



**MEMBER JURISDICTIONS:**

Grandview  
Granger  
Harrah  
Mabton  
Moxee  
Naches  
Selah  
Sunnyside  
Tieton  
Toppenish  
Union Gap  
Wapato  
Yakima  
Yakima County  
Zillah

**YVCOG EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE:**

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*Toppenish City Council*  
Susan Whitman, Vice Chair  
*Yakima City Council*  
Mike Leita  
*Yakima County Commission*  
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John P. Hodkinson  
*Regional Planning Commission*



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**New STP Distribution Process Finalized**

*By Drew Miller, Planner*

Acting upon a recommendation from the Yakima Valley MPO/RTPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the MPO/RTPO Executive Committee approved a new Surface Transportation Program (STP) fund distribution process at their regular meeting on February 21. The Executive Committee finalized a competitive application and money distribution process that was developed by a subcommittee of the TAC over the past 8 months.

YVCOG's process of distributing regional STP funds had to change in response to actions by the Legislature and Governor last year. They directed RTPOs that receive federal STP funding to distribute funds based on a regional priorities rather than by formula. While the Legislature intended for the changes to take place immediately, the Governor gave regions time to thoughtfully change their STP distribution processes. The Yakima Valley RTPO must distribute funds based on a prioritized competitive basis effective with development of the 2008 Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs).

It is anticipated that YVCOG will issue a call for projects this spring (late March/early April) so that projects can be prioritized and award letters distributed in time for development of local 2008 TIPs.

If you have any questions about the new STP distribution process or would like a copy of the new STP competitive application, please contact Drew Miller at [millerd@yvcog.org](mailto:millerd@yvcog.org).

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**Anatomy of a Housing Rehabilitation Grant**

*By Michael Buchanan, Senior Planner*

One of the many activities the planning staff of the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments does is prepare grant applications for member jurisdictions. The 2006–2007 grant years were notable because not only was staff involved in writing the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) general purpose grant application for the Toppenish wastewater treatment plant last November, but we also committed to preparing two other applications for the City of Union Gap and the City of Toppenish for CDBG Housing Rehabilitation funds. The applications were originally scheduled to be due after January 1, 2007, but then the application forms were being modified, several Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) staff were moving to other state agencies, and the target due date kept shifting.

The YVCOG Housing Inspector conducted housing windshield surveys in October 2006 to determine the physical integrity of the existing housing stock in both communities and housing rehabilitation staff conducted prequalification interviews to determine if there would be sufficient applicants for a rehabilitation program, if funded. Budgets were developed and agreements with the applying communities were made to insure that there was sufficient funding to complete the projects if grant funds became available.

In December, it became apparent that the forms were not going to be available for the January 1, 2007 CDBG grant submission date and YVCOG staff became very involved in moving to our new business location. After the physical move, YVCOG staff continued to prepare the grant applications, not fully knowing what the final grant application (forms) would look like.

## Anatomy...Continued from Page 1

A CDBG grant application is always complex, but the added uncertainty of not knowing what kind of information was going to be required made the grant writing even more arduous. During mid-January, YVCOG staff were informed that the new application forms would not be available until February 1, 2007, but that CTED staff would start accepting applications on February 2, 2007. This may not sound like a big hurdle at first blush, however the "catch" was that only two programs will be funded in the entire state and we had two applications from this region alone!

Union Gap and Toppenish city staff were put on alert as the due date approached. On February 1, 2007, the new forms were made available on the CTED web page and YVCOG staff got right to work completing the applications. YVCOG staff worked into the early evening hours copying, collating and binding grant applications so they could be delivered to CTED early on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, to be first in line.

These grant applications required a lot of hard work by many people including numerous YVCOG and city staff from Toppenish and Union Gap, the Mayor of Union Gap and the City Manager of Toppenish. Many thanks to all who had a hand in making sure these applications were first in the door!

### **MARCH MEETINGS...**

MPO/RTPO Technical Advisory Committee  
Thursday, March 8, 2007 - 10:00 a.m.  
311 North 4th Street, Suite 202  
(The 300 Building)  
Yakima, WA

YVCOG Executive Committee &  
MPO/RTPO Executive Committee & Policy Board  
Wednesday, March 19, 2007 at 1:30 p.m.  
311 North 4th Street, Suite 202  
(The 300 Building)  
Yakima, WA

YVCOG General Membership  
Wednesday, March 21 - 6:30 p.m.  
The Vineyard  
150 Division Street  
Grandview, WA

Program: Update of Black Rock Project

### **Your YVCOG Staff:**

J. Page Scott, Executive Director  
Brian Curtin, CTR Coordinator  
Michael Buchanan, Senior Planner  
Vacant, Senior Transportation Planner  
Drew Miller, Planner  
Richard Spada, GIS Analyst/Systems Administrator  
Gene E. Weinmann, Housing Rehab Coordinator  
Jim Dixon, Housing Rehab Building Inspector  
Tamara Hayward, Housing Rehab Office Specialist  
Nancy Soules, Administrative Finance Officer  
Judy Price, Office Specialist



## To map, or not to map? Lessons learned in data collection

*By Rick Spada, GIS Analyst/Systems Analyst*

If you are going to be doing any type of data collection, you may want to consider whether or not you want to be able to present the information you gather on a map. This is an important consideration when determining the procedure you will be using to gather the data and then to store the information you collect.

If you think you may want to display the information you collect on a map, it is important to include geographic data in your survey tool. In order to tie data to a physical location, you will need an address. There are several types of addresses: physical (street) address, mailing address (may be a P.O. Box), and a geographic reference (longitude, latitude). Even a parcel number (code) can be considered an "address" because that code is attributed to a specific parcel of land.

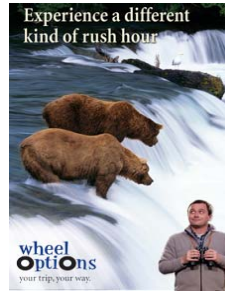
Mailing addresses may be useful for sending information to property owners, but they are not ideal for mapping purposes. Mailing addresses may not be physical addresses (e.g. P.O. Box) and therefore do not provide a link to the location you are gathering information about.

Quick rule of thumb when collecting data to be mapped: Think about how precise you need to be able to "pinpoint" the location. Longitude/Latitude information provides the most precise location and should be used when collecting information that is location sensitive (e.g. location of buried utilities, survey monuments). This precise, from scratch, approach is performed with a Global Positioning System (GPS). However, if a sub-set of a set of features, that already have a geographic location, is to be mapped (e.g. a list of rental units, tax exempt parcels, etc..) then a parcel number is the ideal "address" to be used to pull them out of the entire feature set. The tax lot can then be located and displayed on a map. If there is not a unique identifier associated then there is no way to geographically locate the target features. The features cannot be located and therefore can not be mapped. Parcel number/assessor number is the ideal unique identifier in Yakima County. It also might be good practice to talk to a GIS staff person to help you determine what geographical information will be needed in the mapping process.

Parcel numbers and street addresses are useful when displaying information about entire properties or relative proximities (e.g. location of vacant, commercial properties within a city, properties within ¼ mile of a bus stop).

In short, before you begin any data collection tasks, ask yourself . . . **To map, or not to map?**

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options**  
your trip, your way.



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WWW.WHEELOPTIONS.ORG**

## **Local Prizes!!!**

**Seattle Mariners Tickets**

**Greystone Restaurant Gift Certificate**

**Santiago's Restaurant Gift Certificate**

**Lowe's Home Improvement Gift Certificate**

**Inklings Bookstore Gift Certificates (10)**

**Movie Bucks (10)**

**Yakima Bears Baseball Tickets (10 pr.)**

**Exercise your options and win a 7 day  
Cruise for Two to Alaska!**

**From March 12th to the 23rd say goodbye to your solo commute and carpool, vanpool, ride the bus, bike or walk to work during Wheel Options! You may even be able to compress your work schedule or work from home. Pick the choice that's best for you and discover a more relaxed commute. The lucky winner and traveling companion will experience a different kind of rush hour exploring the beauty and majesty of Alaska from the comfort of an ocean view room aboard a cruise ship. The lucky winner will see more glaciers than skyscrapers, more wildlife than cars and northern lights instead of stoplights. That's one of the great prizes you can win for participating just twice during the two week event. For more information contact your Employee Transportation Coordinator or contact Brian Curtin, YVCOG CTR program coordinator-Phone 574-1550 or email at: [curtinb@yvcog.org](mailto:curtinb@yvcog.org).**

## **Options are a Good Thing!**

*by Brian Curtin, CTR Program Coordinator*

**Carpool or Vanpool, Walk or Bicycle,  
Transit or Telework?**

***It's good to have options.***

From March 12<sup>th</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup>, you will have some "Wheel Options." Participate in Wheel Options and try a smart commute like carpooling, vanpooling or riding the bus. You can even try compressing your work schedule, working from home, bicycling or walking to work. Wheel Options is sponsored by Yakima Valley Conference of Governments and the Washington State Rideshare Organization (WSRO).

Join thousands of others across the state that will choose not to drive alone to work, at least twice during Wheel Options. By exercising your options, you will also be eligible for some great prizes, including an **exciting 7 day Alaskan Cruise for two!**

By participating in Wheel Options, you'll also be doing your part to clean up our air, unclog the roads and save yourself some cash.

Your Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) can help you find the commute that's right for you. They can answer questions about bus schedules and vanpools that you can start or join. They can also assist you in finding a carpool partner or mapping out a walking or bike route. For more information just call your Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) or Brian Curtin (YVCOG CTR Program Coordinator) at 574-1550 or email at [curtinb@yvcog.org](mailto:curtinb@yvcog.org).

Wheel Options entry forms will be distributed to CTR affected worksites in early March or you can register online by going to the website at [www.WheelOptions.org](http://www.WheelOptions.org). Simply check the travel mode and the date(s) that you choose as an alternative to driving alone. You can also see a list of all the statewide prizes being offered by visiting the Wheel Options website. Once again, the YVCOG Commute Trip Reduction program is offering an exciting array of local prizes including a \$100.00 Mariners Baseball gift certificate as well as many other wonderful prizes.

Watch for fun events during Wheel Options, March 12<sup>th</sup> through the 23<sup>rd</sup>. All employers are encouraged to plan special Wheel Options events and activities. The YVCOG and WSRO encourage all employees to participate and get your wheels spinning!

## Wapato Housing Rehabilitation Program Advances

By Gene Weinmann, Housing Rehab Coordinator

The 2006 Wapato Housing Rehabilitation Program (WHRP) has entered the construction phase, having awarded its first 7 projects to contractors and initiating construction work on the projects in early February. The WHRP staff anticipates receiving loan approval on an additional 5 in early March, with project bids and bid awards following shortly thereafter.



The Housing Rehabilitation Program offers Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation and Weatherization loans to qualified Wapato residents. Loans are separated into two basic categories: Standard and Elderly. Standard loans require monthly payments ranging from \$40.00 to \$75.00 and require repayment of only 50% of the portion of the project funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Elderly loans

require monthly payments ranging from \$25.00 to \$60.00 and require repayment of only 40% of the portion of the project funded by CDBG funds. Both loan types are 0% interest.

The Program is targeting a minimum of 15 housing rehabilitation projects within the City's corporate limits. The Wapato Housing Rehabilitation Program is substantially funded by a Community Development Block Grant from the Washington State Department of Community Development, with the remaining funding provided by the City of Wapato.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting Gene Weinmann, YVCOG Housing Coordinator at (509) 574-1550

### **TITLE VI Notice to the Public**

YVCOG fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, see <http://www.yvcog.org/title6.pdf> or call (509) 574-1550.