density.



Source: Google Map



d) Implementing zoning districts: R-3

Policy 2.2.4

Neighborhood Commercial:

- a) Purpose: This designation is intended to allow for a mixture of neighborhood scaled retail, commercial service, office, and various high density residential uses.
- b) Locational criteria: Existing and planned future neighborhood center areas, sites along key arterials and collector streets, and transitional areas between residential uses and downtown or other mixed-use centers or commercial areas.
- c) Principal uses & density: A mix of retail, commercial service, office, and high density residential uses depending on the area’s context. Commercial corridors and neighborhood centers can accommodate a greater mix of retail and commercial uses while some transitional areas near the edge of residential neighborhoods are more appropriate for a mix of office and residential uses. The permitted minimum residential density is 13 net dwelling units per acre, depending on the underlying zoning district and neighborhood context. For developments electing to conform to site and building design standards promoting pedestrian-oriented development, density is primarily limited by allowable building height, integration of required parking, market conditions, and conformance with applicable site and building design provisions. Specifying the maximum number of dwelling units in one building may be appropriate in some areas to ensure a neighborhood-friendly scale of development.



Source: JEM development



Source: City of Yakima

d) Implementing zoning districts: B1, B2, and HB

Policy 2.2.5

General Commercial:

- a) Purpose: This designation is intended to allow for a variety of retail, commercial, office, and high density residential uses.



- b) Locational criteria: Existing and planned future mixed use center areas, and areas along key arterials and collector streets.
- c) Principal uses & density: A mix of retail, commercial service, office, and high density residential uses depending on the area's context. The permitted minimum residential density is 13 net dwelling units per acre, which can accommodate mixed use or multi-family developments. For developments electing to conform to site and building design standards promoting pedestrian-oriented development, density is primarily limited by allowable building height, integration of required parking, market conditions, and conformance with applicable site and building design provisions. Specifying the maximum number of dwelling units in one building may be appropriate in some areas to ensure a neighborhood-friendly scale of development.
- d) Implementing zoning districts: GC and AS

Policy 2.2.6

CBD Commercial Core:

- a) Purpose: This designation is intended to reinforce Yakima's downtown as the center of commercial, civic, and cultural activities within the city. Downtown is expected to accommodate new development while reinforcing and enhancing its historic pedestrian-friendly character and scale.
- b) Locational criteria: Intended for Yakima's existing Central Business District and allowing for growth only when there is a demonstrated need for additional permitted uses in areas physically capable of accommodating the mix of uses.
- c) Principal uses & density: A broad mix of commercial, retail, professional office, civic and cultural, and multifamily residential uses. Active uses are required on the ground floor along Yakima Avenue and key side streets. Multi-story buildings and a mixture of uses are encouraged. New residential uses must feature transit-supportive densities (at least 15 gross dwelling units/acre).





d) Implementing zoning districts: CBD

Policy 2.2.7

Regional Commercial:

- a) Purpose: This designation is intended to promote a medium to large scale mix of retail, service and business, and tourism/recreational establishments and complementary multi-family. Coordinated infrastructure development and site and building design standards are critical elements to emphasize quality development that enhances the character, identity, and economic vitality of Yakima.
- b) Locational criteria: On high visibility sites near Interstate 82 and US Route 12.
- c) Principal uses & density: A wide range of retail, service and business, tourism, and recreational establishments. Multifamily and townhouses are allowed as a secondary use to complement and support other commercial and recreational uses and promote a healthy pedestrian friendly environment. New residential uses feature densities supportive to transit use (at least 15 gross dwelling units/acre).



Source: City of Yakima

d) Implementing zoning districts: RD

Policy 2.2.8

Industrial:

- a) Purpose: This designation provides for manufacturing, agricultural processing/storage, and closely related uses.
- b) Locational criteria: Existing industrial designated areas with active industrial uses or areas featuring adequate public utilities and land physically suited to industrial activities that are buffered from residential or other potentially incompatible uses. New industrial development should be located in areas that take advantage of access to I-82, Highway 12, SR-24, and existing rail and airport facilities. Additional areas may be designated, provided they are surrounded by and characterized by industrial uses.



Source: City of Yakima



c) Principal uses & density: Industrial, agricultural, research and development, repair, construction business, warehouse, and distribution terminals that minimize external impacts to adjacent districts, and accessory uses.

d) Implementing zoning districts: M1, M2, AS

Policy 2.2.9

Open Space:

a) Purpose: This designation provides for various parks, natural areas and open spaces.

b) Locational criteria: Existing park and recreational facilities, environmentally sensitive areas that may be publicly or privately operated. Additional areas may be designated depending on parks need and ownership criteria.

c) Principal uses & density: Industrial, agricultural, research and development, repair, construction business, warehouse, and distribution terminals that minimize external impacts to adjacent districts, and accessory uses. Residential uses are not allowed in this land use designation.

Policy 2.2.10

Public Facilities:

a) Purpose: This designation provides for land to serve various public purposes under public ownership.

b) Locational criteria: Existing public facilities and additional facilities as needed by the public agencies to provide various community and public services.

c) Principal uses & density: Public service facilities, schools, police and fire stations, waste water treatment facilities etc. Residential uses are not allowed in this land use designation.





GOAL 2.3. PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY, CHARACTER, RESILIENCY, COMMUNITY WELL-BEING, AND FUNCTION OF YAKIMA’S RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.

Policy 2.3.1. Provide for a wide variety of housing types within the city to meet the full range of housing needs for Yakima’s evolving population.

- a) Accessory dwelling units (ADU). Allow for attached and detached ADU’s in all residential districts provided regulatory provisions are included to promote compatibility with surrounding uses.
- b) Standard single family. Continue to allow for attached or detached single family dwellings in residential districts.
- c) Small lot single family. Allow for small lot single family development (lots smaller than 5,000 square feet) to meet different housing needs. .
- d) Cottage housing. Allow the development of cottage housing (a cluster of small homes around a common open space) in residential zones, provided special design provisions are included to ensure a pedestrian-oriented design, inclusion of common open space, and strict cottage size limitations.

Cottage Housing

Typically a cluster of 4-12 small, detached housing units that surround a common open space. Cottages are typically no larger than 1,200 sf size range and popular with singles, couples, empty nesters, and small families that desire a sense of community and don’t want to maintain a large yard. They function as a niche housing type that would be popular among a smaller percentage of the population.





- e) Duplexes. Continue to allow duplexes in appropriate residential zones, provided density standards are met. Consider incorporating design standards that emphasize a pedestrian-oriented design and the inclusion of usable open space.
- f) Townhouses. Encourage the development of townhouses in the R-2 and R-3 zones and commercial zones as an efficient form of housing. Design standards should emphasize pedestrian-oriented design, façade articulation, and usable open space.
- g) Senior and assisted housing. Encourage these housing types in the R-2 and R-3 zones and zones and commercial zones. Design standards should emphasize pedestrian-oriented design, façade articulation, and usable open space.
- h) Walk up apartments and stacked flats. Encourage these housing types in the R-2 and R-3 zones and commercial zones. Design standards should emphasize pedestrian-oriented design, façade articulation, and usable open space.



Source: City of Yakima



- i) Live-work units. Promote opportunities to combine live and work spaces in commercial and mixed-use zones.

Policy 2.3.2

Preserve and enhance established residential neighborhoods. Specifically:

- a) Ensure that new development is consistent with the and scale, style, and aesthetic quality to an established neighborhood.
- b) Protect the character of various residential neighborhoods by placing low density homes away from the major centers, and allowing higher intensity residential land uses close to commercial and community services and transit.
- c) Prioritize the upkeep and improvement of streets, sidewalks, landscaping, parks, utilities, and community facilities in established neighborhoods.
- d) Maintain neighborhood upkeep through City code compliance.
- e) Carefully review proposed land use designation changes to more intensive residential designations, commercial, or industrial. Specifically:
 - Proposals should conform to locational criteria set forth for the desired designation in the applicable policies under Goal 2.2.
 - The proposed site should be physically suited for the proposed designation.
 - Avoid spot zones or similar changes that may create instability with the surrounding neighborhood.
- f) Allow home occupations that would not generate excessive traffic, create parking problems, or degrade the livability the neighborhood.

Also see the goals and policies of the Historic Preservation element.



Source: City of Yakima



Policy 2.3.3 Create walkable residential neighborhoods with safe streets and good connections to schools, parks, transit, and commercial services.

- a) Construct sidewalks along all new residential streets.
- b) Provide streetscape standards that create safe and walkable streets within residential developments.
- c) Promote small block sizes to ensure good connectivity and reduced walking distances between residences and schools, parks, and services.

Policy 2.3.4 Consider new design standards for small lot single family development to gracefully integrate these uses into existing neighborhoods in ways that maintain general neighborhood scale.

- A covered entry facing the street.
- Minimize the impacts of garages and driveways on the streetscape.
- Minimum amount of façade transparency to promote more “eyes on the street” for safety and to create a welcoming streetscape.



Source: City of Yakima



Policy 2.3.5. Consider new design standards for new multifamily development to promote neighborhood compatibility, enhance the livability of new housing, and enhance the character of residential and mixed-use areas.

Key concepts to emphasize in the design standards:

- Emphasize pedestrian oriented building frontages.
- Emphasize façade articulation consistent with neighborhood scale.
- Integrate high quality durable building materials and human scaled detailing.
- Provide compatible site edges and sensitive service area design.
- Provide for vehicular access and storage while minimizing visual and safety impacts of vehicles.
- Integrate landscaping elements to soften building elevations, enhance neighborhood compatibility, and improve the setting for residents.

Policy 2.3.6. Allow some compatible nonresidential uses in residential zones, such as appropriately scaled schools, churches, parks and other public/community facilities, home occupations, day care centers, and other uses that provide places for people to gather. Maintain standards in the zoning code for locating and designing these uses in a manner that respects the character and scale of the neighborhood.

Policy 2.3.7. Explore the development of zoning incentives to help meet housing diversity and affordability goals.

Examples could include residential density bonuses, variations in allowed housing type, or flexibility in regulations, if a proposal meets community goals for affordable, senior, size-limited or other types of innovative housing. If not permitted outright or through discretionary review processes, consider providing for these incentives through pilot programs or other innovative measures.



Source: City of Yakima



GOAL 2.4. ENHANCE THE CHARACTER , RESILIENCY, COMMUNITY WELL-BEING, AND ECONOMIC VITALITY OF YAKIMA’S DOWNTOWN.

Policy 2.4.1 Reestablish the historic core of downtown as the heart of the City. Key concepts for the historic core:

- a) Community Gathering Space: Establish a central gathering space for community activities. Specifically:
 - Design to accommodate numerous year-round activities and provide for an 18-hour active, vibrant, and distinctive space.
 - Ensure year round usability and longevity of structures throughout the historic core through street and building design standards that protect residents from extreme heat and flooding.
 - Strengthen and build upon existing assets, including the Capitol Theater, the Federal Building, the existing Millennium Plaza art installment, and Yakima Avenue storefronts.
 - Provide a focus for new ground floor retail and upper floor housing or offices on surrounding infill sites.





b) Main Street: Emphasize Yakima’s Main Street Program such as exploring Chestnut Avenue between Front and Fourth Streets as a destination for retail shopping and entertainment. Streetscape elements could include:

- Reduce travel lane widths to widen sidewalks and reduce pedestrian crossing distances.
- Provide curbside parking adjacent to retail.
- Eliminate turn lane pockets and prohibit/eliminate driveways.
- Bury power lines and emphasize/plant canopy street trees.
- Provide pedestrian scale lighting, benches, shade structures, and public art.
- Incorporate landscaped curb extensions and specially paved crosswalks at intersections.
- Feature specially paved sidewalks similar in material to the plaza and market paving.

c) Parking: Implement a phased parking strategy, including:

- Temporary retail parking lot – Continue access to parking in downtown Yakima in the City operated parking lots according to the parking plan that promotes downtown redevelopment.
- Retail parking structure – as demand grows, construct a municipal parking structure between First and Second Streets east of Chestnut Avenue. Reserve ground level block frontages for active uses and construct a separate mixed-use building along the Second Street block frontage.
- Supplemental parking – to supplement retail customer parking, partner with the Yakima Mall to lease space for retail, special event, and downtown employee parking. Consider access and design improvements to facilitate better utilization of the Yakima Mall parking garage.



Source: City of Yakima



- d) Public Market: Construct a regional retail anchor at the western edge of Front Street between Chestnut and Yakima Avenue. Encourage a mixture of uses downtown, including restaurants and taverns, retail, office, civic, cultural, lodging, and residential uses to support day and evening activities for all ages.

Policy 2.4.2.

Maintain and strengthen downtown uses as the center for civic, retail, cultural, dining and entertainment activity in Yakima.

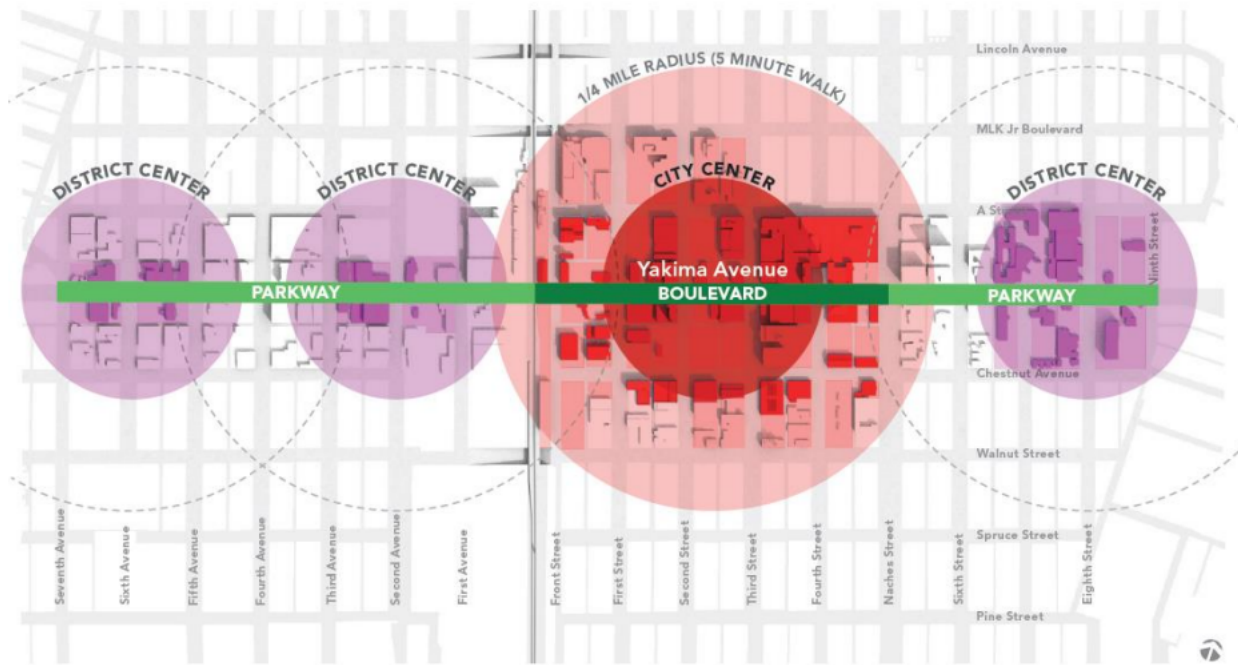
- a) Emphasize storefronts with active uses (retail, food and drink, and entertainment) along strategic downtown core block frontages.
- b) Promote new mixed-use development on vacant or underutilized parcels. Upper floor apartments, condominiums, and office uses are encouraged.
- c) Prohibit new auto-oriented uses and other uses that are space intensive and facilitate minimal pedestrian activity.
- d) Retain and strengthen government uses.
- e) Promote adaptive reuse of Yakima Mall, emphasizing active ground floor uses, government, museum or art gallery uses, and residential and office uses on upper floors.
- f) Deemphasize long term surface parking.
- g) Within the District Center Mixed-Use area (see Exhibit 2-3):
 - Promote retail development at key intersections.
 - Allow more flexibility in the range of allowed uses.



Source: City of Yakima



Exhibit 2-6-- Fundamental Downtown Master Plan concept



Source: City of Yakima

- Policy 2.4.3. Community Design –Develop and apply community design standards for downtown. Key concepts:
- a) Reinforce the historic storefront pattern on Yakima Avenue and key side streets. This includes storefronts built to the sidewalk edge and containing generous transparent window area, entries facing the street, and weather protection elements (particularly on west facing facades).
 - b) Accommodate a variety of pedestrian-friendly building frontages on side streets.
 - c) Minimize untreated blank walls facing the street.



- d) Promote the continued preservation and restoration/rehabilitation of historic and contributing buildings.
- e) Promote façade massing and articulation that complements historical context.
- f) Integrate high quality durable building materials and human scaled detailing.
- g) Provide compatible site edges and sensitive rooftop and service area design.
- h) Locate and design off-street parking to minimize impacts to the retail and pedestrian environment.
- i) Integrate “shade infrastructure” into downtown areas. This includes increasing tree canopy, vegetation, and installing shade structures such as awnings.



Source: City of Yakima

Policy 2.4.4.

Streetscape & Circulation – reestablish all downtown roadway corridors as complete streets where the needs of all travel modes (motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians) are provided for in a balanced manner. Key concepts to consider:

- a) Boulevard – Enhance Yakima Avenue between Front and Naches Streets to prioritize pedestrian access. Key elements include a wide landscaped median, reduced travel lanes(from four to two), integration of left turn lanes at intersections, protected bicycle lanes, additional curbside landscaping, enhanced intersections.
- b) Parkway - Enhance other segments of Yakima Avenue as a landscaped parkway. The concept is similar to the Boulevard, except the center turn lanes remain (no landscaped median) and additional planting strips are provided on each side of the travel lanes.
- c) Downtown Street Standards – Update the street design standards for all downtown streets emphasizing the complete streets approach. The



standards should include general requirements and design elements addressing roadway sidewalk design as suggested in the 2013 Downtown Master Plan.

GOAL 2.5. ENHANCE THE CHARACTER, RESILIENCE, COMMUNITY WELL-BEING, FUNCTION, COMPATIBILITY OF USES, AND ECONOMIC VITALITY OF YAKIMA'S ARTERIAL CORRIDORS AND MIXED-USE CENTERS.

Policy 2.5.1. Allow for a mixture of compatible land uses along corridors and within mixed-use designated areas. This includes the integration of multi-family residential and office uses with retail and service commercial uses. Provide zoning and design standards to maintain compatibility between different uses and zones.

- a) Avoid placing land uses that create excessive noise, unless the noise level can be mitigated, in locations that are close to residences or other noise-sensitive land uses.
- b) See Policy 2.3.5 regarding the establishment of design standards for multifamily development.
- c) Update zoning and design provisions to promote compatibility between different uses and zones. Examples include building setbacks, building massing, landscaping buffers, fencing, service element location, and design provisions, and vehicular parking and access provisions. Landscape buffers are particularly important elements that can effectively mitigate impacts of commercial uses on adjacent residential uses. Commercial development adjacent to Low Density Residential designated areas warrant the greatest compatibility design protections.
- d) Improve standards for public and private development to reduce noise and keep light pollution out of residential neighborhoods.
- e) Improve standards for public and private development to reduce urban heat island effect.



Source: City of Yakima



Policy 2.5.2.

Craft and adopt design standards for Yakima’s most visible corridors and centers, with the highest priority being First Street, General Commercial designated areas, Summit view Avenue, Nob Hill Boulevard, North 16th Avenue and select Commercial Mixed-Use centers. Consider key design elements:

- a) Provide for pedestrian-friendly block frontages (i.e., entries visible from street, pedestrian access, minimize blank walls, landscaping elements).
- b) Promote façade massing and articulation that adds visual interest and reduces perceived scale of large buildings.
- c) Integrate high quality durable building materials and human scaled detailing.
- d) Emphasize landscaping elements as a major character defining feature of the City.
- e) Provide good internal pedestrian and vehicular circulation.
- f) Minimize impacts of service elements, mechanical equipment, and utilities on the pedestrian environment.
- g) Design compatible site edges or buffers, particularly when adjacent to residential zones.
- h) Develop special standards and guidelines for large site development that incorporate open space and landscaping as a unifying element, provide a connected system of pathways, integrate safe internal vehicular circulation, demonstrate sensitivity to the surrounding context, and take advantage of special on-site and nearby features.
- i) Integrate opportunities for flexibility in the design standards by allowing multiple ways of achieving standards and allowing strategic design departures provided the project meets the design intent.

Also see Policy 2.3.5 regarding design standards specific to multifamily development.



Source: City of Yakima



- Policy 2.5.3. Utilize strict access management standards to enhance safety and maintain the arterial traffic functions of the corridor (see the Transportation Element for more details).
- Policy 2.5.4. Prioritize streetscape improvements for the most visible corridors and centers. Possible improvements include lighting, landscaping, sidewalk, underground utilities, bicycle, and pedestrian furniture. Emphasize landscaping elements as one of the character defining features of the City.
- Policy 2.5.5. Commercial Mixed-Use area centered on W. Nob Hill Boulevard & S. 64th Avenue – Promote coordinated master planned development that integrates a mix of uses, and the following land use & design principles:
- Includes an identifiable neighborhood center feature (i.e., main street or central plaza space).
 - Integrates a well-connected grid of streets, lanes, and internal walkways and trails. Prioritize the development of trails that provide a framework for development to orient around and provide functional connections between uses and amenities.
 - Accommodates a variety of housing types within walking distance of neighborhood center retail and amenities.
 - Provides attractive arterial block frontages with a strong emphasis on pedestrian access, landscaping elements, and building facades featuring transparent window areas, articulation treatments that add visual interest and reduce the perceived scale of large buildings, high quality durable building materials, and an integration of human scale design details.
 - Integrate a phasing plan that makes optimal use of initial phases.

Coordinated development concept example

Includes a focal point, a connected circulation system, careful siting of parking areas, and a mix of uses.



Source: City of Yakima



- f) Carefully consider the location of parking lots to minimize impacts on the streetscape environment.
- g) Integrate a range of on-site open spaces to serve residential uses and make the center attractive to neighborhood residents and visitors.

Policy 2.5.6.

Cascade Mill redevelopment – Promote coordinated development that integrates a mixture of uses, and the following land use & design principles:

- a) Includes an identifiable tourism oriented feature(s) (i.e., greenway trail access, brewery/winery district, year-round recreation).
- b) Promote and incentivize large-scale industrial park, business park, light manufacturing or other economic development that integrates with planned retail and recreation uses.
- c) Encourage the integration of retail that serves the Northeast Yakima Neighborhood and regional market. Complementary office uses are encouraged to be mixed with retail uses both vertically (on upper floors above retail) or horizontally (in separate buildings to the side or rear of retail).
- d) Encourage a range of housing types (including townhouses, apartments, and senior housing), adjacent to the Cascade Mill site, in locations complementary to future retail activities, trails, and existing Northeast Yakima Neighborhood uses.
- e) Configure retail and tourism uses to create a pedestrian-oriented focal point. This could include a “main street” concept with storefronts and a pedestrian-friendly street, a central plaza or commons surrounded by storefronts, or other concept that integrates public gathering space with retail/tourism uses in a memorable and character-defining built environment.





- f) Integrates a well-connected grid of streets, lanes, and internal walkways and trails. Continue to plan for and construct the East-West Corridor, freeway access improvements, and the north-south oriented Cascade Mill Parkway. Prioritize the development of trails that provide a framework for development to orient around and provide attractive connections between uses and amenities.
- g) Provides attractive arterial block frontages with a strong emphasis on pedestrian access, landscaping elements, and building facades featuring transparent window areas, articulation treatments that add visual interest and reduce the perceived scale of large buildings, high quality durable building materials, and an integration of human scale design details.
- h) Integrate a phasing plan that makes optimal use of initial phases.
- i) Carefully consider the location of parking lots and views from I-82 (to mitigate visual impacts of parking lots, blank walls, and service areas and enhance the character and identity of Yakima).

GOAL 2.6. PROMOTE COMPATIBLE HIGH QUALITY DEVELOPMENT THAT ENHANCES THE CHARACTER, RESILIENCY, COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND IDENTITY OF YAKIMA.

Policy 2.6.1. Adopt and administer user-friendly design standards and guidelines that support commercial and multifamily development in high visibility areas or as a density bonus incentive. Evaluate effectiveness of adopted standards and guidelines over time and make adjustments as necessary to achieve community design goals and policies. Emphasize the concepts referenced in Policies 2.3.1 through 2.3.7.

Policy 2.6.2. Site and design public facilities to support and strengthen Yakima’s community character, resiliency, community well-being and identity.

- a) Recognize that the design of public rights-of-way play a role in determining community character. Wherever feasible, promote



Source: City of Yakima



complete streets and incorporate streetscape improvements, such as way-finding signs, lighting, public art, enhanced landscaping and street furniture.

- b) Recognize, maintain, and enhance community entry and gateway sites to enhance Yakima’s character and setting.
- c) Design public facilities to serve as a model of architectural and site design for private development in the city through use of quality building materials, human scale detailing, and landscape materials.
- d) Work with WSDOT and Yakima County to consider alternative design plan(s) for the future East-West Corridor I-82 bridge with an iconic design that enhances the entryway into Yakima.
- e) Locate and design public facilities to be resilient to certain hazards such as wildfires, poor air quality, extreme heat, and extreme precipitation, in order to protect community well-being and public health.
- f) Locate and design public spaces that reflect and enhance Yakima’s sense of place and function as welcoming formal and informal gathering spaces.

GOAL 2.7 REINFORCE AND ENHANCE YAKIMA’S ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP THROUGH RESOURCE PROTECTION & SUSTAINABLE DESIGN.

Policy 2.7.1 Maintain and strengthen regulations to protect sensitive natural areas, critical areas and shorelines. Pursue strategies/actions to restore degraded natural areas and increase their resilience to current and future hazards.

Policy 2.7.2 Update development regulations to emphasize and prioritize sustainable design in new developments, including forms of Low Impact Development (e.g., bio-swales, rain-gardens, drought tolerant landscaping).

Policy 2.7.3 Encourage retrofits to existing development and infrastructure to reduce environmental impact and decrease the risks to infrastructure from to natural disasters. Explore providing incentives to residents and businesses

Environmental Stewardship

Please see the **Natural Environment Element** for additional guidance, goals and policies on the natural environment.





that improve building energy performance and/or incorporate onsite renewable energy as well as incentives for retrofits that improve indoor air quality of occupants, stormwater management, and passive cooling capacity of buildings.

Policy 2.7.4 Develop policies and prescriptive designs to encourage property owners to landscape unimproved right-of-way with functional Low Impact Development features (e.g., bio-swale or rain-garden) or for use as private food gardens.

Policy 2.7.5 Emphasize sustainable design/practice in public improvements and in the design/use of public facilities and events. Key elements:

- a) Update public works standards, as necessary, to emphasize best practice sustainable design/practice.
- b) Incorporate consideration of physical health and well-being into the location and design of public facilities.

Policy 2.7.7 Establish resource protection and sustainability goals, monitor development to track success in meeting those goals, and refine the implementation strategy as needed to help meet goals

GOAL 2.8. PRESERVE AND DEVELOP INVITING AND DISTINCTIVE COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES, WITH THE GREATEST EMPHASIS IN DOWNTOWN, MIXED-USE AREAS, AND NEIGHBORHOODS.

See Policy 2.4.1.above regarding downtown community gathering space.

See the Parks & Recreation Element for related goals and policies.

Policy 2.8.1. Adopt development regulations that provide for the integration of usable public open space in residential, commercial, and mixed-use developments.

Policy 2.8.2. Pursue strategic public/private partnerships with large developments to leverage public space integrated with new development.





Policy 2.8.3. Continue to encourage public participation in the design of public spaces throughout the City.

GOAL 2.9. MAINTAIN AND PROMOTE ACTIVE USE OF INDUSTRIAL & MANUFACTURING AREAS TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC GROWTH.

Policy 2.9.1 Develop industrial and manufacturing lands that minimize impacts on surrounding land uses, especially residential land uses and natural areas. Utilize landscape buffers (evergreen trees and shrubs) along with open space or other design controls to mitigate noise, glare, and other impacts associated with the uses to ensure that their location will not adversely affect the surrounding areas.

Policy 2.9.2 Encourage infill and promote efficient utilization of vacant land within areas that are designated for industrial uses.

Policy 2.9.3 Encourage development of compact, small-scale industrial parks through Industrial Planned Development (Industrial PD).

Policy 2.9.4 Encourage multiple business manufacturing development, providing a more stable economic base through diversity, as opposed to a single large manufacturing business.

Policy 2.9.5 Limit non-industrial uses to those that are complementary to industrial activities in terms of access and circulation, public safety, hours of operation, and other land use activities.

Policy 2.9.6 Protect industrial and manufacturing lands from encroachment by other land uses, which would reduce the economic viability of industrial lands.



Source: City of Yakima



GOAL 2.10 PROMOTE LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN THAT ENCOURAGES HEALTHY LIVING AND GOOD CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN COMPATIBLE USES.

Policy 2.10.1 Adopt development standards that facilitate a complementary mix of uses within mixed-use centers that encourage walking and bicycling between uses.

Policy 2.10.2 Adopt design provisions that provide for safe and attractive non-motorized connectivity between uses and amenities, with the frequency of connections commensurate with the envisioned intensity of land uses (e.g., housing, employment, community services, and amenities).

Policy 2.10.3 Adopt development standards that encourage the integration of recreational space with multifamily, mixed-use, and planned residential developments.

Policy 2.10.4 Integrate heat, drought, wildfire, and flood resistant public recreational amenities such as shade infrastructure or native plants accessible to all Yakima residents, workers, and visitors, with highest priority on locations, facilities, and activities that serve underserved communities. (also see the Parks & Recreation Element for more details)

Policy 2.10.5 Increase access to health foods by encouraging the location of fresh food markets and community food gardens close to multifamily zones, mixed-use developments, and transit facilities, and prioritizing underserved communities through zoning regulations

Policy 2.10.6 Promote the use of sustainable design techniques to enhance environmental quality. Low impact development techniques which reduce urban flood potential and capture stormwater runoff shall be emphasized to the extent feasible and incorporated into street, trail, and lot design/layout. Opportunities for natural system restoration should also be considered.

Policy 2.10.7 Treatments along the edges of developments need to consider current and possible future conditions on adjacent sites. Rather than simply walling off



Source: City of Yakima



edges, development plans should include design treatments that allow for better integration of uses.

GOAL 2.11 MAXIMIZE THE PUBLIC SERVICE AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF INSTITUTIONS, WHILE MINIMIZING THE ADVERSE IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR DEVELOPMENT GROWTH AND EXPANSION

Policy 2.11.1 New institutions should be placed where they are compatible with surrounding land uses, and existing institutions should be developed to be compatible with adjoining land uses.

Policy 2.11.2 Institutions within established commercial and industrial areas will be regulated under the codes affecting those land uses and zones.

Policy 2.11.3 Institutions proposed for location in or adjacent to residential areas will be reviewed under the “Institutional Overlay” zoning requirements.

Policy 2.11.4 Access to institutions shall be from the nearest arterial and should not increase traffic on local residential streets.

Policy 2.11.5 An impact analysis of how improvement to institutions will affect traffic, parking and other qualities in surrounding areas will be prepared as part of an Institutional Overlay request.

Policy 2.11.6 Institutions that are identified as essential public facilities should meet the policy requirements under the section “Siting Essential Public Facilities” in this Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 2.11.7 All new development or expansion of hospital and higher educational facilities can be developed through the “Institutional Overlay” zoning requirements.

Policy 2.11.8 The Institutional Overlay (IO) district on the Zoning Map will provide specific development standards that allow for appropriate growth and development for new institutions, or for the expansion of existing institutions within their existing or proposed development boundaries.





- Policy 2.11.9 Establish boundaries for institutions to reasonably protect established residential neighborhoods from further encroachment by institutions and allow the institutions to plan for future growth.
- Policy 2.11.10 Require development and expansion of institutions to be compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhoods, and to minimize the parking and traffic impacts on the adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Policy 2.11.11 Identify areas resilient to climate hazards where community serving facilities or emergency shelters can be placed in the event of an emergency. Siting should prioritize accessibility in underserved areas of the city to improve support to vulnerable community members.

Public Schools

GOAL 2.12. WORK WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND PRIVATE SCHOOL OFFICIALS TO PROPERLY LOCATE SCHOOL FACILITIES AS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY FOR YAKIMA RESIDENTS.

SEE THE CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT FOR RELATED GOALS AND POLICIES.

- Policy 2.12.1 Encourage the location of new elementary and middle schools within the residential neighborhoods the schools will serve.
- Policy 2.12.2 Public schools shall be accessible by sidewalks and bikeways. Provide for through-block connections, where necessary to reduce walking distance to schools.
- Policy 2.12.3 Locate schools on relatively flat land that is in the center or on the borders of the neighborhoods being served. Elementary schools should be located on collector streets; middle and high schools should be located on arterial roads.





- Policy 2.12.4 Co-locate and design schools and recreational facilities to function as an important community resource during off-school hours.
- Policy 2.12.5 Locate and design public school facilities, schools and associated recreational facilities in alignment with the critical facilities requirements of the City of Yakima Critical Areas Ordinance to function as resilience hubs for non-conventional emergency facilities in the event of emergencies or natural disasters especially in areas with fewer public emergency resources.
- Policy 2.12.6 Support school infrastructure upgrades and maintenance including routine heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system (HVAC) assessments and improvements. Consider other infrastructure upgrades, such as use of reflective building materials, passive cooling retrofits, and renewable energy systems.

Siting Essential Public Facilities

Essential public facilities include those that are often difficult to place because no one wants them in or near their community. These include airports, State education facilities, State or regional transportation facilities, correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities and in-patient facilities including hospitals, substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities and group homes. The Growth Management Act requires the Comprehensive Plan to include a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities. The GMA also states that no local comprehensive plan for any neighborhood may forbid the placement of essential public facilities within that neighborhood. It is important to recognize that the location of these facilities may have negative impacts on surrounding land use areas and different essential public facilities may have different needs in terms of their physical location.

GOAL 2.13 PROVIDE ADEQUATE LOCATIONS FOR SITING ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES.





- Policy 2.13.1 All essential public facilities shall be located and developed to be compatible with adjoining land uses to the greatest possible extent.
- Policy 2.13.2 Essential public facilities shall be located in areas where they are best able to serve the individuals they are intended to serve.
- Policy 2.13.3 All essential public facilities providing County-wide or State-wide services shall be identified according to the requirements under the Yakima County-wide Planning Policies Section C.3.1 through C.3.2 (see Appendix F).
- Policy 2.13.4 A review process for siting or the expansion of essential public facilities shall be established according to the requirements under the Yakima County-wide Planning Policies Section C.3.3 through Section C.3.6 (see Appendix F).
- Policy 2.13.5 The criteria for determining the location of essential public facilities should be coordinated and consistent with other planning goal requirements, such as -reducing sprawl, promoting economic development, protecting the environment, improving emergency response, decreasing vulnerabilities to natural hazards, and supporting affordable housing.
- GOAL 2.14. SUPPORT GROWTH OF THE YAKIMA AIR TERMINAL SUBJECT TO MITIGATION OF IMPACTS ON THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY.**
- Policy 2.14.1 The City will support efforts to update the airport master plan to ensure the airport’s long-term vitality as an economic asset to the community.
- Policy 2.14.2 The Airport Overlay Ordinance will be amended as necessary to ensure the Yakima Air Terminal Master Plan’s success and to protect surrounding uses from airport impacts.
- Policy 2.14.3 The purpose of the airport overlay is to identify compatible land uses surrounding the Yakima Air Terminal and ensure minimized adverse impacts on the community and the airport.





Policy 2.14.4 The Ordinance should prohibit buildings, structures, or other objects from being constructed or altered such that those buildings, structures, or other objects do not penetrate the imaginary surface airspace.

Policy 2.14.5 The master plan must include land acquisitions and easements to ensure exclusion of non-noise-sensitive uses.

Policy 2.14.6 The following uses will serve as examples of uses considered compatible with Yakima Air Terminal operations:

Aviation Industries	Airport Related Uses	Open Spaces	Other Uses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Freight Terminal Air Cargo Forwarders Aircraft/Parts Manufacturer Aircraft Repair Shops Aerial Survey Companies Aviation Schools Aviation Research and Testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trucking Terminals Taxi/Bus Terminals Parking Facilities and Auto Storage Car Rental Agencies Gas Stations Restaurants Night Clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Golf Courses Picnic Areas Forests Landscape Nurseries Arboretum Farming Mining and Excavation Cemeteries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storage Facilities Warehouses Wholesale Distribution Center Shopping Centers Banking Services Office Buildings Factories Large Store Retail Sales

Policy 2.14.7 The following uses will serve as examples of uses considered incompatible with Yakima Air Terminal operations:

Residential	Institutional	Sanitary	Wildlife	Other Uses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Development > 1 DU/Acre Mobile/Manufactured Home Parks Multi-Family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Church Hospital Outpatient Surgery Centers Nursing Home Day Care Facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landfill Sewage Pond Transfer Station Sludge Disposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Reservoir Feed Lot Slaughter House Waterfowl Production Wildlife Refuge/Sanctuary Fish Pond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convention Centers Sports Stadiums Other Large Assembly



Residential	Institutional	Sanitary	Wildlife	Other Uses
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lake/Pond Wetland Pond Sanctuary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities that attract high concentrations of people
GOAL 2.15	MANAGE USE AND DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS THAT ARE AT RISK FOR EXTREME WEATHER OR OTHER NATURAL HAZARDS TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.			
Policy 2.15.1	Maintain GIS systems that map existing and projected risks for flooding, wildfires, and worsening extreme heat			
Policy 2.15.2	Promote denser development in highly environmentally suitable areas to minimize human health and safety impacts of projected natural processes and hazards.			
Policy 2.15.3	Communicate directly with developers and the public on these hazards and the associated land use and development decisions moving forward			

2.5 Implementation

The primary implementation tool for the Land Use Element is the zoning code and map, and other supporting development regulations. The Comprehensive Plan process has identified necessary code updates for implementation. See Appendix B (Code review memo). The City will develop and maintain a five year implementation plan after the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.





3 Housing

3.1 Introduction

Housing affordability is a growing challenge in Yakima. A crucial element of this plan is accommodating the current and future housing needs of Yakima’s population, including needs for a variety of housing types and affordability levels. This Housing Element contains the goals, policies, and implementation actions that will help Yakima achieve high quality, affordable, and equitable housing for today’s generations forward.

The City of Yakima acknowledges that the marketplace will generally provide adequate housing to meet demand for those in the upper economic brackets, but that some combination of appropriately zoned land, regulatory incentives, housing funding and rehabilitation programs, and innovative planning techniques will be necessary to meet the needs of middle- and lower-income residents. Understanding this challenge, and the current housing trends, helps the City plan for the future.

Housing Goal- Growth Management Act

Plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock. (RCW 36.70A.020 (4))





New State Laws under GMA

Since Yakima’s previous comprehensive plan update in 2017, the Washington State Legislature adopted several significant changes to the GMA goals and requirements for housing. Exhibit 3-1 summarizes the major legislative changes that apply to Yakima. The City is addressing each requirement in this plan and in its development regulations. See the Technical Analysis for details.

Exhibit 3-1. New GMA Requirements Related to Housing that Apply to Yakima

Legislation (Year)	Summary of New Requirements
HB 1377 (2019)	Density Bonus for Affordable Housing for Religious Organizations. Require fully planning cities and counties provide a density bonus for low-income affordable housing on properties owned by religious organizations. A density bonus is a zoning tool that allows a developer to build higher, more units, or with more floor space than normally permitted in that area
HB 1754 (2020)	Limitations on Regulating Temporary Housing Provided by Religious Organizations. Places new limitations on the ability of jurisdictions to regulate temporary housing for unhoused individuals on religious organization property. Allows jurisdictions to require a religious organization hosting the homeless and the agency managing the hosting to enter into a memorandum of understanding to protect the public health and safety of residents.
HB 1220 (2021)	Affordable Housing, Displacement, and Racially Disparate Impacts. Requires local jurisdictions to plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments of the population, including moderate, low, very low, and extremely low income, as well as emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing. Mandates that comprehensive plans identify land use capacity, barriers, and programs to address housing shortage. Requires jurisdictions to assess and address racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing, identify areas at high risk of displacement, and establish anti-displacement policies.

How are GMA requirements addressed in Yakima’s Comprehensive Plan?

See the Introduction chapter in Volume 2 for a more detailed summary of all new GMA requirements and corresponding updates to Yakima’s Comprehensive Plan and development code.



Legislation (Year)	Summary of New Requirements
HB 1337 (2023)	<p>Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUS). At least two ADUs (both attached, both detached, or one attached and one detached) per lot must be allowed in residential zones in urban growth areas (UGAs) within all zones in urban growth areas where single family homes are permitted. Applicable standards for Yakima include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two ADUs are allowed per lot ▪ ADUs do not require owner occupancy ▪ ADUs allow separate sale ▪ Parking requirements ▪ Maximum size limit shall be no less than 1,000 sq-ft ▪ Setback should not be more restrictive than the that of primary units (can be on lot lines in certain circumstances). ▪ Height limit at least 24 ft.
ESHB 1293 (2023)	<p>Design Review. May not impose aesthetic standards or requirements for design review that are more restrictive for ADUs than those for principal units.</p>
HB 1110 (2023)	<p>Middle Housing. Requires cities to allow a broader range of housing types in areas that previously allowed predominantly detached homes. For Yakima (a Tier 1 City of at least 75,00) must include:</p> <p>At least six of the nine middle housing types (duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, fiveplexes, sixplexes, townhouses, stacked flats, courtyard apartments, cottage housing.)</p> <p>4 units per lot (6 units per lot near major transit)</p>
SB 5258 (2023) & SB 5559 (2025)	<p>Unit Lot Subdivision. Unit lot subdivision is a method of dividing a single parent parcel into unit based lots that can be sold to individual owners. SB 5258 requires local governments to incorporate this provision into their short plat regulations. SB 5559 clarified that only cities and town in counties planning under the GMA must adopt the new unit lot subdivision regulations.</p>
HB 1998 (2024)	<p>Co-housing. Requires communities to allow co-living on any lot located within a UGA that allows at least six multifamily residential units, including mixed use zoning. This includes any lots required to allow six middle housing units.</p>





Legislation (Year)	Summary of New Requirements
SB 6015 (2024)	Residential Parking. Establishes new rules for residential parking standards, including limitations on what can be required to meet minimum parking requirements. It provides various ways to count parking such as enclosed or unenclosed, tandem, grass block paved surface etc.
SB 5184 (2025)	Parking Reform. Reduces or eliminates parking requirements for certain residential uses and commercial spaces in cities with a population of 30,000 or more. Yakima must adopt this by January 2027.

3.2 Housing Today and Tomorrow

Conditions and Trends

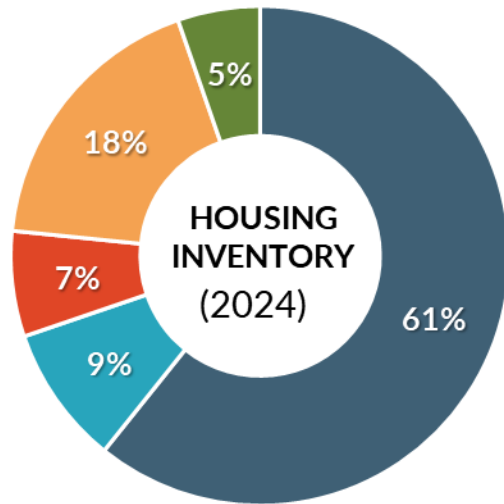
Most of Yakima’s Housing Stock is Detached Single Family Homes

There were 38,584 housing units in Yakima in 2024. Around 61 percent of these units were single-family detached homes, as shown in Exhibit 3-2. Small multifamily structures like duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes make up about 16 percent of the housing stock, while larger multifamily structures like apartment buildings make up 18 percent. About two thirds of all housing units have either two or three bedrooms (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022).





Exhibit 3-2. Housing Inventory by Type in City of Yakima, 2024



- Single Family
- Duplexes
- Multi-family (3 or 4 Units)
- Multi-family (5+ Units)
- Mobile Homes

Source: Washington Office of Financial Management, 2024; BERK Consulting, 2025.

Yakima Needs more Housing Diversity

Over 60% of all housing in the City of Yakima are single-family homes. Not all households require, or can afford, that much space. For example, 30% of all households in Yakima are individuals living alone. Yet only 6% of housing units in Yakima are studios and only 11% have just one bedroom. Increasing the diversity of housing options available will increase housing supply and provide more choices for residents seeking more affordable housing that meets their current needs.

Where are different housing types located?

See the Land Use chapter in Volume 2 for detailed maps of existing land uses within each council district. These maps show the location of parcels with single family homes and multifamily homes.

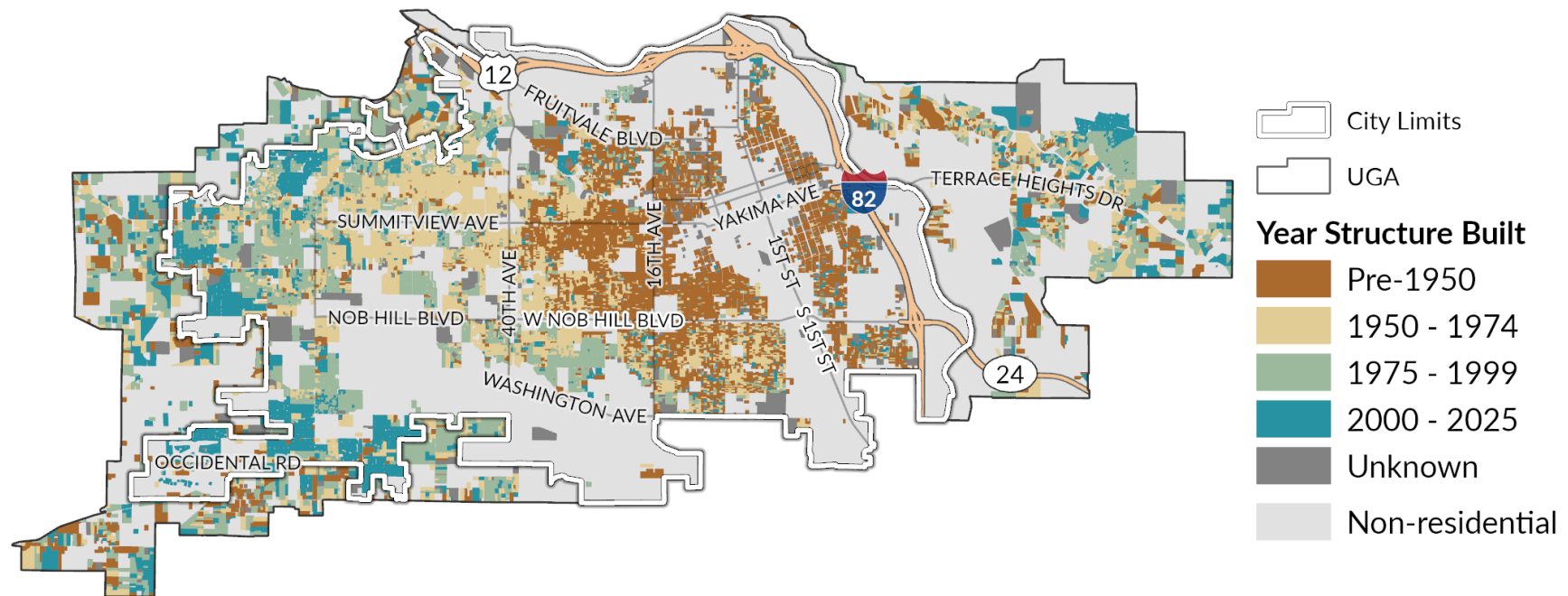




Most of Yakima’s Housing Stock is Old

As of 2025, about 20 percent of residential structures were built since 2000, and nearly two-thirds (63.1 percent) of units were built 40 or more years ago. Since housing units generally have a functional life of around 40 years, those units older than 40 years require additional investments. Preserving existing housing is important to maintain affordability. A map of structure age (both residential and commercial) is shown in Exhibit 3-2; the vast majority of structures in the city are residential with older stock focused between 40th Ave and Highway 82.

Exhibit 3-3. Year Built for Residential Structures



Source: City of Yakima GIS, 2025; BERK, 2025.



The overall age of housing structures is indicative of structure quality, supported by national research that shows a negative correlation between the age of a unit and its condition. In addition, the older housing in Yakima is generally not aligned well with the current and trending household needs in terms of household size, the high number of households without children, relatively low-income levels, and the age demographics of the city. Alternately, Yakima’s current population indicates an increasing need for more small houses, townhouses, multifamily, and accessory dwelling units.

Most New Housing Units Produced are in Multifamily Buildings

Recent development in Yakima is helping to increase housing diversity. Between 2019 and 2024, Yakima added 2,341 units through new housing construction. About 70 percent of these new units were in multifamily structures, from duplexes up to larger apartment buildings (OFM, 2024). This new housing is expanding the range of housing options in Yakima.

Yakima has a Shortage of Housing Compared to Demand

Vacancy rates, as an indicator of housing markets, can provide information about how supply and demand interact and how the market and prices may react. As of 2024, only 2.4% of rental housing units in Yakima were vacant, which is lower than what is considered a healthy rate of 5% to 6%. The supply of ownership housing is also constrained. When vacancy rates and supply are low, people looking for homes have fewer options, increasing competition for the limited units available. This drives up both rents and housing prices.

Housing prices are rising faster than incomes

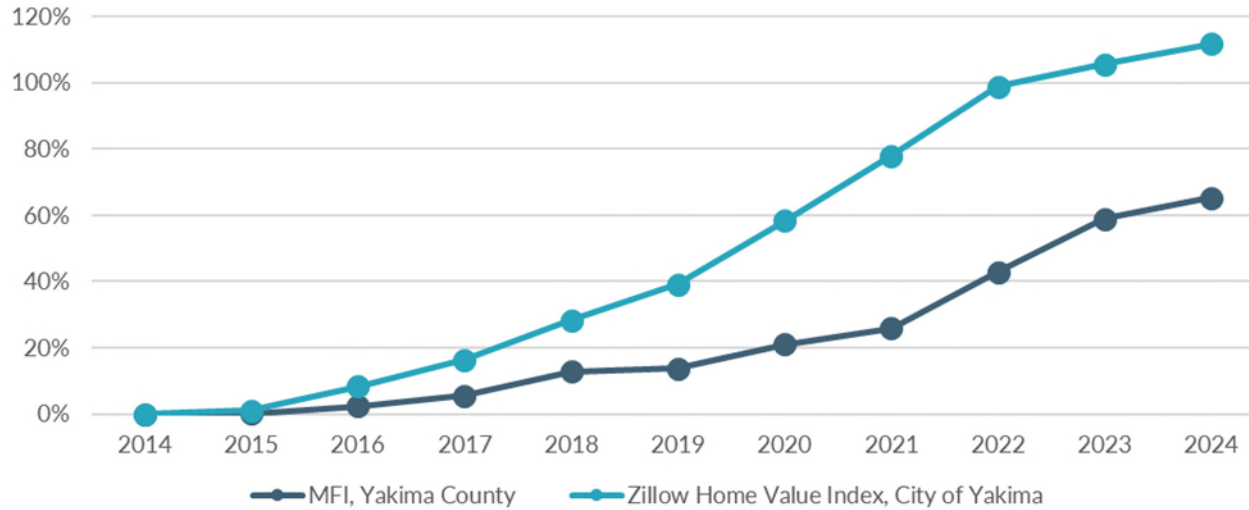
Between 2014 and 2022, the typical home value in Yakima increased by **99%**, from \$163,074 to \$324,075. Over the same period, the median family income only increased by **43%** (from \$47,369 to \$67,644). This indicates homeownership is getting further out of reach for many prospective buyers. See Exhibit 3-4.



Source: City of Yakima



Exhibit 3-4. Percent Change since 2014 in Typical Home Value and Median Family Income (MFI)



Note: Historic MFI and home value data are not adjusted for inflation.
Source: Zillow, 2025; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-2024; BERK, 2025

Many Households in Yakima are Cost-burdened

Between 2017 and 2021, 32% of all households in Yakima were cost burdened. Nearly half (44%) of renter households, and just under a quarter (23%) of owner households, were cost-burdened. Cost-burdened households spend a large portion (over 30%) of their available income on housing costs. This leaves less money available for other vital needs like food, transportation, healthcare, and education.

Housing Needs are Greatest among Low-income Households

About 75% of all households with incomes below 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI) are cost-burdened. Over half of these households are severely cost-burdened, meaning they spend over 50% of their income on housing costs. While there are low-income households

How affordable is homeownership in Yakima?

As of 2025 a household would need an annual income of about \$112,000 to afford the average single family home. New homes are even more expensive. See the Housing chapter in Volume 2 for a more detailed analysis of homeownership and rental housing affordability.



living in neighborhoods across the city, the greatest concentration of low-income households is in eastern Yakima, and many of these households are of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity.

Typical home value
\$324,075 in
2022



Majority households
(75%) below 50% AMI
are cost burdened

Demand for Special Needs Housing and Programs

Several populations may have special housing needs or supportive services, including the homeless, residents with disabilities, single parents, seasonal and year-round farmworkers, and the elderly.

- According to the Department of Commerce’s [Snapshot of Homelessness in Washington State for July 2024](#), there were 11,971 persons who were homeless or unstably housed in Yakima County (Commerce, 2024). This was approximately 5% of the county population. Among these people, 9,906 were considered homeless (Commerce, 2024).
- As described above, the elderly make up almost 16 percent of the city’s population in 2022 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). The elderly often have disabilities – about 46 percent – requiring universal housing designs that meet ambulatory needs. Continuum of care housing and services allowing aging in place are other considerations over the planning period.
- Another challenge for elderly households is housing affordability. There are 3,405 cost-burdened elderly households in Yakima. About a third of these households are elderly persons (age 62+) living alone, and nearly all have incomes well below the county median (U.S. HUD, 2024). These residents are spending more than 30% of their income



on housing costs and often have fixed incomes that don't keep pace with rising housing costs over time.

- The City of Yakima is located at the heart of Yakima County, which employs many farmworkers at the farms, orchards, and livestock operations throughout the County. Many of these workers struggle to find stable housing. The City of Yakima and other non-profit agencies offer a number of services that address maintaining and attaining housing to meet the needs of low-income households, disabled persons, and senior citizens in the community. Single parent households, particularly female headed households, are more likely to have lower incomes and potentially have cost burdens.
- The City of Yakima and other non-profit agencies offer several services that address maintaining and attaining housing to meet the needs of low-income households, disabled persons, and senior citizens in the community.

Environmental Hazards and Impacts to Housing Stock

Scientists predict that environmental hazards, such as extreme heat, precipitation, and wildfires, will increase in severity and frequency in Yakima¹. Older homes can be retrofitted with efficient heating and cooling to increase resiliency. However, these retrofits are expensive, and low-income households may be unable to bear the cost. Additionally, residential land use patterns can exacerbate environmental hazards. For instance, building new detached single-family homes on the outskirts of urban areas near forests and open space can put them at greater risk of wildfires. Additionally, new pavement and buildings contribute to increased stormwater runoff. This runoff increases the risk of flooding. See the Climate Vulnerability Assessment Memo in Appendix A for further analysis.

¹ Raymond, C., & Rogers, M. (2022). Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington. Retrieved from <https://cig.uw.edu/resources/analysis-tools/climate-mapping-for-a-resilient-washington/>



Challenges and Opportunities

Compared to other areas in Washington, Yakima still provides relatively lower-cost housing, the majority of which are single family homes. The City has additional capacity for housing with a large share of land that is developable, particularly to the west, and a good portion of the City that provides an opportunity for infill development and redevelopment.

Low vacancy rates in Yakima contribute to pressure on housing supply as the population grows and the housing stock ages. New housing will be needed to replace units that have reached the end of their useful life and to house new residents. In addition, a diversity of housing types will be needed in order to provide units that fit the needs of large and small households, young and first-time home buyers, special needs populations, those aging in place, and multi-generational households. Yakima has a vision of being a place that provides affordable and quality housing equally to all residents across the city.

The City has sufficient capacity to meet future housing growth targets for 2046. Yakima's strategy is to focus on infill housing downtown, in mixed use centers, and throughout the City, with compatible transitions to townhomes and single-family dwellings. The capacity in Downtown Yakima and mixed-use nodes will create an increased supply of smaller units in multifamily or mixed-use residential structures while the undeveloped land capacity to the west will result in added single family units.

Future Needs

The GMA requires cities to accommodate future housing needs by affordability level. Yakima received its allocation of countywide housing from Yakima County, as shown in **Exhibit 3-5**. The City must make accommodations to enable housing growth to meet these needs through the year 2046. **Exhibit 3-6** shows the allocation and projected housings needs for the City and UGA. Meeting these needs will require increasing the rate of new housing development, with a focus on multifamily housing and lower-cost ownership options such as townhomes and condominiums.





Exhibit 3-5. Projected Housing Needs, Yakima County (2020-2046)

	Total	Affordability Level (% of Area Median Income)						Emergency Housing/ Shelter Beds	
		0-30%		30-50%	50-80%	80-100%	100-120%		120%+
		Non-PSH	PSH						
Total Future Housing Needed (2046)**		8,261	4,495	25,742	36,353	12,706	8,282	18,643	1,951
114,482									
Estimated Housing Supply (2020)*	89,425	4,351	228	20,264	33,325	10,917	7,070	13,270	572
Net New Housing Needed (2020-2046)	25,057	3,910	4,267	5,478	3,028	1,789	1,212	5,373	1,379

PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing.

* 2020 supply excludes homes in recreational use, such as vacation homes and short-term rentals. Supply of PSH in 2020 is beds. However, projections of Net New Housing Needed (2020-2046) are in housing units.

** Total Future Housing Needed (2046) excludes 2020 homes in recreational use, such as vacation homes and short-term rentals.

Source: WA State Department of Commerce, Growth Management Services Housing For All Planning Tool (HAPT). Calculations are based on the Yakima County 2046 Population Projections and Allocations.





Exhibit 3-6. City of Yakima and UGA Combined Allocation of Projected Housing Needs, 2020-2046

Jurisdiction	Total Units Allocated	Affordability Level (% of Area Median Income)							Emergency Housing/ Shelter Beds
		0-30%		30-50%	50-80%	80-100%	100-120%	120%+	
		Non-PSH	PSH						
City of Yakima + UGA	10,648	1,750	1,911	2,450	1,286	760	514	1,977	617

Source: WA Department of Commerce, 2025; BERK, 2025.

3.3 Our Housing Plan

Yakima’s plan to accommodate its current and future housing needs builds upon its land use plan and is implemented through multiple zoning districts. New GMA requirements now allow various housing types in zones where single family homes are allowed. This will allow additional homes such as duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, accessory dwelling units etc. in the City’s low density land use and zones. Through revisions to zoning and development regulations the city will reduce barriers to the production of new housing, with a focus on multifamily housing in high density zones, townhomes, cottage housing, accessory dwelling units, and manufactured homes.

Actions include providing for greater flexibility with regards to density limits, lot sizes, building heights, and parking standards. The Planning and Building divisions should coordinate code and policy changes, prioritizing reducing barriers for the development of housing. Another way to reduce barriers is streamlining the city’s permit application process and increasing SEPA thresholds. Targeted infrastructure investments to enable higher density infill development will also support this plan.

To encourage and support income-restricted affordable housing projects for lower-income residents, the City can provide incentives such as an expanded multifamily tax exemption (MFTE) program, or the donation of public land.

Does Yakima’s zoning and land capacity allow for enough new development to meet all projected housing needs?

Yes, it does. See the Housing chapter in Volume 2 for an analysis of Yakima’s buildable land capacity compared to housing needs.





3.4 Goals and Policies

- GOAL 3.1 ENCOURAGE DIVERSE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING CHOICES.**
- Policy 3.1.1 Monitor market rate and affordable housing needs. Review and adjust land capacity for housing development and redevelopment based on housing needs.
 - Policy 3.1.2 Promote the preservation, improvement, and development of middle housing and single family homes in Yakima.
 - Policy 3.1.3 Encourage mixed use infill development, particularly Downtown and in commercial nodes.
 - Policy 3.1.4 Allow diverse housing types that meet the needs of aging, young professional, and small and large households.
 - Policy 3.1.5 Facilitate small lot sizes, condominiums, townhomes, accessory dwelling units, clustering, and other middle housing options that increase the supply of affordable homeownership options and the diversity of housing types.
 - Policy 3.1.6 Allow accessory dwelling units in single family zones to increase the supply of affordable housing units and to help existing homeowners remain in their homes.
 - Policy 3.1.7 Allow manufactured homes on individual lots in residential zones in accordance with the provisions of state and federal law. Apply development and design standards equally to manufactured housing and other residences.
 - Policy 3.1.8 Promote the improvement of existing mobile home parks to meet health and safety standards and quality of life needs of residents.
 - Policy 3.1.9 Encourage and incentivize affordable housing development for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households.





Policy 3.1.10 Support proposals for affordable assisted and market rate housing based on the following criteria:

- Dispersion of affordable housing throughout the City
- Convenient access to transit
- A range of unit types including middle housing
- Ownership housing when possible
- Long-term affordability

Policy 3.1.11 Remove barriers to development of affordable and market rate housing.

- Maintain a zoning system that allows a wide range of housing types and densities.
- Use creative SEPA tools such as exemption thresholds, infill and mixed use exemptions, or planned actions to encourage housing and streamline permitting.
- Ensure that City fees and permitting time are set at reasonable levels so they do not adversely affect the cost of housing.

Policy 3.1.12 Encourage a range of affordable homeownership options and provide access to education for first time buyers.

Policy 3.1.13 Participate in efforts to secure land available for affordable housing.

Policy 3.1.14 Allow for well-designed farmworker housing recognizing the City of Yakima’s role as the primary city in the agricultural Yakima valley with the greatest range of housing opportunities, urban infrastructure, and public services.



Source: City of Yakima



GOAL 3.2 PRESERVE AND IMPROVE EXISTING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.

Policy 3.2.1 Improve existing neighborhoods through various programs and investments such as street light maintenance, sidewalk improvements, safe route to school, bike and non-motorized mobility improvements etc.

Policy 3.2.2 Support programs that improve and preserve Yakima’s existing housing stock such as various capital improvements in the neighborhoods.

Policy 3.2.3 Prevent demolition of housing structures, when possible, by providing resources for periodic maintenance and upgrade, and using various funding sources for maintenance based on need.

Policy 3.2.4 Encourage maintenance and preservation of existing housing. Maintain the City’s Housing Repair Assistance Program for low- and moderate-income homeowners.

Policy 3.2.5 Encourage cooling retrofits and passive cooling measures for existing housing to ensure effective cooling in case of extreme heat.

Policy 3.2.6 Encourage energy efficiency and water efficiency retrofits for existing homes to lower utility demand during and leading up to natural hazard events.

GOAL 3.3 ENSURE AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF HOUSING FOR ALL INCOME GROUPS AND PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.

Policy 3.3.1 Prioritize the provision of housing opportunities to all economic segments of the population including those with special needs as allocated through the regional allocation process.

Policy 3.3.2 Support development of new units and the operation of existing units for housing persons with special needs such as the disabled and elderly. Promote universal design principles in new and rehabilitated housing to ensure housing is designed for all persons and abilities to age in place as their housing needs change.

Policy 3.3.3 Support programs that offer assistance to homeless individuals and families.



Source: City of Yakima



Policy 3.3.4 Support programs and housing options that allow the senior population to age in place as their housing needs change.

Policy 3.3.5 Support programs to ensure that individuals and families vulnerable to natural hazard impacts have adequate housing options. Vulnerable communities include the following:

- older adults and children
- those with pre-existing health conditions including pulmonary conditions
- individuals with mobility challenges
- low- and extremely low-income individuals
- persons who are pregnant
- people with limited literacy
- people who speak English as a second language

GOAL 3.4 ENCOURAGE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, AND MAINTENANCE OF HIGH QUALITY HOUSING WITHOUT MAKING UNITS COST PROHIBITIVE.

Policy 3.4.1 Promote sustainable development practices in housing development such as the use of energy efficient and durable building material, maintenance of indoor air quality, protection of natural environment, provision of walkability, and others.

Policy 3.4.2 Ensure densities, design and landscape standards promote planned goals.

Policy 3.4.3 Encourage development of well-designed new housing in coordination with population growth, employment growth, and transportation goals.

Policy 3.4.4 Coordinate future housing development with capital planning and investment.

Policy 3.4.5 Implement utility standards that encourage infill development and middle housing.





- Policy 3.4.6 Encourage or incentivize residential development standards which increase resiliency to natural hazards such as extreme heat, severe storms, drought, and wildfire smoke through cross-ventilation, passive cooling window coverings, and energy efficiency upgrades.
- Policy 3.4.7 Ensure multimodal public and private transportation options are available for new and redeveloped housing.
- Policy 3.4.8 Promote complete streets and trails to interconnect Yakima’s neighborhoods and promote walkability.
- Policy 3.4.9 Promote safe, energy efficient, and healthy housing attainable to very low-, low-, and moderate income households. Explore measures to improve indoor air quality and foster construction methods that reduce dust, mold, and air toxics concentrations in the homes.

GOAL 3.5 FOSTER A CARING COMMUNITY THAT NURTURES AND SUPPORTS INDIVIDUALS, CHILDREN, AND THEIR FAMILIES.

- Policy 3.5.1 Make human services more inclusive and accessible to the Yakima community, especially to marginalized populations to prevent them from being displaced from their community.
- Policy 3.5.2 Develop strategies that result in human services involvements proactive and preventative of marginalized populations being displaced or homeless.
- Policy 3.5.3 Allocate City general funds and seek federal and state funds to offer human services that the City can best provide to address a spectrum of community needs.
- Policy 3.5.4 Consider human services objectives in developing City regulations and codes. Ensuring there are community resources to assist these residents, before they are abated, is critical.
- Policy 3.5.5 Cooperate with school districts and non-profit human service providers to identify needs and effective delivery of services to individuals, children, and families





- Policy 3.5.6 Educate the community about and promote affordable and special needs housing and human services facilities and programs.
- Policy 3.5.7 Conduct early and ongoing public outreach and communication during program or project review and apply appropriate conditions of approval that address community concerns such as traffic congestion, public service provision, or environmental quality.
- Policy 3.5.8 Connect with isolated community groups to ensure effective human service delivery and ensure people and homes are safe in the event of emergencies.
- Policy 3.5.9 Evaluate services, service delivery, and community-based resources as they relate to making individuals, children, and families more resilient to natural hazards of extreme heat, flooding, wildfires, and drought events.

GOAL 3.6 PREVENT DISCRIMINATION, AND DISPLACEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF HOUSING.

- Policy 3.6.1 Collaborate with community groups, organizations, non-profits, and businesses to help vulnerable groups obtain and maintain housing.
- Policy 3.6.2 Evaluate the potential for displacement on lands proposed for rezone or redevelopment for public use.
- Policy 3.6.3 Collaborate to understand the drivers of displacement through involvement of community groups, organizations, and institutions in affected areas.
- Policy 3.6.4 Ensure code enforcement does not result in displacement or marginalized population or homelessness.

3.5 Implementation

Yakima’s Housing Element is implemented through the actions and investments made by the City with the support of its residents and stakeholders. Some of these actions include regulatory changes, partnerships, coordination, administrative acts, policy changes, human





service programs, and capital investments. The following implementation items aid in this process.

Exhibit 3-7. Housing Implementation

Implementation Item	Action Type	Desired Result
Adequate Provisions Action Items (2026)	The Comprehensive Plan Volume 2 Technical Analysis includes a list of action items related to affordable housing incentives, development regulation changes, and permit process improvements. There are some overlaps between this list of actions and prior studies, such as the Housing Action Plan.	Reduce barriers to new housing development that can accommodate housing needs at all income levels
City of Yakima Housing Action Plan (HAP) (2021)	<p>This plan identified six objectives for promoting affordable housing options for all community members across all neighborhoods. To achieve these objectives, it identifies 37 strategies. While some strategies would be pursued in partnership with other organizations, the following high priority strategies can be implemented by the City:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update city regulations to remove barriers to innovative housing types. ▪ Make strategic investments in infrastructure. ▪ Encourage rent-to-own opportunities and sweat equity programs. ▪ Expand and update down payment assistance programs. ▪ Donate or lease surplus or under-utilized city property to support affordable housing development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage diverse housing development within existing neighborhoods. ▪ Create and preserve affordable homes. ▪ Create homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate- income households. ▪ Support housing options that meet the diverse needs of older adults. ▪ Address the needs of those struggling with homelessness. <p>Protect against displacement and poor housing conditions</p>





Implementation Item	Action Type	Desired Result
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentivize landlords to improve the quality and maintenance of housing. 	
<p>City of Yakima Consolidated Plan (2025-2029)</p>	<p>Strategic plan, updated periodically, that provides an assessment of current and projected housing needs, housing market trends, inventory conditions, barriers to providing affordable housing, a list of current providers, and a five-year strategy for providing affordable housing. Many of the actions identified in this plan to support housing affordability are mirrored in the HAP. This plan also addresses needs for supportive services and poverty reduction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data on housing inventory and needs Inventory of affordable housing providers Increase in affordable housing
<p>Yakima County’s 5-Year Plan to Address Homelessness 2019-2024</p>	<p>The Yakima County 5-Year Homelessness Housing Strategic Plan serves three critical purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a strategy to address homelessness in Yakima County. Setting clear, measurable goals to achieve that strategy, and to hold stakeholders within the system accountable to their roles. Creating concise objectives generated by local experts that can be used in making funding decisions for Yakima County. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce homelessness in Yakima County Ensure that anybody’s experience with homelessness is brief, rare, and one-time through an efficient and effective homeless response system that prioritizes and focuses first on putting people into stable housing.
<p>Annual Action Plan for CDBG and HOME Investment Partnership Funds, 2024</p>	<p>This plan includes the strategies, goals, and objectives established in the FY 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and is the basis for the annual funding application for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in affordable housing needs and community development needs





Implementation Item	Action Type	Desired Result
	Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME programs.	
Yakima County Farmworker Housing Action Plan, 2011 – 2016	Strategic plan for approaching issues related to farmworker housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Housing needs data for seasonal and year-round farmworkers▪ Increased housing stability for farmworkers

