



MEMBER JURISDICTIONS:

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

**YVCOG EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE:**

Al Hubert, Chair
Toppenish City Council
Susan Whitman, Vice Chair
Yakima City Council
Mike Leita
Yakima County Commission
Jim Restucci
Sunnyside City Council
Dan Olson
Union Gap City Council
Velva Herrera
Mayor, City of Mabton
John P. Hodkinson
Regional Planning Commission



**School's in Session!
Watch out for kids!**

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Yakima, WA 98901
509-574-1550
FAX 509-574-1551
Website: www.yvcog.org

Groundbreaking Ceremonies Held

By Drew Miller, Sr. Transportation Planner



The City of Yakima celebrated the official start of the railroad grade separations project with a ceremonial groundbreaking on August 15. The YVCOG Executive Director was on hand along with U.S. Representative Richard "Doc" Hastings and representatives from U.S. Senator Patty Murray's office, BNSF and the state Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB).

The project will construct two roadway underpasses, one on MLK Blvd. and one on Lincoln Ave. The underpasses will provide three lanes on each roadway, bicycle lanes and sidewalks under the BNSF railroad mainline. This project will benefit air quality, increase mobility and eliminate conflicts with the 8 to 12 trains that pass through Yakima daily. The total estimated cost of this project is \$34.77 million.



2008

FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION BUDGET

By Drew Miller, Sr. Transportation Planner

The full U.S. House passed its FFY 2008 transportation spending bill on July 24. The Senate Appropriations Committee passed its own transportation spending bill on July 12, but the full Senate will not consider it until later this month. Both bills fully fund the highway program at the SAFETEA-LU guaranteed level of \$40.2 billion, a \$1.1 billion increase over FFY 2007.



The President has threatened a veto because the bill passed by the House exceeds the President's budget by \$3.4 billion; objecting in particular to highway and Amtrak spending. The House vote was 268-153, just shy of a 2/3 vote required to override the veto threat by the President.

Both bills also included funding designated for specific projects, also called earmarks. Initial analysis indicates funding for earmarks continues to decline. For Washington State, 2008 earmarks for highway projects totaled \$16.3 million, while in 2007 the total was \$23.7 million.

One local project included in the House passed transportation spending bill was \$200,000 for Yakima County's Beaudry Road grade-separated pedestrian underpass to connect East Valley schools near the City of Moxee.

HAC News Provides Valuable Housing Information

By Gene Weinmann, Housing Rehab Coordinator

The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) News has provided some valuable housing-related information in recent months:

TRUST FUND BILL AND BILL ON SMALL PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCIES (PHAS) ADVANCE. On July 31 the House Financial Services Committee approved the *National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act*, H.R. 2895 (see *HAC News*, 7/3/07). Visit <http://thomas.loc.gov> or <http://www.nhtf.org>. *Public housing authorities* that administer fewer than 250 public housing and voucher units would be exempt from many annual planning requirements under H.R. 3067, passed by the House of Representatives on July 30. A bill has been introduced in the Senate but not yet acted upon. S. 809 would provide a broader exemption and apply to PHAs with fewer than 500 units.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT OFFERS PRESERVATION REVOLVING LOAN FUND MONIES. Nonprofits and housing finance agencies can apply by September 6 for funds to re-lend for preserving Section 515 housing. See *Federal Register*, 8/6/07, pp. 44076-81 or <http://www.hudclips.org/cgi/index.cgi>. Contact Henry Searcy, Jr., 202-720-1753, henry.searcy@wdc.usda.gov.

HUD ADOPTS SIX-YEAR PHASE-IN OF PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCIES (PHAS) OPERATING FUND CUTS. The schedule was proposed in November (see *HAC News*, 11/29/06) for PHAs that will lose funding under the new operating subsidy formula. See *Federal Register*, 8/15/07, pp. 45871-74, or <http://www.hudclips.org/cgi/index.cgi>. Contact Elizabeth Hanson, HUD, 202-475-7949.

SUBPRIME LENDING INFORMATION COMMENTS INVITED. Regulatory agencies have proposed illustrations of information lenders can provide to consumers about subprime mortgage lending. (Nontraditional mortgage illustrations were issued in June; see *HAC News*, 7/3/07.) Comments are due October 15. See *Federal Register*, 8/14/07, pp. 45495-500, or <http://www.fdic.gov/regulations/laws/federal/>. Contact Victoria Pawelski, FDIC, 202-898-3571.

HOUSING AFFECTS HEALTH AND EDUCATION. Comprehensive resources on the impacts of both rental housing and homeownership on health and educational achievements, released by the National Housing Trust's enter for Housing Policy and Enterprise Community Partners, are at <http://www.nhc.org/housing/intersections>. The Housing Assistance Council is a nonprofit corporation headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has been helping local organizations build affordable homes in rural America since 1971. The HAC emphasizes local solutions, empowerment of the poor, reduced dependence and self-help strategies. The Housing Assistance Council may be contacted at (202) 842-8600 or on the web at www.ruralhome.org.

Telework Works!

By Brian Curtin, CTR Program Coordinator

So, you think you've heard it all; carpooling, public transit, van-pools and compressed work week and you've even tried riding your bike and walking to work. Now something you've never heard of before, called telework, comes along and you're **just wondering...**; "Is this something that could work for me and my company?" I'm so very glad you asked!

Telework is working at home or at a satellite office or telework center near home one or more days a week—instead of commuting to the main office or place of business. Because telework, often called telecommuting, reduces the work commute, it conserves fuel, relieves traffic congestion and improves air quality. Telework can result in higher quality work at a lower cost. It also empowers people to work independently and have greater control over their lives. That's why many experts are calling telework "a significant working arrangement for the future." It is estimated that there are currently 12 million telecommuters.

There are powerful reasons for the popularity of this relatively new work arrangement:

- Organizations' desire to recruit and retain the best employees.
- Pressure on organizations to improve the bottom line by doing more work and getting better results with fewer resources.
- Rapid development of technology that allows fast and easy movement of information.
- Increasing concern with the environmental, social and personal costs of commuting.
- Employee's need to balance work and home lives as the number of two working-parent and single-parent households rises.

How telework benefits your organization:

- Improved effectiveness and work quality.
- Higher employee morale and job satisfaction.
- Increased ability to attract and keep valued employees.
- Greater employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- Increased ability to meet air quality or transportation mandates (CTR survey ring a bell?)

How telework benefits your employees:

- They have the opportunity to be more creative and more productive, and to do higher quality work.
- They feel better about themselves and their job because they are given trust, responsibility and independence.
- They save time and money, and have less stress because they commute less.

How telework benefits your community:

- Decreased traffic congestion.
- Cleaner air.
- Conservation of limited energy resources because of lower gasoline consumption.

It is imperative that you determine up front how you will define the success of your telework effort. Set program objectives that can be measured by results. Gathering information regarding the home environment, work environment, attitudes toward telework, job performance, job satisfaction and travel patterns is necessary to evaluate the success of your program. If you would like more information regarding starting a telecommuting program at your worksite, please contact Brian Curtin, YVCOG CTR Coordinator at 509-574-1550 or e-mail curtinb@yvcoog.org. For a very comprehensive overview of telework, visit <http://www.gilgordon.com>.

Free Antivirus Software Available for your Windows Home Computer

By Rick Spada, GIS Analyst and System Administrator



Are you like me, always looking for a bargain? Are you on a budget? If you are, then this article might interest you. I have put together a list of FREE antivirus software that you might be interested in downloading and installing on your home computers. They are comparable to

the big expensive antivirus software packages that have taken over the market, such as McAfee and Norton. If you decide you want to take the free route you can let your current antivirus expire and then download one of these free antivirus software products. You can download several of them and run one continuously and run the others as on-demand (i.e., you run them once or twice a week). These are targeted for PC's running a Windows operating system and must be used for non-commercial use.

- **AVG - AVG Internet Security Home Edition.** Their phrase is "Tough on Viruses Easy on Users". I tend to favor this one, however, it is not the only one. It provides comprehensive antivirus protection. The one catch is that the license for the free download is for only 3 home computers. If you have more than three computers you want to install it on then this will not work for you.
- **AVAST! – AVAST! 4 Home Edition.** This is a comprehensive antivirus as well. This requires you to register the product but it is so quick and easy. However, it does require periodic registration after it is installed.
- **Avira – Avira AntiVir Personal Edition Classic for Windows.** This one is excellent as well. It protects against viruses, worms, Trojans, expensive dialers, phishing, and rootkits.
- **Vintage Solutions, INC - Antidote Super Lite Version.** This is a gem for sure. It utilizes the same virus database as its commercial version.
- **Novatix – Cyberhawk Basic.** This is designed to be a compliment to your current antivirus software (the free one you downloaded). This virus scan is unique in that it looks at the behavior of the infected program not the content.
- **PC Tools Software - PC Tools Antivirus Free Edition.** Antivirus and firewall for windows.

These are the most comprehensive that I know of so far. If you do decide to download and install any of these products and have any questions please send me an email at spadar@yvcog.org or call me at 509-574-1550 and I will gladly help you with any technical issues or advice.

YVCOG SEPTEMBER MEETINGS...

MPO/RTPO Technical Advisory Committee

Thursday, September 13, 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

Monday, September 17, 2007 - 1:30 p.m.
311 North 4th Street, Suite 202
(The 300 Building)
Yakima, WA

YVCOG General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, September 19, 2007 - 6:30 p.m.
The Harman Center
101 North 65th Avenue
Yakima, WA
(On the Corner of Summitview & 65th Avenue)

Meeting Highlights....August 20, 2007

MPO/RTPO Executive Committee

- Approved two-year agreement with A-1Tri-City Taxi, Inc., for YVCOG Commute Trip Reduction Guaranteed Ride Home program.
- Presented YVCOG's Draft Yakima Valley Regional Commute Trip Reduction Plan for review.
- Approved YVCOG MPO/RTPO Self-Certification Statement indicating compliance with federal metropolitan planning requirements.

YVCOG Executive Committee

- Discussed 2008 YVCOG Budget Subcommittee report and reviewed draft 2008 YVCOG Preliminary Budget.
- Approved payment of August vouchers for \$76,403.93 .

Your YVCOG Staff:

J. Page Scott, Executive Director
Brian Curtin, CTR Coordinator
Michael Buchanan, Senior Planner
Drew Miller, Senior Transportation Planner
Saadia Hassan, 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



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.