



**MEMBER JURISDICTIONS:**

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

**YVCOG EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE:**

James A. Restucci, Chair  
*Mayor, Sunnyside*  
Kevin Bouchey  
*Yakima County Commissioner*  
Rick Ensey  
*Yakima City Council*  
Area 1 — Dan Olson  
*Union Gap City Council*  
Area 2 — Loren Belton, Vice Chair  
*Toppenish City Council*  
Area 3 — Angel Reyna  
*Mayor, Mabton*  
Member At Large-  
John Hodgkinson, Jr.



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Yakima, WA 98901  
509-574-1550  
FAX 509-574-1551  
Website: [www.yvco.org](http://www.yvco.org)



**YAKIMA VALLEY REGIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE  
—DRAFT PLAN RELEASED—**

On May 20, 2011 the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG) issued the Draft version of its 2011 update to the Yakima Valley Regional Transportation Plan. There is a 30-day comment period on the Draft Plan, from May 20, 2011 to June 20, 2011, before the Yakima Valley Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Planning Organization adopts the Final Plan. The document is a long-range plan for both the Yakima County region and the greater Yakima metropolitan area. It identifies a strategy for future transportation needs based on forecast population and job growth over the next 20 years, focusing on the efficiency of the road network and other transportation facilities and services. An update to the Plan is required to maintain the region's eligibility to receive federal funding for transportation improvement projects. The Plan was last updated in 2007.

The Draft Plan was developed through a 6-month planning process conducted by YVCOG. Preparation of the plan was guided by the Yakima Valley Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Planning Organization (MPO/RTPO) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Executive Committee. Public input is being sought and obtained through written comments and the project website.

Briefly, the strategy for future transportation improvements that is part of the Draft Plan calls for:

- Maintaining and preserving prior investments in the regional transportation system.
- Completing transportation projects that are underway or have previously been established as having a strong regional commitment.
- Focusing on spot or corridor improvements that resolve operational and safety issues.
- Investing in selected widening or construction of new corridors to accommodate forecast travel demands, shift traffic from existing congestion locations, and support better access to the major regional highway system.
- Enhancing transit and transportation demand management programs to better serve the local community needs and to reduce overall traffic volumes.
- Improving special needs transportation services, especially outside the metropolitan area.
- Constructing high priority components and missing links of the regional non-motorized transportation system that are not addressed by other transportation improvements.
- Referencing other regionally significant projects that could be funded at a later date.
- Supporting local agency projects to improve the overall mobility for the communities and reduce the local traffic demands on the regional system.

The Draft Plan includes an extensive list of future transportation improvements in the region. These include both improvements on state highways, and regional

## UPDATE Continued from Page 1...

improvements that will be implemented by local jurisdictions. While a number of future projects involve road widening or construction of new road corridors, the project list also includes many preservation and maintenance projects and improvements to help the flow of traffic at intersections. Transit, pedestrian, bicycle, rail, and freight improvements are also part of the Draft Plan, as are commute trip reduction measures.



The Draft Plan is based on expected population and employment growth throughout the region. It also examines potential environmental issues associated with future implementation of transportation projects and programs.

Copies of the Draft Plan are available at the downtown Yakima and Sunnyside branches of the Yakima Regional Library, YVCOG office, and on the project website at <http://yvco.org/pages/PlanUpdate11.html>. The public is invited to submit comments on the Draft Plan by emailing them to [lacombed@yvco.org](mailto:lacombed@yvco.org), or by writing to Deborah LaCombe, Senior Transportation Planner, YVCOG at 311 North 4th Street, Suite 202, Yakima, WA 98901. Information is also available by calling YVCOG at 509-574-1550. The comment period ends on Friday, June 15 at 5:00 p.m.

A meeting of the Yakima Valley MPO/RTPO Executive Committee is scheduled for June 20 at the YVCOG offices to consider adoption of the Plan. The public is welcome to attend and participate. The project website will include more detailed information about the meeting. Spanish language speakers may request further information on the project by contacting 509-574-1550 and asking for the Spanish extension. For special accommodations to participate in a meeting or materials in an alternative format, please call YVCOG at (509) 574-1550 by 10:00 AM three days prior to the meeting. For TTY users, please use the State's toll-free relay service, 7-1-1, and ask the operator to dial (509) 574-1550.



## June Committee Meetings

### **MPO/RTPO Technical Advisory Committee**

Thursday, June 9 at 10:00 a.m.

### **YVCOG MPO/RTPO Executive Committee & Policy Board & YVCOG Ex- ecutive Committee**

Monday, June 20 at 1:30 p.m.

**The 300 Bldg\* 2nd Flr \* 311 North 4th St \* Yakima  
For more info, call (509) 574-1550.**



## Washington State Launches New Map Website

OLYMPIA, WA -- Have you ever wondered where Google and Bing get the information that appears on their online maps? Often, it comes straight from government map data, which is becoming increasingly easier to access online. Now, the State of Washington is hoping to make it easier for you to search and find the huge amount of geographic data it tracks, whether you're a Geographic Information System (GIS) specialist or a just a curious member of the public.

The Washington State Department of Information Services this week launched the Washington State Geospatial Portal, found online at <http://geography.wa.gov>. The site is a way to access a wide variety of maps, interactive mapping applications, and geographic data hosted on government websites.

Whereas previously you would need to search through multiple state government agency websites to find map data, now you can find it all listed in one place online. Through the Geospatial Portal, you can:

- Download data to view in other map programs like Google Earth or Bing Maps.
- Access online interactive mapping applications, with the ability to select and zoom areas, choose layers, and print. Interactive maps included on the site show information such as broadband speeds, sales tax rates, and comparisons of legislative districts.
- View or download maps showing a variety of information, including county population densities, tsunami and flood hazard areas, or soils and farming data.

### **Are you a local government with data to share?**

The site's creators plan to include links to maps and data held by cities and counties in Washington State. Local governments can help expand the site by sending a link to their online maps and data files to the Washington State GIS Coordinator, Joy Paulus, at [joy.paulus@dis.wa.gov](mailto:joy.paulus@dis.wa.gov).

The Department of Information Services is encouraging users to check back often on the site as more content is loaded over the coming months.

**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.



# Grandview's "Alive Downtown" Dedication and Archway Ribbon Cutting Ceremony To Celebrate Grandview's Downtown

By Deb LaCombe, Senior Planner

On the afternoon of May 14<sup>th</sup>, Grandview was showing off in grand style. A ceremony was held next to the impressive archway at the entrance to the city.



The idea for revitalizing Grandview's downtown started as a grassroots movement in mid September 2007 with the formation of a revitalization committee. By December of that year, momentum was realized when a Business/Property Owner Workshop attracted 24 participants. The plan for "Alive Downtown" was adopted on March 17, 2008 by the city Council and, in planning timeline terms, the project was completed in record time thanks to the Mayor, City Council, City Staff, Block Captains, and the team of consultants and contractors.

Funding came from City investments, grants, loans and awards. The substantial list of grants include:

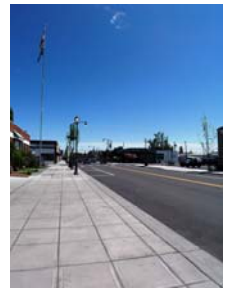
- State Rural Opportunity Fund Grant
- HUD CDBG Planning-Only Grant
- Yakima County Supporting Investment in Economic Diversity (SEID) Grant Funds
- ARRA Transportation Grant
- HUD CDBG Recovery Grant
- Public Works Board (Small Communities in Rural Counties) Grant

In all, the funding that revitalized and stimulated the rebirth of downtown Grandview totaled over \$5,196,000.



Beautification efforts for the business district include wider sidewalks, streetlights, pedestrian lights, banners, street trees and planters, and sidewalk tables at businesses to encourage livable community spaces.

Event speakers included: David Reeploeg from Senator Maria Cantwell's Office; Page Scott from Yakima Valley Conference of Governments; Kaaren Roe from Washington State Department of Commerce; Kathleen Davis from Washington State Department of Transportation; Jeff Louman from Huibregtse, Louman Associates, Inc; and Gloria Mendoza, a downtown Grandview businesswoman.



### Your YVCOG Staff:

- J. Page Scott, Executive Director
- Brian Curtin, CTR Coordinator
- Deb LaCombe, Senior Transportation Planner
- Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner
- John R. Rohrbaugh, GIS Analyst/Systems Administrator
- Nancy Soules, Senior Accountant
- Tamara Hayward, Office Specialist
- Sarah A. Hyndman, Office Specialist
- Serena Pettit, Office Technician (CTR Intern)



## New Vision Update In Naches

By Sarah Hyndman, Office Specialist



We had a gorgeous day as YVCOG members headed up to Naches for our General Membership meeting on May 18. The swollen Naches River mudily meandered along the way. The fragrant flowering fruit trees were easily distinguishable as we drove to the historic Naches Depot. What a restored treasure!

For our program, Dave McFadden of the Yakima County Development Association (New Vision) provided an update on marketing efforts for the Yakima Valley. Through an Entrepreneur Friendly Cities initiative (EFC), New Vision is designing a support system for entrepreneurs in the Yakima Valley's rural communities. Their goal is to promote retention and attraction of employers and employees to the Yakima Valley communities.

New Vision is currently working to implement their EFC initiative with higher education institutions and SCORE (Counselors to America's Small Business). College students will be recruited as support interns for each EF City. Periodic campus training sessions for community leaders involved in this initiative are also planned. SCORE will train interns and community volunteers on

helping and advising local businesses in each EF City. Library materials and business resources for each community designated business center will also be provided.

Cities interested in participating will be asked to submit a proposal seeking designation later this summer. There are key steps and timelines to implement this initiative.

Please contact Dave McFadden or Tammy Everts (509) 575-1140 or [tammy@ycda.com](mailto:tammy@ycda.com) if you have questions about New Vision's Entrepreneurial Friendly Cities initiative. For more information on living and relocation to the Yakima Valley, see their valuable web-sites [www.liveyakimavalley.com](http://www.liveyakimavalley.com) and [www.workyakimavalley.com](http://www.workyakimavalley.com).

Also, many thanks to those who made this a great evening: Wayne and Kit Hawver for coordinating our meeting, Randy Juettes dynamite job on the BBQ meal, and the Naches Town Council and staff's gracious hospitality! Thanks to all!



## Commerce To Focus On Infrastructure

By Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner

The Department of Commerce's Growth Management Services has seen significant reductions in their resources and staff during the past two years. To adjust to new realities, Growth Management Services is revisiting its priorities. Responding to feedback from jurisdictions, Growth Management Services will be focusing their 2011-2013 programs on assistance to local governments for planning infrastructure needs. In particular, they will focus in smaller jurisdictions that may lack planning staff.

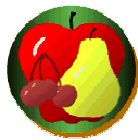
In addition, instead of providing a staff planner to smaller regions throughout the state, Growth Management Services has reorganized into two teams: an eastern Washington team headquartered in Spokane, and a western Washington team headquartered in Olympia. The eastern Washington Growth Management team contacts are:

- Dave Anderson, Lead, (360) 725-3052, [dave.anderson@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:dave.anderson@commerce.wa.gov)
- Dee Caputo, (509) 389-1291, [dee.caputo@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:dee.caputo@commerce.wa.gov)
- Bruce Hunt, (509) 280-3602, [bruce.hunt@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:bruce.hunt@commerce.wa.gov)

The eastern Washington team can answer questions and assist jurisdictions throughout eastern Washington, particularly with matters related to infrastructure planning.

### YVCOG General Membership Meeting

**WHERE:** City of Tieton  
**PROGRAM:** To Be Determined  
**WHEN:** Sept. 21, 2011  
 6:30 p.m.— 9:30 p.m.  
 (Dinner \$18 at 7:00 p.m.)



Reservations and cancellations are due no later than **Friday, Sept. 13, 2011 at noon**. Please RSVP to Sarah or Tami at (509) 574-1550 or email to [haywardt@yvcog.org](mailto:haywardt@yvcog.org).

### TERRESTRIAL GPS IN FOR TROUBLE - THE 4G / GPS COLLISION

By John Rohrbaugh, GISP/IT

Many of us have a personal global positioning system (GPS) by now. These units come in the form of fancy devices we put in our backpacks to navigate back to our favorite camp site, or dash mounted units showing us how to return home from Costco.

In addition, the large population of smart phones in the world today also come with GPS's built in to allow for "location based" applications. This makes geographic information usable to the lay person! Instead of asking an elaborate computer system to show us where the best placement for a new recycling center would be, our phones can show us how to find the nearest gas



## Bike-To-Work Month Challenge

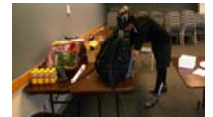
by Brian Curtin, CTR Program Coordinator

As reported here last month, May has been designated Bike-To-Work Month by the League of American Bicyclists and the Bicycle Alliance of Washington. The Governor also officially declared the month of May as Bike Month stating, "Creating bicycle-friendly communities has been shown to improve citizens' health, well-being, and quality of life-boosting community spirit, improving traffic safety, and reducing pollution and congestion..."

In support of this proclamation, the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments, through the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) program, has been actively promoting the use of bicycles for daily commuting. A month-long promotional campaign called "The Bicycle Commuter Challenge" offers prizes to commuters that use the most efficient form of transportation, the bicycle, four or more times during the month of May. The contest entry form can be found on the last page of this newsletter.



A challenge was issued to all CTR affected employers in the area to hold special Bike-To-Work Day events at their workplaces. One local employer,



the Department of Ecology, accepted the challenge to host the official Bike-To-Work Appreciation event on the official Bike-To-Work Day, May 20<sup>th</sup>. They made their workplace available for a Bicycle Rider Appreciation event the morning of May 20<sup>th</sup> and fun and refreshments were had by all. Many local cyclists dropped by on their way to work and shared their thoughts and insights into cycling in Yakima.

There were many positive comments about increased number of bike lanes in the city as well as legitimate concerns about the safety of cycling in the area. Another of our CTR affected employers, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT-SCR) also informed us that one of their sites had held their own Bike-To-Work day event with excellent results.



If you are an avid bicycle commuter or if you just thought you would just give it a try, it's not too late to participate in the first "Annual Bike-To-Work Month Commuter Challenge" contest. All you need to do is print out the entry form (found on the next page), fill out the dates you commuted by bicycle and then fax the entry form to 509-574-1551 by 5 p.m. on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Good luck and keep on cycling!



station, or coffee shop.

This is all well and good. However, GPS could become increasingly less reliable or completely disabled by the very technology that uses the system most frequently: the cell phone networks. With the advent of the 4G high speed networks, it turns out that the signals required to broadcast at these speeds might actually disrupt terrestrial GPS signals from reaching receivers such as your Garmin in the car, or your 'where am I' application on your phone!

To explain this further, I will defer to the experts who can put the physics in layman's terms. This month's 'Directions Magazine' has a well written article by Alex Mahrou which further discusses this conundrum. Check out the explanation at: <http://tinyurl.com/3buvpg2>.





SPRING 2011

PRIZE ENTRY FORM

**Commute Challenge, May 1-31**

- Bike to work (round trip), minimum four times for the month. Win great prizes!
- Each day during Bike Month, mark the days you participated.
- Return the completed form to your ETC or Fax to (509) 574-1551 by June 6th.
- Incomplete entries are invalid. One entry form per person.

SUN May 1	MON May 2	TUES May 3	WED May 4	THUR May 5	FRI May 6	SAT May 7
SUN May 8	MON May 9	TUES May 10	WED May 11	THUR May 12	FRI May 13	SAT May 14
SUN May 15	MON May 16	TUES May 17	WED May 18	THUR May 19	FRI May 20	SAT May 21
SUN May 22	MON May 23	TUES May 24	WED May 25	THUR May 26	FRI May 27	SAT May 28
SUN May 29	MON May 30	TUES May 31				

Number of days I participated: \_\_\_\_\_

One-way miles to work: \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN BY JUNE 6<sup>th</sup> TO:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

City/County you work in: \_\_\_\_\_

At the end of the Commute Challenge, return the completed paper form to your ETC or Fax to (509) 574-1551 by **June 6<sup>th</sup>** for your chance to win great prizes.