November 13, 2026

Bill Preston and Trevor Martin Yakima City Planning Division
129 N. 2nd Street
Yakima, WA 98901

RE: Yakima Comprehensive Plan 2050 and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)

Dear SEPA Responsible Official and City Planning Manager:

Please accept my comments regarding updates to the City of Yakima's Comprehensive Plan regarding resilience and efforts to address climate change.

I am a long time resident of Yakima County having moved here from Seattle in 1970. I lived in the City until 1995 on the eastside and I have fond memories of that time. I now live in the Lower Yakima Valley, but I visit the City of Yakima often on business as do many others.

One of the sad changes I see in Yakima is an increase in homeless people on eastside streets. It is stressful to see human beings huddled in alleyways with all their belongings in shopping carts, hoping for handouts of food and a kind word. It is sad to see families waiting in line at food banks.

I propose that climate change will bring an increase in displaced people who are pushed out of more affluent areas to areas such as Yakima. I propose that this population shift will bring an increase in crime and an increased demand for basic health care. I propose that the City of Yakima and Yakima County will see an increase in deaths from exposure to the elements as the number of homeless people rises. As you know, East Yakima has the highest rate of deaths due to fine particulate air pollution in the state.

I propose that solutions to problems related to homelessness require attention to:

- Employment opportunities
- Education and job training
- Adequate housing
- Emergency shelters
- Engagement with law enforcement
- Health care and mental health services for poverty level populations

These are big issues with no magic bullets. I propose that many Yakima County residents are more than willing to serve on advisory committees designed to address these common problems. The City of Yakima should take advantage of the wisdom and experience of ready and willing volunteers who can collectively gather data, analyze that data, research opportunities for

DOC. INDEX #
D-32

programs to address homelessness, and help city staff make the City of Yakima a place that we all want to visit.

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

Jean Mendoza

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DOC. INDEX #
D-32