



DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CITY OF YAKIMA, WA

Why Apply?

This is an excellent opportunity in a professional organization with a focus on customer service. Nestled in the beautiful Yakima Valley, the City is the heart of Central Washington and the hub for culture, business, education, services, health, and government. The City has a dedicated team of department directors and employees. The next Director of Community and Economic Development will be in a leadership position to help create a new strategic direction and plan for community and economic development.

Welcome to YAKIMA



Located about 150 miles east of Seattle, Yakima is a vibrant city of 98,000 residents and the 11th largest in Washington State. The city is known for its beautiful weather, central location, relatively low cost of living, and strong sense of community.

Serving as the county seat of Yakima County, Yakima has been the cultural, business, educational, healthcare, and governmental focal point of the Central Washington region since it was founded more than 125 years ago. Originally built along the then-new Northern Pacific Railway line, Yakima has grown from its agricultural roots into a vibrant, diverse, metropolitan city.

Yakima's economy has traditionally revolved around agriculture and a wide variety of crops are grown in the Yakima Valley, including more than 30 varieties of fruit (apples, cherries, peaches, pears, nectarines, apricots and berries) and vegetables (such as asparagus and eggplant). The Yakima region is also well-known for producing about 75% of all the hops grown in the United States.

While Yakima still relies on agriculture to drive its economy, over 250 manufacturing firms call the area home and produce a variety of products, including aircraft parts, wood products, plastic products, recreational vehicles and communications technology.

Tourism is the fastest growing segment of the Yakima economy. More than 70 wineries are located in the Valley and regularly draw visitors to sample and buy internationally renowned varietals. Multiple craft breweries and distilleries utilize home-grown products in their unique offerings.

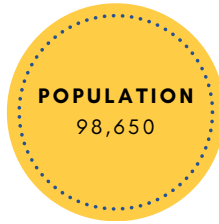
Yakima is host to many family-friendly facilities and events including the new YMCA/Yakima Rotary Aquatic Center, Capitol Theatre, Sozo Sports Complex, the Central Washington State Fair, a wood bat summer league baseball team, and welcomes numerous regional youth and adult sports tournaments.

The Yakima community enjoys a rich mixture of people from many cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Over the past 30-plus years, the Valley has experienced a large influx of Latino immigrants, many from the state of Michoacan in central Mexico, accounting for approximately 52% of the population in Yakima County.

THE CITY OF YAKIMA

Yakima is a Charter Civil Service city governed by a seven-member Council operating within the council/manager form of government. Council members serve staggered four-year terms and are elected as representatives from within the City's seven districts. The mayor is selected by the Council from among its members.

Yakima is a full-service city with a 2024 General Government budget of approximately \$75 million and a total budget of approximately \$251 million. Full-time staffing consists of approximately 750 employees: 24% in Police, 18% in Fire, 18% in Utilities, 7% in Transit, 4% in Streets/Traffic, and 29% in other City departments and divisions.



THE COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

The Community & Economic Development Department operates with a 2023 budget of \$3,338,091 and a team of 30 FTEs. The Department is made up of three operating divisions: Planning (Land Use and Short Range), Economic & Neighborhood Development Services, and Code Administration (Permitting, Code Compliance, and Building Inspection).

The mission of the **Planning Division** is to assist the residents of Yakima in the achievement of their personal and community development goals. The Planning Division provides this service on an individual and timely basis with a commitment to community values, ecological principles for protection of the environment, while evaluating competing priorities and interests.

The **Economic and Neighborhood Development Service Division** works to increase investment and sustain prosperity in the community and strives to create a healthy and dynamic economic ecosystem to develop and retain business and job opportunities, attract spending in the community, and provide excellent customer service to businesses. The division administers the funds the City of Yakima received from the US Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Yakima is eligible for Entitlement Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocations and HOME Investment Funds. Additionally, the city participates in other programs sponsored by HUD and the Washington State Department of Commerce, which assist in meeting the community's housing and neighborhood needs.

This **Code Administration Division** is responsible for the enforcement of all development codes related to structural, fire, life safety, and health requirements. In addition, this division enforces land use regulations; operates the City's customer service Permit Center; answers water and sewer utility location and/or connection fee inquiries, issues business and regulatory licenses; handles complaints via the code compliance hotline and Yak Back; administers the City's nuisance ordinances and handles complaints regarding the public way.





THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Reporting to the City Manager, the Director of Community and Economic Development is responsible for the proper administration and operation of the Community & Economic Development Department. The Director plans, directs, manages and oversees the activities and operations of Planning, Community Development, Economic & Neighborhood Development Services, and Codes Administration including land use, short and long-range planning, building codes and permits, and environmental review. The Director coordinates assigned activities with other departments and outside agencies and provides highly responsible and complex administrative support to the City Manager as a member of the City's Leadership Team.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City of Yakima is seeking a progressive leader who is approachable, knowledgeable, and collaborative with a common sense, can-do attitude and a passion for community growth and development. A successful Director of Community and Economic Development will be visionary, yet possess practical business sense and proven experience. The City desires a candidate with a heart for a community invested in agriculture and hometown values of integrity, hard work, and service to others.

At the City of Yakima, customer service is not just a catch phrase, but a core principle. The best candidate will be respectful of Council, staff, and the public; and will encourage an environment where creativity flourishes, ensure results and accountability. Additionally:

- Experience in leading comprehensive plans, growth policies, economic development.
- Ability to create a vision for community development and economic vibrancy.
- Excellent communication skills with city administration, department directors, city council, and the community.
- Ability to work in partnership with developers, contractors, architects, and engineers to move projects forward.
- Outstanding leadership skills to organize and manage daily operations and long-term priorities.
- Ability to create and foster partnerships with cities, county, state, and regional agencies.
- Experience managing in lean times and the ability to anticipate and resolve issues before they escalate.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Comprehensive Plan

The City is scheduled to update its comprehensive plans in 2024. This will be a major project and includes engagement with the community and City Council.

City Plans

There are several City plans that must be updated including the Economic Development Plan, Downtown Master Plan, the Consolidated Plan, the Housing Plan, and new codes.

Staffing

There are several key management positions that must be filled. They include the Planning Manager and the Economic & Neighborhood Development Services Manager.

Budget

The City has a challenge to meet service demands with limited resources. The Department's budget will be a key priority. Staffing and resources for updating plans will be a difficult balance with limited resources.



COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The City of Yakima is offering an annual salary range of \$127,212 to \$162,385 for this position, dependent upon experience and qualifications, along with a comprehensive [benefits](#) package.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

A bachelor's degree in urban planning, public administration, business administration or closely related field and a minimum of five (5) years public planning, economic development, housing and/or redevelopment experience, including three (3) years of management and administration responsibility.

Four (4) years additional experience may substitute for a bachelor's degree. A master's degree and/or American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certification is desired.

Or any satisfactory combination of experience and training which demonstrates the knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully perform the job.

RESOURCES

[Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce](#)

[Yakima Valley Tourism](#)

[Downtown Association of Yakima](#)

[Yakima County Development Association](#)



TO APPLY

Apply Online: gmphr.com

First Review: **May 5, 2024, 2024**

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