

City Manager

Yakima, WA

(Population 91,100 - Approximately the 340th largest City in the U.S.)

Yakima has been the cultural, business, educational, health services, and governmental focal point of the Central Washington region since it was founded 125 years ago. Originally built along the then new Northern Pacific Railway company line, Yakima has grown from its agricultural roots into a vibrant, diverse metropolitan city. With a rich history and a bright future, Yakima is the Heart of Central Washington.

Yakima's economy has traditionally revolved around agriculture and a wide variety of crops are grown in the Yakima Valley. These include more than 30 varieties of fruit (apples, cherries, peaches, pears, nectarines, apricots and berries) and vegetables (such as asparagus and eggplant). Not many people know that the region produces about 75% of all of the hops (a key ingredient in beer) 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. Healthcare plays a large role in the Valley as represented by five hospitals and over 400 first class physicians covering 36 specialties. Clinics provide a full range of treatment with open heart surgery, neurosurgery, and cancer care among them.

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. Outdoor recreation, including water and snow skiing, fishing, boating, hiking, horseback riding, and white water rafting, also makes Yakima a favorite destination for people from throughout the Northwest and around the world. Finally, Yakima is home to a minor league baseball team (the Yakima Bears, an Arizona Diamondbacks affiliate) and hosts numerous regional sports tournaments (baseball, basketball, softball and soccer, for example).

COST OF LIVING, HOUSING AND EDUCATION

The cost of living in Yakima is below the national average at 88.6%. The average sales price of a home is \$172,000 and the average commuting time to work is about 15 minutes. Beyond K through 12, the area boasts a private technical college, a community college, a university, an osteopathic medical school, and a number of vocational education programs.

GEOGRAPHY, DEMOGRAPHICS AND CLIMATE

Yakima is located in South Central Washington State and covers 28.27 square miles. Sunshine is the norm with 270 to 300 blue sky days per year. The area enjoys four separate and distinct seasons with the summers being hot and dry while the winters are cool with light snowfall.

Yakima is the largest city in Yakima County and the 8th largest city in Washington State. Most of the people who founded Yakima were of European decent, although significant numbers of African-Americans and Asian-Americans homesteaded in the area well. Relatively recently, the Yakima Valley has experienced a large influx of Latino immigrants, which now account for approximately 45% of the population in Yakima County. Today, the Yakima community enjoys a rich mixture of people from many cultural and ethnic backgrounds. 74% of the population has at least a high school degree and 18% has a bachelors degree or higher. The median annual household was estimated to be \$44,556 in 2008.

THE GOVERNMENT

Yakima is a full service city. Its General Government budget is \$57 million and its total budget is \$193 million. Based on the 2009 CAFR, approximately 30% of the employees are in General Government, 25% in Police, 12% in Fire, 8% in Wastewater, 7% in Transit, 5% in Streets, 4% in Water and 6% in other activities ranging from Refuse and Stormwater to a cemetery and the bus transit system.

Yakima is governed by a seven member council operating within the traditional Council – Manager form of government. Council members serve staggered four year terms. Four members represent geographic districts and

three are elected at large. The Mayor is selected by the council from among its members. The City Attorney reports to the City Manager.

Over the past year, the number of union bargaining groups representing employees has increased from 11 to 15 and only about 90 of the City's employees are not unionized. One final note is that a referendum was on the ballot in February of this year proposing the City change to a Mayor - Council form of government. It was defeated 52% to 48%.

THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES THE NEXT MANAGER WILL FACE

- **Scarce Resources.** While Yakima has been well and conservatively managed, resources are tight. In the last year, funded positions have been reduced from 750 to 730. Additionally parts of the City's infrastructure (such as 30% of its streets) need renovation.
- **Redevelopment.** In the past ten years Downtown Yakima has undergone a renaissance. The Downtown Futures Initiative provided for a street to storefront renovation throughout the downtown core, and included new pedestrian-friendly lighting, water fountains, planters, banner poles, new trees and hanging baskets to complement the new paver-inlaid sidewalks. The result is the downtown has been recast as a center for events, services, entertainment, and smaller, more personal shopping experiences. The City wants the redevelopment momentum to continue. Examples of other opportunities are the redevelopment of the 211 acre Boise Cascade Mill site and designating the area around the local commercial airport as a port district.
- **Crime.** While no worse than many other places, the City does have an issue with gangs and it is working diligently to resolve the issue.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City Council is seeking someone to work with it as a partner. The individual will be a leader and someone who is intelligent, outgoing, fair, organized, and progressive – someone with common sense and a can do attitude, someone who is visionary, yet practical, and someone who is a realistic risk taker. She/he will be expected to engage the community and work diligently as an ambassador to it and to the world. Yakima has a wonderful story to tell and the Council wants its next manager to be passionately positive about telling that story. The ideal candidate will have

strong analytical skills, take a hard look at City operations and challenge entrenched processes. He/She will be politically savvy but not politically involved. The manager will have outstanding interpersonal and communication skills while being open and approachable. She/he will be someone who works with the Council, the community, local businesses, and residents to find solutions to problems. Customer service will not be just a catch phrase but rather, along with integrity, be a core principle. The best candidate will be respectful of the City's managers and staff, delegate and encourage an environment where creativity will flourish, and will expect results and accountability. The manager will believe in transparency and open government. Other important characteristics are experience managing in lean times, experience working with the media, and the ability to anticipate and resolve issues before they become problems.

The selected individual will have a demonstrated track record of achievement in management, finance, labor relations, economic development, redevelopment, and public / private partnerships. Experience dealing with crime (gangs in particular), intergovernmental relations and diversity will also be important. With the Yakama Nation reservation being located just a few miles south of the city, experience working with Native American tribes will also be helpful.

The selected candidate will be expected to make a commitment to Yakima. This position should not be viewed as a stepping stone but as a gem in its own right. The City hopes and expects the next manager will honor its prior manager's passion for the City and to have a lengthy tenure.

The position requires a Bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, public policy or related field, and seven to ten years of increasingly responsible experience as a senior level government executive. A Master's degree is preferred.

THE INCUMBENT MANAGER

The incumbent manager will retire in early July of this year after serving the City well and faithfully for 38 years overall and for 32 years as its City Manager.

COMPENSATION

The starting salary will be between \$135,000 and \$180,000.

RESIDENCY

Residency within the City is not required but is desired.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Candidate names will not be released without the candidates' permission. However, it is expected that, when the City selects finalists, some form of public participation will be incorporated in the final stages of the city manager selection process.

HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your resume to Recruit25@cb-asso.com by May 30, 2011. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537.

THE PROCESS

Applicants will be screened between May 30th and June 27th. Finalists will be selected on July 5th with the expectation that interviews will be held July 15th and 16th. The final selection will be made on July 18th.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Yakima is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity at all levels of its workforce. It encourages minorities and women to apply.