



YAKIMA VALLEY

CONFERENCE OF GOVERNMENTS

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MEMBER JURISDICTIONS:

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

James A. Restucci, Chair
Mayor, City of Sunnyside
Mike Leita
Yakima County Commissioner
Maureen Adkison
City of Yakima City Council
Area 1 — Dan Olson
Union Gap City Council
Area 2 — Janice Gonzales,
City of Zillah, City Council
Area 3 — Mario Martinez
Mayor, City of Mabton
Member At Large-
John Hodgkinson, Jr., Vice Chair

2017 DRYVE & TRANS-Action DC TRIP

Continued Opportunities to Expand our Voice

By: Alan Adolf, Transportation Program Manager



The DRYVE and TRANS-Action Transportation Advocacy Committees met with federal legislators and administration officials for the first time in two years as the delegate sought to learn more about the transportation intentions of a new presidential administrations and the rumors of an unprecedented investment in the nation's infrastructure systems.

The May 15-19th Washington D.C. delegation consisted of County Commissioner Ron Anderson (DRYVE & TRANS-Action Vice-Chair), Union Gap Councilman (and TRANS-Action Chairman) Dan Olson, Toppenish City Administrator (and DRYVE

Chairman) Lance Hoyt, Sunnyside City Administrator Don Day, Businessman Trent Marquis, HLA Engineering and Surveying President, Mike Battle, YVCOG Executive Director Larry Mattson, and YVCOG Transportation Program Manager, Alan Adolf.

The trip included a record 16 scheduled and attended



meetings including the offices of Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, Congresswomen Suzan DelBene (1st Dist. – WA), Gloria Herrera-Buetler (3rd Dist. – WA), and Kathy McMorris-Rodgers (5th Dist. – WA), our own Congressman Dan Newhouse, and an impromptu “Capitol Building Elevator” meeting with House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure Member Brian Babin (36th Dist. – TX). These meetings emphasized the delegation’s efforts to remind legislators that any infrastructure legislation approved in Washington **MUST** include funding for “Rural America” where even a relatively small investment (in comparison to multi-billion dollar metropolitan investments) have a generational benefit to rural communities, including those in Central Washington.



Our continued efforts to meet with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and Federal Transit Administration (FTA); was augmented for the first time with a meeting with Anthony Bedell, Deputy Administrator to the U. S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao. Mr. Bedell has spent time in Central Washington in the past and understands the importance of a quality road system for the agriculture industry.

In an effort to obtain a national prospective on transportation, the delegation met with representatives of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

(AASHTO), who is currently staffed by our own WSDOT Asst. Regional Administrator, Troy Suing, who is on a one year AASHTO Fellowship with the organization.

Finally, for the first time, Governor Inslee’s Washington, DC representative, Sam Ricketts, met with the delegation. The delegation updated Mr. Ricketts on the current status of local projects and how local jurisdictions have worked to not only secure federal and state funds, but are securing their own local funds to move projects forward. Including Mr. Ricketts in future meetings allows the delegation an opportunity to integrate Washington State (Connecting Washington) and federal (FAST Act) transportation strategies in a shared setting.





YVCOG Launches New Grant Program

By: Mike Shuttleworth, Planning Manager

Congratulation to our jurisdictions that have completed the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update process. The comprehensive plan update requirement comes around every eight years and require a lot of work by your staff, YVCOG staff, planning commissioners and council members. The comprehensive plan is a 20-year vision and roadmap for the future of the community. The plan guides the community's decision on where to create new jobs, build new housing and where to make capital investments.

YVCOG has enjoyed working with our member cities as they completed their comprehensive plan updates. Take a few minutes and thank those members of the community, planning commission, and councils that spent many nights reading the documents and conducting meetings and hearings.

Now it is the time to obtain funding for many of the projects in your plans.

Most of these proposed projects are completed with the help of grants and local funds.

YVCOG is starting a grant research and writing program to help our members find funds for those projects and activities proposed. We will research funding sources that will help complete the goals and projects contained in your comprehensive plans, strategic plans, or council mandates. From the new swing set at the local park to the new public works building, YVCOG can help you with the grant research, writing and application process.

This new program is set up to help our members locate possible grant, apply for those grants and complete the grant process. I think this program can bring new funding sources into the communities and help communities obtain the vision outlined in their comprehensive plans. The YVCOG Executive Committee's 2018 budget sub-committee will determine how we fund this program. You'll receive more information on the benefits and costs to use this service at our October General Membership meeting.

If you are interested in this service please contact

Mike Shuttleworth, Planning Manager at (509) 574-1550 or mike.shuttleworth@yvcog.org.



Competitive Process Results in Changes for Yakima Valley's Homeless Program

For the first time, a competitive application process resulted in significant changes to the Yakima Valley's homeless funding 'landscape.' "We've been working closely with the Homeless Planning and Policy Council over the last year to bring light to the darkness; to dramatically increase the transparency with which these public dollars are allocated and awarded to our local service providers," said YVCOG Executive Director Larry Mattson.

"Twenty-one applications were scored by our seven-member review panel. The panel includes Homeless Planning & Policy Council members as well as Valley residents from a variety of backgrounds including business, mental health, and an at-large citizen. This committee had difficult choices to make. They chose to emphasize longer-term projects," said YVCOG program manager Crystal Testerman. The citizen panel focused on proactive long term solutions rather than reactive emergency services, shifting \$356,000 from service projects to capital improvement projects.

Utilizing the ZoomGrants online tool, the panel scored 21 different applications, requesting a total of more than \$4.1 million, from an available pool of \$1.9 million. "The results of this first-ever competitive process change the landscape for homeless services in the Valley in a good way," per YVCOG Executive Committee Chairman Jim Restucci, Mayor of Sunnyside. "New service providers with new ideas will receive funds. With these recommendations from our citizen scoring panel we're turning the corner, taking steps to really get ahead of the homeless problem."



Even with a 10-year plan to end homelessness in place, homelessness in Yakima County has **steadily increased** over the last 10 years

2009 — 446 Homeless
2011 — 443 Homeless
2013 — 563 Homeless
2015 — 538 Homeless
2017 — 572 Homeless

***Numbers provided by the U.S. Department of housing and Urban Development**

Also for the first time, true cross-sector collaboration occurred, as representatives from the business, faith, local government and mental health sectors actively participated in the process. The level of collaboration on this recent RFP aligns beautifully with federal rules on involving a diverse Continuum of Care in local decision-making. Organizations with a stake in how we manage homelessness as a community were given a seat at the table to express those concerns and to participate.

Because of this funding shift from service projects to capital projects, you've read in the *Herald* claims from some providers that we will have dozens of homeless people on the streets when the new contracts take effect July 1st. When funding is shifted to a different homeless service provider, the homeless person or family receiving services do not necessarily lose their services. The new providers begin to serve these clients with either the same services, or possibly with new services.

The federal and state funds determine how the providers can spend the money and what type of services they can provide.

YVCOG staff is working with both current and newly-funded agencies to make the transition as seamless as possible for previously homeless clients. Despite those efforts, we can expect to see some people become temporarily homeless as old service contracts end and new contracts begin. “We have a broad network of service providers. I know they’ll do their best to ensure that their homeless clients continue to receive the services they need,” said Crystal Testerman.

Although eliminating or reducing funds to current service providers was difficult, the RFP scoring committee said that we need to find solutions that deliver long term results. “Both current and new homeless service agencies will receive funding for new capital projects that will help us break out of the emergency encampment cycle we see year after year,” said Mr. Mattson. It is costing our community millions of dollars each year providing services. We need a different approach, one that fosters innovative solutions to the pervasive problem of homelessness.

Homeless Program funds are public dollars. These funds come from your federal taxes and local document recording fees. With your money, we are required to manage these funds to ensure competitiveness and compliance. The competitive process ensures that business is conducted with integrity, fairness, and openness. This provides any qualifying organization with the chance to compete for and receive public funding.

YVCOG Executive Committee Approved 2017 Consolidated Funding Awards:

Transform Yakima Together - \$236,000 – *Capital Improvement Project* – Construction of tiny homes to provide housing for unsheltered families and individuals including chronically homeless.

Yakima Neighborhood Health - \$120,000 – *Capital Improvement Project* – Construction costs associated with a transitional housing unit to serve chronically homeless individuals, homeless veterans, and homeless elderly over 62.

Entrust – \$100,000 - *Community Investment Project* - Certified Peer Mentoring with case management and providing employment opportunities for unsheltered families and individuals including the chronically homeless.

YWCA - \$100,000 – *Operating Costs* – Operations for a housing program, case management and emergency services for victims of domestic violence.

Rod’s House – 54,000 – *Operating Costs* – Operations for a youth drop-in center to serve unaccompanied youth ages 13-24.

Catholic Charities - \$304,354 – *Rental Assistance/Operating Costs* – Provide rental assistance/subsidy a.k.a. the Young Adult Housing Program (YAHP) which serve homeless clients 18-24 years of age. Services will include intensive case management.

Northwest Community Action Center - \$353,684 – *Rental Assistance* – Provide permanent housing for families with children. Also, will provide essential needs items and potential housing assistance for low income adults who are unable to work for at least 90 days with a disability referral from DSHS, a.k.a Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) clients.

Yakima Neighborhood Health - \$414,000 – *Rental Assistance* – Provide essential needs items and potential housing assistance for low income adults who are unable to work for at least 90 days with a disability referral from DSHS, a.k.a Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) clients.

Lower Valley Crisis Services - \$46,665 – *Emergency Shelter* – Provide emergency shelter including case management for victims of domestic violence with geographic focus in the Lower Valley.

Transform Yakima Together - \$180,000 – *Emergency Shelter* – Provides a 24-hour “managed” encampment while in the process of acquiring a permanent facility for a low barrier homeless shelter serving unsheltered individuals and couples including the chronically homeless.



Coordinated Entry

By: William Denton, Homeless Program Coordinator

Hello Yakima County! We are embarking on a very exciting time in the homeless program here at YVCOG. July 1, 2017 marks the start of a new program and tool to help end chronic homelessness. For the past few months YVCOG staff and many service providers from around Yakima County have been meeting weekly to develop a tool known as Coordinated Entry. This program has been years in the making for Yakima County.

A bit of history of Coordinated Entry and Yakima County. Yakima is the last county in the state to be out of compliance with having a CE program in place and running. In 2016 the Department of Commerce granted YVCOG technical assistance to help in this matter with a deadline of July 1, 2017 to have a program in place. YVCOG is very proud of the joint effort by many service providers in many cities throughout the county to make this program become an effective tool for Yakima.

What is it? Coordinated Entry is essentially a tool that is made up of three different parts, standardized assessment to determine the level of assistance that a client needs and ensures all clients are being evaluated equally. Second part is the *Matching Agent* to ensure that those that have been assessed are prioritized by vulnerabilities verse the traditional first come first served model. Third part of Coordinated Entry will be the *referral* to the service provider. This assessment also prioritizes clients to help ensure that those in the that are the most vulnerable will receive much needed resources that are mostly limited within our community. The most limited resource in Yakima right now is Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). This housing has essential wrap around services that include much needed case management. What Coordinated Entry will help do is make sure those that truly need this limited resource will be that ones to receive this resource. Once a client is assessed by a local service provider that is known as an access point that information is then made available to the Matching Agent that will refer the top priority client to an opening in PSH unit. If a client is identified as a lower priority, then they may be referred to Transitional Housing or Rapid Rehousing.

What Coordinated Entry *does not do*, is provide more housing for a community or make housing homeless individuals faster. This program might slow down housing new clients at first, but the long-term goal of not having to rehouse these clients in the future is the ultimate goal of Coordinated Entry.

Yakima County has 4 access points as of right now and those access points are; The Depot (YNHS) in Yakima, Northwest Community Action Center in Toppenish, Neighborhood Health services in Sunnyside and Rod's House in Yakima serving the youth population of 18-24-year old's. Please view the YVCOG website for more detailed information about these access points!

Is someone in your city experiencing homelessness?
Below are the numbers they can call to receive help.



HOMELESS? AT RISK OF BECOMING HOMELESS?

Multiple access points. Call for appointment.

YAKIMA

The Depot 602. E. Yakima Ave.
(509)249-6232 9:30-5pm

TOPPENISH

Northwest Community Action Center 706 Rentschler Ln.
(509) 865-7630 8-5pm

SUNNYSIDE

Neighborhood Health Services at 617 Scoon Rd.
(509)837-8200 8:30-5pm
Neighborhood Health at Walmart Plaza 2685 E. Lincoln Ave. #E
(509)515-0580 8-6:30pm

Services based on eligibility
Screening for all community programs





21st Century Traffic Counting Available to YVCOG Jurisdictions

By: Alan Adolf, Transportation Program Manager



12,345...12,346...12,347.....oh, look... SQUIRREL!!!! Uh, oh... now, where was I? ...1...2...3.....

Whether tracking water buffalo on pre-historic cave walls, scribing Roman chariot movements on clay tablets, or getting a hand cramp counting Model T's on old mechanical hand counters at a busy New York City intersection; when our ancestral traffic counters got distracted, many hours or even days of gathering data could be compromised, if not lost!

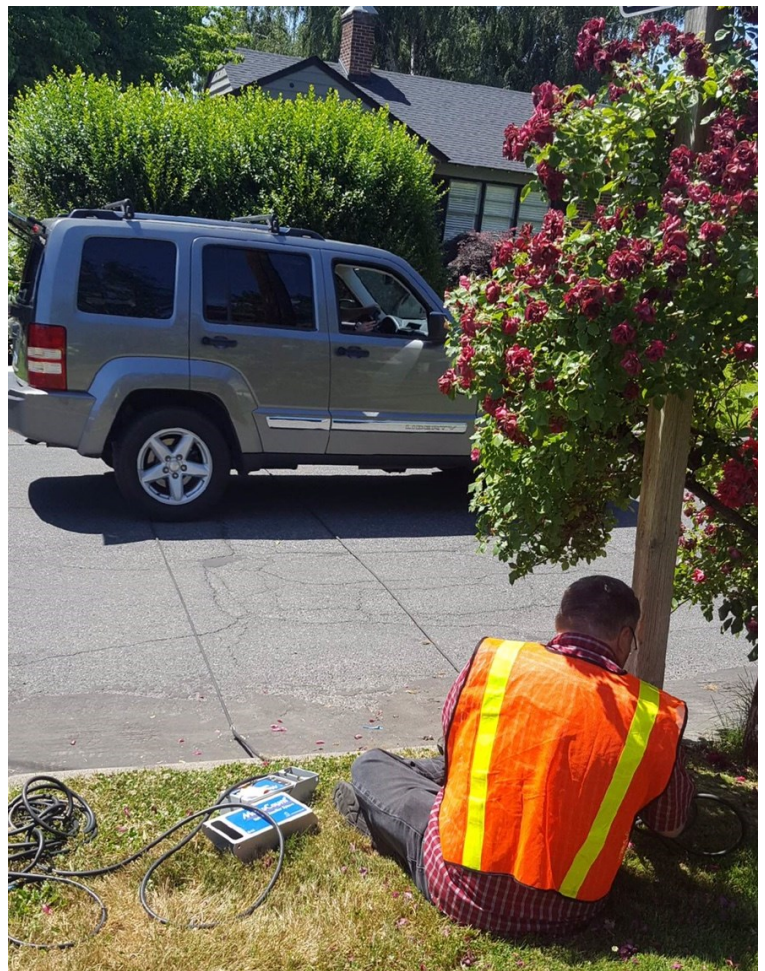
But in 21st Century Yakima County, local jurisdictions have a tired and true means of obtaining travel information, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, along their roadways through a renewed YVCOG Traffic Counting Program.

Vehicle Tube Counter and Classifier equipment allows jurisdictions to not only obtain basic vehicle traffic volumes, but also Direction, Vehicle Speed, Gap & Headway (space between moving vehicles), and Axle-Based Classification data. Jurisdictions can use this data for several different analytic purposes, including:

- **Transportation Model Calibration**
- **Speed Monitoring for Road Safety**
- **Vehicle Class and Volume Data for Funding Applications**

YVCOG maintained a traffic counting program until the early 2000's when COG's Wally Webster departed and the traffic counter equipment became obsolete. For years after that, local jurisdictions were limited to seeking assistance from Yakima County, when available, or contract with a private provider. This all changed in February 2016 when YVCOG purchased 10 new counters from METROCOUNT® Inc., and began performing traffic counts for jurisdictions up and down the county.

To date, 10 of the 14 cities have had site specific traffic counting performed as a basic planning assistance activity provided by YVCOG. Traffic count data is now being integrated into the new Traffic Demand Model (TDM), that YVCOG and the member jurisdictions have been upgrading that will provide traffic forecasting capability for local jurisdictions through the year 2040.





Any YVCOG Member jurisdiction is welcome to request traffic counting assistance on a “First come, first serve” basis and scheduled when counts are needed. New count data near a school may aid in the justification of a Safe Routes to School Grant, but getting count data in the middle of summer would not provide accurate information on vehicle/pedestrian movements. Likewise, scheduling counts to obtain traffic data near parks or other attraction sites during annual community events could be scheduled days or weeks preceding and succeeding an event to compare how those events impacts the jurisdictions road systems.

Want to determine how many pedestrians or cyclists are using your trail or pathway? YVCOG now has a MetroCount® pedestrian counter available.

Jurisdictions interested in performing new vehicle or Bike/Ped counting can Traffic Counter Request Form by contacting **Alan Adolf, Transportation Program Manager** or **Brian Galloway, Associate Planner** at **574-1550** or link directly online at <http://tinyurl.com/YVCOG-CountRequest>.

(Note: Form should be downloaded first then filled out)



Save the Date: YVCOG General Membership Meeting

When: September 20, 2017

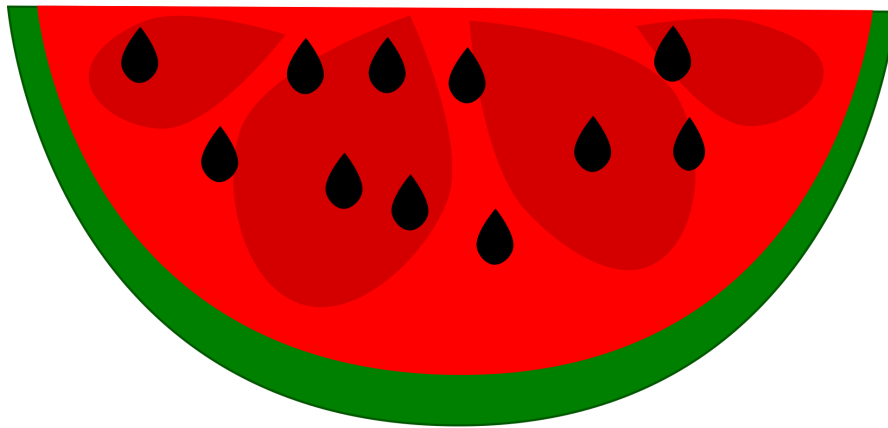
Where: Toppenish, WA

6:30 p.m. - Social

7:00 p.m. - Dinner



Enjoy your Summer!



YVCOG Staff:

Larry Mattson, Executive Director
Christina Wickenhagen, Deputy Director
Brian Curtin, CTR Coordinator
Mike Shuttleworth, Planning Manager
Crystal Testerman, Homeless Program Manager
John R. Rohrbaugh, GIS Analyst/Systems Admin

Brian Galloway, Associate Planner
Tamara Hayward, Office Specialist
Jessica Hansen, Office and Communication Specialist
William Denton, Homeless Program Coordinator
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