

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Civic Organizations Applaud Yakima's Falling Crime Rate

The Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce, The Yakima County Development Association (New Vision), and Safe Yakima Valley touted the City of Yakima's public safety efforts as new 2014 Police Department statistics show another reduction in crime. The numbers demonstrate the progress Yakima is making on several fronts. Since 2012, serious crime in Yakima has dropped by 21.8 percent. Within this category:

- auto thefts **declined by 37 percent**,
- burglaries **dropped by 32 percent**,
- robberies **dropped 26 percent**, and
- Less serious crimes (Part II offenses) like vandalism and fraud **dropped** similarly during the same period.

Yakima Part I Crime Trends

Offense	Number of Offenses			Change from <u>2012</u>
	2012	2013	2014	
Assault	267	212	197	-26.2%
Forcible Rape	54	31	31	-42.6%
Robbery	156	149	115	-26.3%
Burglary	1580	1165	1077	-31.8%
Larceny	3202	2953	2830	-11.6%
Arson	11	14	39	254.5%
Motor Vehicle Theft	1139	602	726	-36.3%
Homicide	6	9	2	-66.7%
Total Crime	6415	5135	5017	-21.8%
Total Part I crimes/1000	69.8	55.1	53.8	-21.8%

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Comparative 2014 crime stats from other Washington cities are not available yet, but 2013 statistics from the Washington Association of Police Chiefs and Sheriffs put Yakima at about 25th on the list in terms of crime rates among Washington cities. Over the long term serious crime rates in Yakima have dropped by over 69% since the mid-1980s.

The City's increased gang emphasis patrols, investment in police cars for officers, and community prevention activities are credited with improving public safety. Despite the progress there is no letup in terms of local law enforcement efforts. Yakima along with the County Sheriff's office and other city police departments are doing more than ever before to improve public safety.

Reducing crime is a big deal for the region. Our organizations get calls from prospective companies who are concerned about our criminal activity. We get even more calls from local Human Resource managers who lose talented potential employees because of safety concerns.

Our organizations applaud local law enforcement agencies for making our communities safer. Yakima has done an excellent job over the last few years to impact crime. The job to reduce crime is certainly not over, but let's take stock of where Yakima is relative to other communities and recognize Yakima is a much safer place to live today.

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About Safe Yakima Valley: Safe Yakima Valley is a Yakima-based not-for-profit organization, dedicated to improving and safeguarding our community. Through outreach, education and special events, we strive to highlight what's best about the Yakima Valley, and create positive change throughout our beautiful community.

About New Vision, the Yakima County Development Association: New Vision is a countywide economic development association that works to attract and grow business within the Yakima Valley. Founded in 1985, the association has helped over 50 companies locate or expand within the region. Companies receiving New Vision help have created over 2500 new jobs these firms have a \$400+ million dollar annual economic impact on the regional economy.

About the Yakima Chamber of Commerce: The Yakima Chamber of Commerce is the largest business support and development organization in Central Washington. With just over 800 members representing every business sector, the Chamber and its committees oversee county-wide growth initiatives and provide a range of business support tools including publications, web services, seminars and even leadership development for a new generation.