

Title VI

Annual Report and Update Questionnaire for Yakima Valley Conference of Governments

For the period of October 15, 2006 – October 15, 2007

I. Title VI Plan

There were no changes to YVCOG’s Title VI Plan since it was approved in October 2006. YVCOG’s updated Title VI Plan from 2006 is attached.

2. Organization, Staffing, Structure

Title VI Coordinator: J. Page Scott, Executive Director

Transportation Program Title VI Liaison: Drew Miller, Senior Transportation Planner

The following table summarizes staff gender and race by the respective YVCOG transportation program areas. See attached organization structure chart.

YVCOG Program Area	Race	Gender/Female	Gender/Male
Transportation Planning	Caucasian (3) Asian (1)	2	2
Administration	Caucasian (2)	2	0
TOTAL	6	4	2

3. Complaints

No Title VI complaints were received during this reporting period.

4. Planning: Accomplishment Report and Update

A. Monitoring and Review Process:

- Describe the planning activities that are performed by the YVCOG.

The YVCOG, as the lead planning agency for the Yakima Valley Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Planning Organization (MPO/RTPO), performs the following planning activities:

- Develops and updates a long-range transportation plan for the Yakima Metropolitan Area and Yakima Valley Regional Transportation Planning Organization;
 - Certifies that the transportation elements of comprehensive plans adopted by counties and cities within the region reflect guidelines and principles that are consistent with the adopted regional transportation plan and the Growth Management Act (GMA);
 - Develops a 4-year Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (M/RTIP);
 - Develops an annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP);
 - Administers distribution process for federal surface transportation program (STP) and congestion mitigation and air quality (CMAQ) funds for the Yakima County region;
 - Administers a regional competitive STP Enhancement process.
- *Describe the actions taken to promote Title VI compliance regarding planning activities, including monitoring and review processes, and their outcomes or status.*

On October 6, 2006, YVCOG implemented a new “Spanish extension” for our telephone voice mail system. This new extension allows Spanish-speaking callers to leave a message or ask a question about any of the YVCOG programs. The voice messages can be retrieved by a YVCOG staffperson who speaks Spanish, or, if necessary, YVCOG will bring in a qualified interpreter to assist with the translation.

As part of our Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan Update, YVCOG released a draft Public Participation Plan for 45-day comment period beginning on September 29, 2006. Online comment forms were available in English and Spanish. Draft Public Participation Plan documents were available at the Yakima Regional Library in downtown Yakima and the Sunnyside library as well as on the YVCOG website. The Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan Update was completed and adopted on June 18, 2007.

B. Studies

YVCOG completed the update to the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan on June 18, 2007. The Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan includes an extensive list of future and potential transportation improvements in the valley. These include both regional state highway improvement projects and regional improvements that would be implemented by Yakima County or one of the local cities or towns within the County.

YVCOG ensured that Title VI considerations were included in the planning process for the plan update by following the Public Participation Plan developed specifically for the update. Stakeholders included the general public; environmental, health, neighborhood, citizen, and civic organization; traditionally underserved populations such as people with disabilities, low-income, and racial and ethnic minorities; and affected public agencies. YVCOG made great efforts to ensure these stakeholders participated throughout the update process.

C. Draft TIPs

The Draft 2008-2011 Yakima Valley Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP/RTIP) was released for public comment on August 30, 2007 for a 14-day comment period. Notices were published in the Yakima Herald-Republic and Sunnyside Daily

Sun News papers and on the YVCOG website. Copies of the Draft MTIP/RTIP were available at the Yakima Regional Library in downtown Yakima, the Sunnyside library and at the YVCOG offices in Yakima. Comment forms were available inside the back cover. No public comments were received either during the public comment period, or at the Yakima Valley MPO/RTPO Executive Committee meeting on September 17, 2007.

D. Other Public Hearings

No public hearings were held by YVCOG during this reporting period.

E. Upcoming Year

YVCOG will continue to solicit comments and participation throughout the Certification of the transportation elements of comprehensive plans adopted by counties and cities within the region. YVCOG will ensure the local plans reflect the guidelines and principles that are consistent with the adopted regional transportation plan and the Growth Management Act. YVCOG will also encourage participation in the TIP development process through YVCOG newsletter articles, agenda items on TAC and Executive Committee meetings, and our YVCOG website. We will also utilize our “Spanish extension” voice mail to receive comments and questions.

YVCOG will complete the “four factor analysis” according to U.S. Dept. of Justice (DOJ) guidelines to ensure individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) have access to our planning processes and services.

5. Environmental Affairs: Accomplishment Report and Update

A. Monitoring and Review Process

None

B. Staff Responsible for Environmental Affairs

The YVCOG does not have staff responsible for environmental affairs because YVCOG does not sponsor transportation projects. Environmental review takes place at the local level when local agencies sponsor projects. However, YVCOG supports multi-jurisdictional consultation processes related to environmental review and YVCOG participates in the environmental review of land use and transportation projects within the Yakima Valley region.

C. Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)

YVCOG did not produce an EIS during this reporting period. YVCOG issued a SEPA Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) on the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan, with a 30-day comment period ending on June 14, 2007. YVCOG sent the SEPA DNS, the SEPA Checklist and the Environmental Constraints Memo to multiple agencies for review. The Environmental Constraints Memo supplements the SEPA Checklist by identifying more specifically where transportation improvements listed in the Draft Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan may have the potential for direct impacts to geologic hazard areas; water resources and wetlands; endangered, threatened, sensitive, candidate and priority plant and animal

habitat areas; air quality; land use and housing; noise; aesthetics/light; environmental justice; recreation; and historic/cultural resources.

D. Upcoming Year

YVCOG will identify possible impacts to Title VI affected populations as part of the process for certifying the transportation elements of comprehensive plans adopted by local agencies, and during the development and implementation of the 2008-2011 M/RTIP.

6. Consultant Contracts: Accomplishment Report and Update

A. Monitoring and Review Process

YVCOG solicits proposals for planning consultant services only when a specific project or staffing levels necessitate the use of outside consulting services. When issuing an RFP, YVCOG posts the notice on our website (www.yvcog.org) and publishes notices in either local, regional, or national publications, depending on the scope of the project and the range of expertise needed. YVCOG may also send notices directly to planning consultants if contact information is available from other sources (e.g. American Planning Association, WSDOT Consultant lists, etc.).

YVCOG last issued an RFP for consulting services in June 2006 to update our Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan. The RFP was published in the Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce and posted on the YVCOG website.

Title VI requirements are included in RFPs and consultant contracts. Compliance will be monitored as the contract is administered -- generally through signed assurances, as YVCOG does not have staff resources to verify consultant practices by inspecting records at distant consultant offices.

B. Consultant Contracts

- *How many consultants have contracts with the YVCOG? -*

YVCOG does not have any consultant contracts at this time and does not anticipate any during the upcoming year. The last contract YVCOG had ended in June 2007 with the completion of the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan.
- *Dollar value of each contract?*

YVCOG does not have any consultant contracts at this time. The last contract amount for the completion of the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan was for \$350,000.
- *How many of these consultants are DBEs?*

YVCOG does not have any consultant contracts at this time. During the update to the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan one member of the consultant team, Berk & Associates, is certified as a WBE (#W2F4707114).
- *What efforts were made to utilize DBE consultants?*

YVCOG does not have any consultant contracts at this time. As part of our RFP process, we encourage consultants to partner with women and minority business enterprises to develop proposals.
- *Is there currently a separate list maintained on DBE consultants based on the most current information from the Washington State Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises Web site at www.omwbe.wa.gov?*

YVCOG does not maintain a list of consultants – DBE or otherwise – because we so seldom utilize consultant services. Most of our work program tasks can be completed using existing YVCOG staff when all key positions are filled. A consultant was used during the update to the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan because at the time the Senior Transportation Planner position was vacant, thus necessitating a consultant contract to complete the plan update.

- *How is the list utilized to increase DBE participation in consultant contracts?*

YVCOG does not maintain a list of consultants – DBE or otherwise.

- *What methods were used during the review period to ensure Title VI related contract agreements were adhered to?*

YVCOG does not have any consultant contracts at this time. For YVCOG’s last contract that expired in June 2007 to update the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation, the June 2006 RFP included the following language:

YVCOG, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. 200d to 200d-4 and Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Department of Transportation, Subtitle A, Office of the Secretary, Part 21, Non discrimination in Federally-assisted programs of the Department of Transportation issued pursuant to such Act, hereby notifies all who submit proposals that it will affirmatively insure that any Contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

Article V of our Agreement for Professional Services with our selected consultants (The Transpo Group) includes conditions for equal opportunity employment, non-discrimination, and disadvantaged and women’s business enterprises.

C. Upcoming Year

In 2008, our focus will be to update all consultant-related procedures, policies, and forms to more clearly reflect Title VI requirements, and include updated Title VI-specific text. Some of this work has already begun.

7. Education & Training: Accomplishment Report and Update

A. Monitoring and Review Process

- *Describe the actions taken to promote Title VI compliance regarding education and trainings, including monitoring and review processes, and their outcomes or status.*
None. Waiting on guidance/direction from WSDOT OEO. YVCOG will continue to support Title VI staff trainings as they become available.

B. Staff Responsible for Coordinating Training

- *Identify staff by job title, ethnicity, and sex responsible for selecting which employees receive training.*

<i>Title</i>	<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Gender</i>
Executive Director	Caucasian	Female

C. Complaints

There were no civil rights complaints during the reporting period.

D. NHI Training

No courses specifically offered by NHI, but two by NTI and one by the Transportation Research Board. The Public Involvement in Transportation Decision Making training course offered by NTI specifically dealt with Title VI.

- Public Involvement in Transportation Decision Making, National Transit Institute Training Course, February 27 – March 1, 2007 Portland, OR (Drew Miller, Senior Transportation Planner)
- State and Metropolitan Transportation Programming, National Transit Institute Training Course, June 25-27, 2007, Seattle, WA (Drew Miller, Senior Transportation Planner)
- Key Issues in Transportation Programming: Second National Conference, Transportation Research Board, November 12-14, 2006, Seattle, WA (J. Page Scott, Executive Director)

E. Title VI Training

- *Was any Title VI training information provided by WSDOT during the reporting period? - Yes*

YVCOG received second-hand information on state-sponsored Government-to-Government training in our region in May 2006. The YVCOG Executive Director also participated in the statewide Title VI Coordinator meeting held on April 24, 2007.

- *If so, how did the YVCOG assist WSDOT in the distribution of information on these training programs?*

YVCOG distributed information on Title VI trainings to interested entities throughout the Yakima Valley region.

- *If applicable, how many participants attended trainings? What was the subject of the trainings? Provide the job titles and Title VI roles, if applicable, of attendees.*

The YVCOG Executive Director participated in the statewide Title VI Coordinator meeting held on April 24, 2007 at the Thurston Regional Planning Council in Olympia.

- *Was any other civil rights training conducted?*

The Public Involvement in Transportation Decision Making training course offered by NTI and attended by the YVCOG Senior Transportation Planner specifically dealt with Title VI.

- *If so, what type of training (course content)? Provide a list of participants by job title and Title VI role, if applicable.*

Public Involvement in Transportation Decision Making, National Transit Institute Training Course, February 27 – March 1, 2007 Portland, OR (Drew Miller, Senior Transportation Planner).

Course Content – Public Involvement is much more than posting notices and holding public hearings. Public participation involves creative thinking, with willingness and ability to interact openly to the public's preferred forms of communication. It is about being sensitive to disparate needs and conflicting priorities. It is about giving the public an opportunity to influence transportation decision making. This course "walks the talk" by employing public involvement techniques as the means of conveying the key learning outcomes. It is a joint effort among FTA's Office of Planning, NTI, the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Office of Planning, and the National Highway Institute (NHI) and was recently updated to reflect changes in the Federal Transportation reauthorization.

The Yakima Valley Conference of Governments assures that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and as amended, and the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P.I. 100.259) be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance from the Washington State Department of Transportation.

The Yakima Valley Conference of Governments further assures every effort will be made to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its programs and activities, whether those programs or activities are federally funded or not.

In the event the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments distributes federal aid funds to another governmental entity or other sub-recipient, the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments will include Title VI language in all written agreements and will monitor for compliance.

The Yakima Valley Conference of Government's Office of the Title VI Coordinator is responsible for initiating and monitoring Title VI activities, preparing required reports and other Yakima Valley Conference of Governments responsibilities as required by 23 CFR 200 and 49 CFR 21.

J. Page Scott
Executive Director
Yakima Valley Conference of Governments

October 16, 2007