

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Approve Agenda**
- 4. Public Comment**

The Planning Commission welcomes public attendance at Planning Commission meetings. With very few exceptions, RCW 42.17A.555 prohibits government agencies from allowing the use of public facilities, directly or indirectly, for campaign purposes. At this time, citizen comments and inquiries about agenda business are encouraged. If you wish to address the Planning Commission, please stand or raise a hand so you can be called upon. After you are recognized, please come forward to the lectern, state your name, and address for the public record. Your remarks must be limited to three minutes or less. Please use the microphone.

5. Approval of Minutes

- a. Consider the Minutes of the March 18, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting.

6. New Business

- a. Comprehensive Plan Update Utilities and Economic Development Element Presentation

7. Other Business

8. Adjournment

Next Planning Commission Meeting Will Be Held on May 20, 2026

Planning Commission meetings are accessible to persons with disabilities. For individuals who may require special accommodations, please contact City Hall at (509) 865-6754, 24 hours in advance.

TOPPENISH PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2026

Chairperson Mayer called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL AND ATTENDANCE

Present: Chairperson Janet Mayer, Commissioners Jesus M. Aguirre, Benita Polina and Gabriella Guel.

Absent: None

Staff: Community Economic Development (CED) Director Andrew Hattori.

CED Hattori conducted roll call for each Planning Commissioner to respond to their attendance at the meeting. Chair Mayer, and Commissioners Aguirre, Polina, and Guel, responded to their attendance during roll call.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Aguirre moved, seconded by Commissioner Guel, to approve the March 18, 2026, meeting agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Aguirre moved, seconded by Commissioner Polina, to approve the minutes from the February 18, 2026, meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Joseph Calhoun, Planning Supervisor for HLA Engineering, presented TMC 17 Zoning Periodic Update Summary.

OTHER BUISNESS

CED Hattori presented draft Code Amendments for TMC 15.20 Fences. Commissioner Aguirre moved, seconded by Commissioner Polina to recommend the Fence Code Amendments applying to residential use excluding apartment dwellings for consideration by the City Council. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Janet Mayer, Chairperson

Andrew Hattori, Community Economic
Development Director

Meeting Date: April 15, 2026

Subject: Comprehensive Plan Update Utilities and Economic Development
Element Presentation

Attachments: 1. 7. Utilities_2046_Toppenish
2. 9. Economic Development_2046_Toppenish

Presented By: Joseph Calhoun - HLA

Approved for Andrew Hattori, CED Director

Agenda By:

Discussion:

The City of Toppenish is currently undergoing work to update its Comprehensive Plan by the end of 2026, as is required by all jurisdictions that plan under the Growth Management Act. The Comprehensive Plan is considered one of the largest planning documents a city produces and guides the development of the City, it includes various "Elements" that cover the major considerations the City must make. As we navigate the Comprehensive Plan update process we will be reviewing each element that goes into the plan. The "Utilities" element addresses items such as existing and proposed utilities like water, sewer, electricity, natural gas, etc. and the "Economic Development" element addresses items such as strategies and policies to enhance our economy, job market, and community development.

Fiscal Impact:

NA

Recommendation:

NA

Alternatives:

CITY OF TOPPENISH

2026 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chapter 7 - Utilities Element

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This Utilities Element has been developed in accordance with Section 36.70A.070 of the GMA to address utility services in the City of Toppenish and the adjacent urban growth area. It represents one of several elements of the community's comprehensive plan for growth over the next 20 years.

The Utilities Element has also been developed in accordance with the countywide planning policies, and has been integrated with all other planning elements to ensure consistency throughout the comprehensive plan. The Utilities Element specifically considers the general location, proposed location, and capacity of all existing and proposed utilities, including, but not limited to, electrical lines, telecommunication lines, and natural gas lines. This element also identifies general utility corridors.

GMA REQUIREMENTS

The Washington GMA (GMA) requires that the following be addressed by the utilities element:

(4)(a) A utilities element consisting of the general location, proposed location, and capacity of all existing and proposed utilities, including but not limited to, electrical, telecommunications, and natural gas systems.

(b) The city shall identify all public entities that own utility systems and endeavor in good faith to work with other public entities, such as special purpose districts, to gather and include in its utilities element the information required in (a) of this subsection. However, if, after a good faith effort, the city is unable to gather the information required in (a) of this subsection from the other public entities, the failure to include such information in the utilities element shall not be grounds for a finding of noncompliance or invalidity under chapter 228, Laws of 2023. A good faith effort must, at a minimum, include consulting the

public entity's capital facility or system plans, and emailing and calling the staff of the public entity. (RCW 36.70A.070(4)).

APPLICABLE COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES

The Yakima Countywide Planning Policy recognizes the need to promote orderly development with appropriate urban services provided to such development. The following Countywide Planning Policies apply to discussion on the Utilities Element:

1. Areas designated for urban growth should be determined by preferred development patterns and the capacity and willingness of the community to provide urban governmental services. (Countywide Planning Policy: A.3.1.)
2. Urban growth should be located first in areas already characterized by urban growth that have existing public facilities and service capacities to serve such development, and second in areas already characterized by urban growth that will be served by a combination of existing public facilities and services and any additional needed public facilities and services that are provided by either public or private sources. Further, it is appropriate that urban government services by provided be cities and urban government services should not be provided in rural areas. [RCW 36.70A.110(3)] (Countywide Planning Policy B.3.1.)
3. Urban growth management interlocal agreements will identify services to be provided in an urban growth area, the responsible service purveyors and the terms under which the services are to be provided. (Countywide Planning Policy B.3.2.)
4. The capital facilities, utilities and transportation elements of each local government's comprehensive plan will specify the general location and phasing of major infrastructure improvements and anticipated revenue sources. [RCW 36.70A.070(3)(c)(d)]. These plan elements will be developed in consultation with special purpose districts and other utility providers. (Countywide Planning Policy B.3.4.)
5. New urban development should utilize available/planned urban services. [RCW 36.70A.110(3)] (Countywide Planning Policy B.3.5.)
6. Formation of new utility special purpose districts should be discouraged within designated urban growth areas. (Countywide Planning Policy ` B.3.6.)
7. From local inventory, analysis and collaboration with state agencies and utility providers, a list of countywide and statewide public capital facilities needed to serve the Yakima County region will be developed. These include, but are not limited to, solid and hazardous waste handling facilities and disposal sites, major utility generation and transmission facilities, regional education institutions, airports, correctional facilities, in- patient facilities including hospitals and those for

substance abuse and mental health, group homes and regional park and recreation facilities. (Countywide Planning Policy C.3.2.)

8. Some public facilities may be more appropriately located outside of UGA due to exceptional bulk or potentially dangerous or objectionable characteristics. Public facilities located beyond urban growth areas should be self-contained or be served by urban governmental services in a manner that will not promote sprawl. Utility and service considerations must be incorporated into site planning and development. (Countywide Planning Policy C.3.5.)
9. The multiple use of corridors for major utilities, trails and transportation right-of-way is encouraged. (Countywide Planning Policy C.3.6.)
10. The County and cities will work with special purpose districts and other agencies to establish a process for mutual consultation on proposed comprehensive land use plan policies for lands within urban growth areas. Actions of special purpose districts and other public service providers shall be consistent with comprehensive plans of the County and the cities. [RCW 56.08.020, RCW 57.16.010] (Countywide Planning Policy F.3.1.)
11. The use of interlocal agreements is encouraged as a means to formalize cooperative efforts to plan for and provide urban governmental services. (Countywide Planning Policy F.3.2.)
12. Joint financing ventures should be identified to provide services and facilities that will serve the population within the urban growth area. (Countywide Planning Policy F.3.3.)
13. Each interlocal agreement will require that common and consistent development and construction standards be applied throughout that urban growth area. These may include, but are not limited to, standards for streets and roads, utilities and other infrastructure components. (Countywide Planning Policy F.3.5.)
14. The County and the cities will work with special purpose districts, adjacent counties, state, tribal and federal governments to formalize coordination and involvement in activities of mutual interest. (Countywide Planning Policy I.1.)
15. Special districts, adjacent counties, state agencies, the tribal government and federal agencies will be invited to participate in comprehensive planning and development activities that may affect them, including the establishment and revision of urban growth areas; allocation of forecasted population; regional transportation, capital facility, housing and utility plans; and policies that may affect natural resources. (Countywide Planning Policy I.3.)

URBAN GROWTH AREAS

The Urban Growth Area boundary was selected in order to ensure that urban services will be available to all development. This includes the provision of utility facilities. The City recognizes that planning for utilities is the primary responsibility of the utility providers. However, the City will incorporate plans prepared by the providers into its comprehensive planning efforts in order to identify ways of improving the quality and delivery of services provided in the City and its designated urban growth area boundary. All development requiring urban services will be located in the urban growth area, and will have these services extended to them in a timely and financially feasible manner.

FEDERAL AND STATE LAWS/REGULATIONS AFFECTING THE PROVISION OF UTILITIES

REVISED CODE OF WASHINGTON AND WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Utilities and transportation are regulated in Washington by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). The WUTC, composed of three members appointed by the governor, is empowered to regulate utilities (including, but not limited to, electrical, gas, irrigation, telecommunication, and water companies). State law (WAC 480) regulates the rates and charges, services, facilities, and practices of utilities. Any change in customer charges or service provision policy requires WUTC approval.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATION COMMISSION

The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) regulates the cellular telephone industry as this federal agency is charged with the regulation of the country's airwaves. The FCC is responsible for issuing the licenses required to operate cellular systems.

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is an independent five-member commission with the U.S. Department of Energy. FERC establishes rates and charges for the interstate transportation and sale of natural gas, for the transmission and sale of electricity, and the licensing of hydro-electric power projects. In addition, the Commission establishes rates or charges for the interstate transportation of oil by pipeline.

NORTHWEST POWER PLANNING COUNCIL

The Northwest Power Planning Council (NWPPC) focuses on the generation of electricity; however, its policies have implications for gas too. The NWPPC plans and policies directly and indirectly affect the future availability and cost of these resources.

UTILITY CHARACTERISTICS

Many public and private agencies are involved in regulation, coordination, production, delivery, and supply of utility services. Providers of utilities for the City of Toppenish and its urban growth area are listed in Table 29 (Utility Service Providers, City of Toppenish/Urban Growth Area).

CABLE TELEVISION

Spectrum has franchise agreements with the City of Toppenish to provide service in city limits. Cable generally follows electrical and telephone lines. Only easements are needed, and are not usually a problem.

In addition, DirecTV and DISH Network offer satellite television access, and since these companies have no restrictions, they are available to anyone. Satellite cable is regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and does not come under local regulation since it does not use public rights-of-way for its distribution network.

CELLULAR TELEPHONE

There are many federally licensed cellular telephone communication companies serving Toppenish and Yakima County. These companies are regulated by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) and not the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). The FCC regulates cellular telephones because radio signals are used for communications.

ELECTRICAL UTILITIES

The City of Toppenish is served by Pacific Power, which has a very well developed backbone transmission system. Existing facilities place no restrictions on normal residential, commercial or industrial growth, and industries and institutions can be readily accommodated. The utility takes a proactive approach to system capacity, developing its system in anticipation of eventual growth.

While the utility has an abundant supply of energy, its demand-side resource management policy encourages conservation to assure continued availability of power to accommodate new growth and keep the cost low.

Transmission for a 115,000 volt system can be accommodated on a single pole structure that uses the road right-of-way. A substation capable of serving 10,000 residential customers typically requires no more than 2 acres, and is compatible with many adjacent land uses. Pacific Power offers several tools on its website to assist property owner and

developers, including a Residential Line Extension Estimator and a Developer and New Service Checklist.

IRRIGATION

The City of Toppenish provide irrigation water to properties within city limits through its domestic services. Portions of the UGA are provided irrigation service from the Wapato Irrigation Project.

NATURAL GAS

Toppenish is served by Cascade Natural Gas. The City's natural gas supply system meets existing demands of residential, commercial, and public customers.

Cascade Natural Gas serves areas along I-82. In general, the provider should be consulted for any proposed development that will require natural gas. The developer should not assume that service is available without checking with the local utility. Cascade Natural Gas will build to any customer in its service area that meets the criteria in its financial feasibility formula. Other customers can also be served if the customer is willing to contribute to the cost of extending the lines. Those contributions may be refundable or non-refundable; if additional customers connect to the same main, part of the contribution may be reimbursed. To serve development outside its service area, the utility will apply for a "certificate of convenience" from the Public Utilities Commission to include the area within its service area, if the proposed development meets the financial feasibility criteria.

TELECOMMUNICATION UTILITIES

The City of Toppenish is served by Centurylink for phone service. There are various facilities located throughout the county and the city. Many of the telecommunication facilities, including aerial and underground, are co-located with those of the electrical power provider.

The telecommunications industry is currently in the midst of tremendous advances in technology. Both cellular and optical fiber technologies are transforming the way service is delivered in the City of Toppenish. These changes have also fostered a competitive industry which appears to make the future configuration of telecommunications provision difficult.

Table 7-1. Utility Service Providers - Urban Growth Area

Type of Service	City of Toppenish	Remainder of UGA	Phone Number	Website
Cable Television	Spectrum	Spectrum	(888) 406-7063	www.spectrum.com
Cellular Telephone	There are many cellular phone providers in the area.	There are many cellular phone providers in the area	Varies	Varies
Electric Utility	Pacific Power	Pacific Power	(888) 221-7070	www.pacificpower.net
Irrigation	City of Toppenish Domestic Water System	Wapato Irrigation Project	Wapato Irrigation (509) 877-3155	www.yakamareservationirrigation.com/wapato-irrigation-project
Natural Gas	Cascade Natural Gas	Cascade Natural Gas	(888) 552-1130	www.cngc.com
Telecommunication	Centurylink	Centurylink	(888) 320-2794	fast.centurylink.com
Internet	There are many internet providers in the area.	There are many internet providers in the area.	Varies	Varies

III. GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL U-1: To ensure that energy, communication and irrigation facilities and services needed, to support current and future development, are available concurrently with the development.

Policy U-1.2 For electrical service, coordinate land use and facility planning with Pacific Power and Benton Rural Electric Association to allow for siting and construction of future distribution facilities that provide sufficient amounts of electrical power with minimal periods of service interruption.

Policy U-1.3 For telecommunications, including telephone, cellular telephone and cable television, allow the development/maintenance of facilities necessary to provide services as needed to accommodate population growth and advancements in technology.

Policy U-1.4 New development shall be allowed only when and where utilities are adequate, and only when and where such development can be adequately served by essential public utilities without significantly degrading level of service elsewhere.

GOAL U-2: To minimize impacts associated with the siting, development, and operation of utility services and facilities on adjacent properties and the natural environment.

Policy U-2.1 Electric power substations, recycling drop-off boxes, and similar facilities should be sited, designed and buffered, as needed, to fit in with their surroundings. When sited within or adjacent to residential areas, special attention should be given to minimizing noise, and light and glare impacts. Visual and land use impacts resulting from electrical system and other utility upgrades shall also be mitigated, as needed.

Policy U-2.2 Establish a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities, such as solid waste or recycling handling facilities. Cooperatively work with other agencies, surrounding municipalities and Yakima County during the siting and development of facilities of regional significance.

GOAL U-3: Develop an efficient utility system that supports the community vision (both public and private).

- Policy U-3.1 Develop adequate rights-of-way and infrastructure improvements for future development through the planning process, including, but not limited to, public and private utilities.
- Policy U-3.2 Development within the unincorporated portion of the urban growth area should be encouraged to occur only on a limited scale to prevent the inefficient use and distribution of public facilities and services.
- Policy U-3.3 Utility extensions should be designed to provide service to the maximum area possible with the least length of extension.

CITY OF TOPPENISH

2026 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Chapter 9 – *ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT*

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Development Element establishes the long-range strategy of the City of Toppenish which will help foster a thriving and sustainable economy while supporting high quality of life for current and future residents.

Toppenish serves as a regional center within the Yakima Valley, with a strong foundation in agriculture, food processing, cultural tourism, and small business activity. This element integrates economic planning with land use, transportation, housing, and capital facilities to ensure coordination between planning elements.

Growth Management Act Requirements

The GMA requires cities create: *“An economic development element establishing local goals, policies, objectives, and provisions for economic growth and vitality and a high quality of life. A city that has chosen to be a residential community is exempt from the economic development element requirement of this subsection.”* RCW 36.70A.070(7).

The goal of the Growth Management Act (GMA) is to encourage thriving and sustainable economies that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with city and county comprehensive plans. The GMA requires that communities apply consistency when addressing economic development issues. Considerations for regional, state, or federal economic development plans and programs are recommended, including the development of partnerships with organizations within the community.

Consistency means that no feature of a plan or regulation is incompatible with any other feature of a plan or regulation. Consistency allows orderly integration with other elements in a system. Consistent features and elements of the plan are compatible to the extent that they can coexist and not preclude the accomplishment of other features or elements.

Relationship to Other Elements

The Economic Development Element is coordinated and consistent with other chapters in the plan, each of the other elements are interrelated with the Economic Development Element and the goals and policies of each element. This element is the result of culminative context and situations of the other elements and is greatly influenced by their outcomes.

Regional Coordination

Coordination and concurrency between countywide and City of Toppenish development plans are essential to Yakima County's vitality and quality of life. While the County's natural setting sets the stage and determines the parameters within which economic development may take place, virtually every other feature of community life stems from the area's economic health. Outcomes from successful economic development include, but are not limited to providing; jobs for local residents, tax base for infrastructure, schools, parks, public safety, and other public facilities and services.

Yakima County's economic historical setting has been primarily tied to agriculture, dependent on irrigation. Development was shaped largely by the Northern Pacific Railroad and Yakima River; the Yakima Project of 1905 was one of the first and largest irrigation projects completed by the US Bureau of Reclamation. With the availability of irrigation and railroads, commercial fruit production grew, bringing along with it more farmers and the development of the towns that make up Yakima County. Today, Yakima County is Washington State's leading agricultural county, and is the state's largest producer of apples, hops, corn, spearmint, peppermint, and grapes.

County-wide Planning Policy

The County-wide Planning Goal G.3. addresses economic development: the following policies related to a general strategy to help ensure future economic vitality, broaden employment opportunities to meet the needs of projected future growth while maintaining a high-quality environment.

G.3.1. Encourage economic growth within the capacities of the region's natural resources, public services and facilities:

- Identify current and potential physical and fiscal capacities for municipal and private water systems, wastewater treatment plants, roadways and other infrastructure systems.
- Identify economic opportunities that strengthen and diversify the county's economy while maintaining the integrity of our natural environment.

G.3.2. Local economic development plans should be consistent with the comprehensive land use and capital facilities plans, and should:

- Evaluate existing and potential industrial and commercial land sites to determine short-term and long-term potential for accommodating new and existing businesses;
- Identify and target prime sites, determine costs and benefits of specific land development options and develop specific capital improvement strategies for the desired option;
- Implement zoning and land use policies based upon infrastructure and financial capacities of each jurisdiction;
- Identify changes in urban growth areas as necessary to accommodate the land and infrastructure needs of business and industry;

G.3.3. Coordination of efforts between the many diverse economic development organizations and other related agencies within Yakima County should be encouraged by:

- Identifying linkages between economic development issues and strategies and other growth planning elements (i.e. housing, transportation, utilities and land use);
- Defining roles and responsibilities for carrying out economic development goals, objectives and strategies.

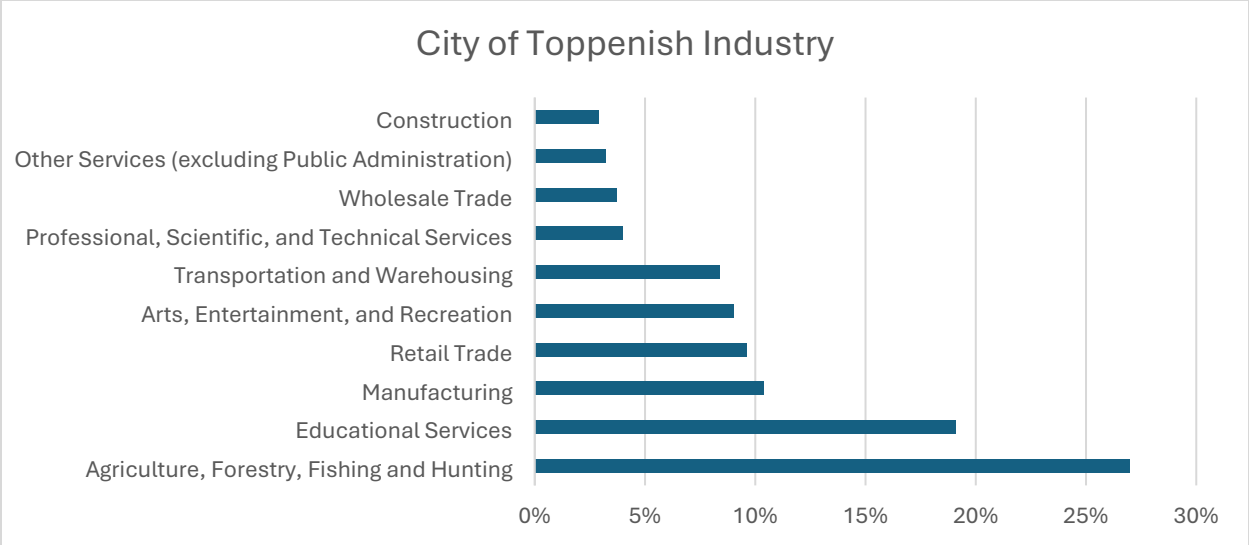
Existing Conditions

The health of the economy in Toppenish is based upon many diverse factors. The economic development activities include: (A) overall economic outlook; (B) population; and (C) wages.

Yakima County has been identified as a distressed area by the Washington State Employment Security Department, distressed areas are counties where the 3-year unemployment rate is at least 20% higher than the statewide average.

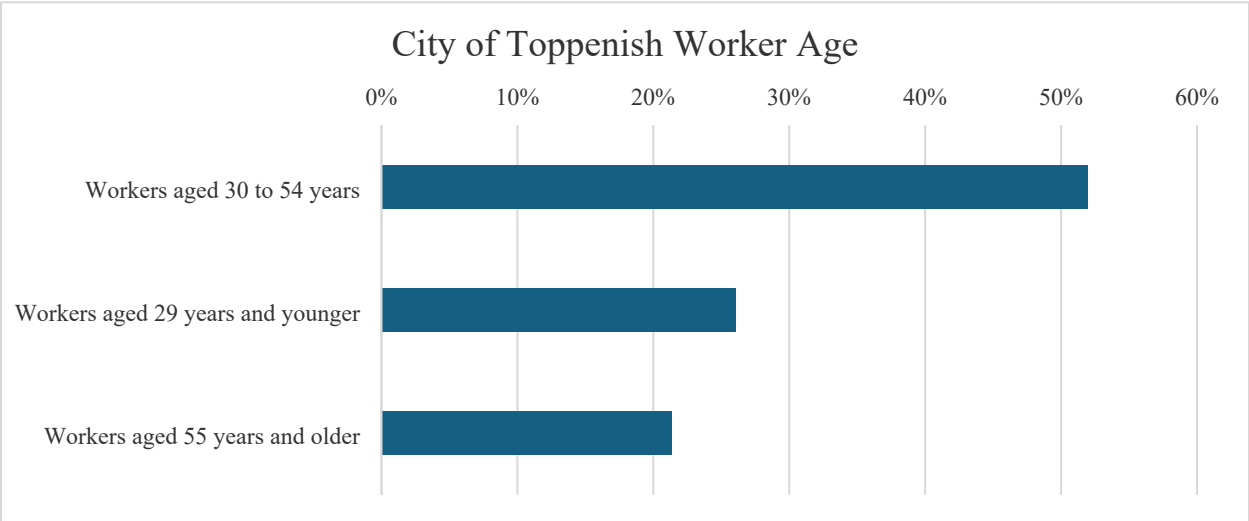
Overall Economic Outlook

The City of Toppenish supports all of the most prevalent industries within Yakima County. Industry connected with Toppenish is largely centered on agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining comprising 27% of employed population aged 16 year and over.



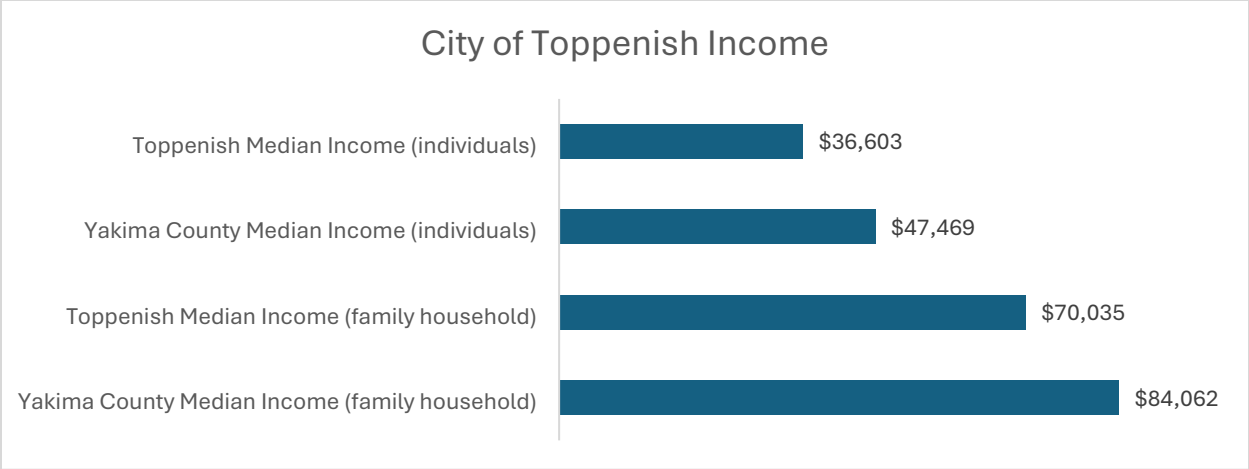
Population

The total population of the City of Toppenish is 8,854, this represents 3.4% of the population of Yakima County. Work within the city, totals 3,077 jobs within the city. The demographic distribution of the population working within the city is mostly comprised of people aged 30 to 54 years.



Wages

The City of Toppenish has a median income of \$36,603 for individuals and \$70,035 for family household income. Poverty affects the community significantly with 18% of the population of Toppenish classified as impoverished.



Goals and Policies

Goal ED-1. Encourage coordination between the City of Toppenish and Yakima County governments with local, state, and federal entities as well as the public to promote economically diverse opportunities for the Toppenish community.

Policy ED-1.1: To ensure community consensus representation should be sought from all City of Toppenish stakeholders in planning for economic diversification. “Stakeholders” include, but are not limited to, Toppenish School District, Heritage University, Toppenish Chamber of Commerce, Yakima Regional Library, Etc.

Policy ED-1.2: The City and County should monitor the implementation of and regularly meet to refine economic development programs.

Policy ED-1.3: To achieve economic development Goals, the City and County shall coordinate, where applicable, zoning, development standards, permit review process, and land use within the urban growth area.

Policy ED-1.4: The City should pursue Rural Economic Development Fund grants through Yakima County to assist in funding the construction of public facilities that support economic development projects identified in the Capital Improvements Plan.

Policy ED-1.5: The UGA boundary expansion may be activated by a proposal from either the City or County. Both governments must agree on the boundary as required by the Washington State Growth Management Act.

Policy ED-1.6: Base proposed expansion of the UGA on the percentage of developable land existing within the UGA as determined by the City Council as well as changes in the city or amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

Goal ED-2. Implement long-range economic diversification projects to provide job opportunities and reduce economic reliance on agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining industries.

Policy ED-2.1: The City should seek, support and assist in grant applications to help fund construction of planned circulation improvements in the downtown area.

Policy ED-2.2: Encourage non-polluting industries to locate within the city and/or UGA

Goal ED-3. Encourage economic development that strengthens the Toppenish community.

Policy ED-3.1: Retain and support existing businesses.

Policy ED-3.2: Ensure that economic development addresses all levels of demography.

Policy ED-3.3: Support home occupations that do not change the character of the neighborhood. Differentiate between major and minor home occupations located inside and outside of UGAs.