



MEMBER JURISDICTIONS:

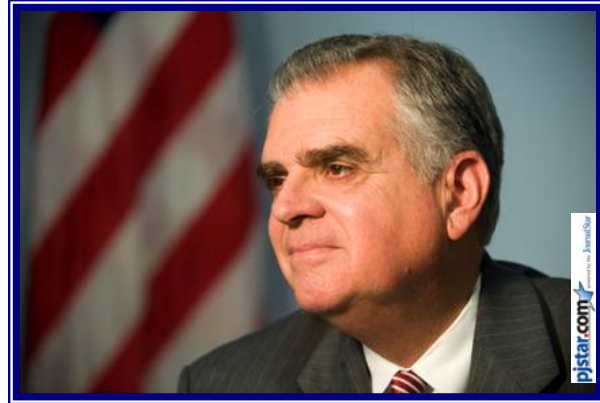
Grandview
Granger
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Moxee
Naches
Selah
Sunnyside
Tieton
Toppenish
Union Gap
Wapato
Yakima
Yakima County
Zillah

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NEW US DOT SECRETARY ANNOUNCED

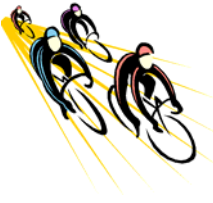
By Drew Miller, Planner

Rep. Ray LaHood (R-Ill.) has accepted an offer to become President-elect Barack Obama's transportation secretary. LaHood, 63, became a key player on the House Appropriations Committee and in his new role leading the US DOT, will take a central role in the administration's anticipated public works program designed to stimulate the economy. LaHood is considered a moderate, and in relation to transportation policy, he has broken with his party over Amtrak funding to support an expansion of passenger rail service. In 2005, he told the Peoria Journal-Star that "we've got a good Amtrak system in Illinois and I don't think we want to destroy it by talking about privatization." In 2006, he received a 66 percent approval rating from the American Road and Transportation Builders Association and in 2008 he voted in favor of the Saving Energy Through Public Transportation Act, a bill designed to promote increased public transportation.

Some bicycle and pedestrian advocates are pleased with LaHood's selection. He is a member of the Congressional Bike Caucus and has historically been a strong supporter of the federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) and Enhancement funding programs. Defending the Enhancement program from a \$600 million redirection during the FY 2004 transportation budget, LaHood said on the floor of the House, "If we really want Americans to be fit and healthy and get in good shape, the way to do it is to allow for the enhancement program that has worked so well, that allows people to get outdoors, to ride their bikes, to jog, to walk. What better way to bring people in a community together. This program has been a marvelous program. We should not change it. It is a program that works. It is not broke. I encourage Members to support the amendment and continue the fine program we have had."

DOT Secretary...Page 2

Due to holiday observations, YVCOG Office will be CLOSED on January 1st and 19th, 2009. We will return on Friday, January 2nd and Tuesday, January 20th for our regular office hours.



Make a Difference!!

By Brian Curtin, CTR Coordinator

The beginning of winter might seem like an odd time to be thinking about walking and bicycling, but I can't think of a better time to start plotting and scheming for the New Year. I'm often asked the question, "I was just wondering, CTR Guy, what I can do to become more involved in making this community more bicycle and pedestrian friendly?" Sometimes CTR Guy doesn't have all the answers, but he sure knows where to find them. I paid a visit to the "source"; The Bicycle Alliance of Washington's www.bicyclealliance.org and the League of American Bicyclists www.bikeleague.org websites are a treasure-trove of bicycle information. Here are just ten things you can do to make your community a better place for bicycling and walking as well.



1. Contact your elected officials. You can phone, write, e-mail or meet with them. Let them know that biking is important to you. Ask them to support a particular project, more funding for bicycle facilities, bicycle-friendly public policies, etc.
2. Attend public hearings that impact bicycling. Transportation project, community plans, budgets, land use, regional

transit...these things can impact your ability to bicycle safely and easily.

3. Join a bicycle organization that advocates for cyclists and encourage your cycling friends to do the same. Groups like the Bicycle Alliance of Washington can keep you informed about bicycle issues and can help you take action on issues of interest to you. A great local resource is our own Chinook Cycling Club of Yakima, their website is www.chinookcycling.com.
4. Write a letter to the editor or opinion piece for local paper. Keep it brief, timely and pithy.
5. Attend a "bicycle" event. Look for events in your area such as Yakima's annual Gap-to-Gap race (for more information about Gap-to-Gap visit the Greenway website <http://yakimagreenway.org/g2g/>).
6. Familiarize yourself with your community's transportation plan. These transportation plans must address nonmotorized issues such as bicycling. Use the elements that support bicycling to support your issue.
7. Contact your local transportation and park officials. Encourage them to stripe more bike lanes, install more bicy-



Difference.....Continued on Right



Washington Trivia Corner!!!

These are just some quirky fun facts about Washington State. We hope you learn something new!

1. What small Washington town shipped a 22-ton lump of coal to the 1893 Chicago World's Fair?
2. What famous magician leaped while manacled into the Spokane River in 1910?
3. What famous photographer opened a studio in Seattle in 1910?
4. Because of Phil and Steve Mahre, what ski resort has become best known in Washington?

See Below for Answers

Difference.....Continued from Left

8. Sit on your local bicycle/pedestrian advisory committee and attend their meetings. The Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee provides input to the City of Yakima's City Council and transportation department and helps to guide the bicycle agenda. Yakima's committee typically meets the second Thursday of every month at 4:00 pm in the City of Yakima Council Chambers.
9. Get involved in your neighborhood or city planning process. The Growth Management Act requires comprehensive planning at the local, regional and state levels and they address bicycling as well as walking.
10. Be a bicycle ambassador. Promote safe cycling by riding safely yourself. Encourage your workplace and businesses that you patronize to support bicycling. Spread the word to your friends, family, colleagues, and neighbors. Trails and bicycle-friendly streets aren't just a benefit to bicyclists; they are a community benefit as well.

DOT Secretary.....from Page 1

YVCOG will continue tracking the many issues LaHood will encounter as head of the US DOT; reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU, economic stimulus proposals, future highway trust fund solvency, and whether the department will continue to work towards a congestion tolling initiative started under the previous administration.

If you have any questions, please contact Drew Miller at 509-574-1550 or by email at millerd@yvco.org.

Your YVCOG Staff:

- J. Page Scott, Executive Director
- Brian Curtin, CTR Coordinator
- Vacant, Senior Planner
- Drew Miller, Senior Transportation Planner
- Vacant, GIS Analyst/Systems Administrator
- Gene E. Weinmann, Housing Rehab Coordinator
- Jim Dixon, Housing Rehab Building Inspector
- Tamara Hayward, Housing Rehab Office Specialist
- Nancy Soules, Senior Accountant
- Sarah Hyndman, Office Specialist



Washington Trivia Answers...

1. Roslyn.
2. Harry Houdini.
3. Imogen Cunningham.
4. White Pass.

January Meetings...

MPO/RTPO Technical Advisory Committee
Thursday, January 8 at 10:00 a.m.

*YVCOG Executive Committee & MPO/RTPO
Executive Committee & Policy Board*

Monday, January 21 @ 1:30 p.m.
The 300 Building
311 North 4th Street, Suite 202
Yakima, WA

YVCOG General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, January 21 at 6:30 p.m.

American Legion
Wapato, WA

Reservations by Wednesday, Jan. 14, please.
Cancellations by Monday, Jan. 19.

UNION GAP'S HOUSING PROGRAM PROGRESSES

By Gene Weinmann, Housing Coordinator

The City of Union Gap's 2007 Housing Rehabilitation Program has been extremely successful to date, having approved 33 projects (15 rehabilitation, 12 weatherization and 6 lead hazard abatement), awarded 29 projects to contractors and completed 23 projects to date.

The 2007 Program offers Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation, Lead Hazard and Weatherization loans to qualified Union Gap 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 60% of the portion of the project funded by CDBG funds. Elderly loans require monthly payments ranging from \$25.00 to \$60.00 and require repayment of only 50% of the portion of the project funded by CDBG funds. Both loan types are 0% interest.

The 2007 Program represents the first housing partnership between the City of Union Gap and the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG). The YVCOG's role is that of a project administration manager, directing all project administration and construction management elements of the Program. Funding is provided by a 2007 Community Development Block Grant from the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) and by City of Union Gap funds.

Additional information regarding YVCOG-administered housing rehabilitation programs 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.yvco.org/title6.pdf> or call (509) 574-1550.



Judy Price Receives 2008 YVCOG Outstanding Service Award

By Page Scott, Executive Director

At the December 10, 2008 General Membership Meeting at the Mt. Adams Country Club, YVCOG members were able to thank Judy Price one more time for her 22+ years of service to them. Judy was surprised after offering to help out at the General Membership meeting, to then be presented with a certificate and her name engraved on the Outstanding Service Award plaque that hangs in the YVCOG office reception area.

Page Scott, YVCOG Executive Director, and John Hodgkinson, YVCOG Chair, presented Judy with the certificate and agreed that Judy's years of service had to be recognized.

YVCOG members were also able to say "thank you" to several others for their contributions to the Yakima Valley communities and YVCOG membership for their services. Certificates of Appreciation were presented to Ron Gammache, retiring Yakima County Commissioner; Don Whitehouse, WSDOT South Central Region Administrator; Norm Johnson, Yakima City Council member and YVCOG Executive Committee; and Maravell Gonsioroski, Moxee City Council member.

