



YAKIMA VALLEY CONFERENCE OF GOVERNMENTS

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Volume 44...Issue 2 March 2016

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Wapato
Yakima
Yakima County
Zillah

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"Being At the Right Place at the Right Time"

*By: Cus Arteaga — Grandview's City Administrator and
Public Works Director*



In 2010, the City of Grandview completed the renovation of the downtown business district which was funded mostly by grants. This was at a time in which the City was starting to see a decline in revenue streams and we recognized that we were going to need to explore other ways of funding road improvements.

Grandview, like most cities, does not have enough funds to properly provide maintenance to our road system so we started the discussion of implementing the TBD. These discussions came at a very difficult time, because we were right in the middle of the recession and it was very hard for Council to implement what people would consider a new tax. We knew that we would need to be very clear as to how the funds would be used should Council truly consider implementing the TBD Program.

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Spring is Coming!



By: Joseph Calhoun - Planner



What is the one thing from your daily driving that has been absent throughout winter? No, not Air Conditioning – although I am very much looking forward to cranking that back up. It is the gentle thump-thump...thump-thump you feel as you drive over those inconspicuous rubber tubes that you remember seeing and hearing throughout the valley during the spring and summer months. Spring is coming – and that means traffic counters.

YVCOG is currently in the process of purchasing 10 new traffic counters from Metrocount. Not only will these counters keep track of passenger vehicles, but they also have the capability of tracking freight movement. This data collection effort will be useful for your jurisdiction as you prepare for your 2017 GMA update cycle and will also be used to bolster our regional traffic demand model.

We anticipate being quite busy with these counts and already have quite a few locations in the queue, so please get in touch with us early! Please contact Joseph Calhoun to get more information – joseph.calhoun@yvcog.org or 509-759-7982.



Time Fly's... So Let's Survey!



By: Brian Curtin, CTR Program Coordinator

"Time fly's when you're having fun," or so the saying goes. It's hard to believe, but we are quickly approaching our biennial Employer Survey of Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) affected employers. This year's survey is scheduled to be conducted the week of April 18th through April 22nd. This survey will be particularly useful; in that it will give insight into the direction the CTR program is headed. The previous survey cycle held in 2012/14 showed progress being made by the region in reduction of Drive Alone (DA) rate and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

The 2006 CTR Efficiency Act established a target of 10% reduction in Drive Alone rate and a 13% reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled rate within a CTR affected jurisdiction as well as the region as a whole. The significant change in the CTR law narrowed the scope and affected area of the CTR program here in Yakima. Prior to the law change, all large employers (100+ employees) of Yakima County were CTR affected. With the change, only large employers within the boundaries of the urban growth areas of Yakima, Selah, Moxie and Union Gap are affected. This change took place in early 2008, so all employers who are currently CTR affected are still required to survey. The results of the 2014 survey indicated that many of our jurisdictions have either met or were making significant progress towards meeting the established goals.

To better prepare employers for the upcoming survey, there will be a **mandatory** training session for all CTR affected employer's Employee Transportation Coordinators (ETC) on Tuesday, April 12, 2016 at 1:30pm. The training will be held at the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG) offices, located at 311 North 4th Street, Suite 204 Yakima, WA 98901. Survey forms will be available for pick up at that time. For additional information regarding the CTR Survey process or any questions regarding the CTR Program, please contact Brian Curtin at 509-759-7992 or brian.curtin@yvcog.org.



Planning the Future at Strategic Visioning Retreat

By: Larry Mattson



Left to right front of table: Kelly Penfold (ALPHA Team); David Helseth (Clergy/Yakima Homeless Tiny Homes) Kathy Tierney (NW Justice); Tim Sullivan (YVCOG/Homeless Manager) Left to right back of table: Joe Willis (Rod's House); Lowel Krueger (Yakima Housing); Rhonda Hauff (YNHS); and Korbie Jorgensen Haley (ORFH)

More than 20 homeless advocates, service providers, and interested persons attended a planning retreat on March 3 and 4. We developed a vision and determined 4 bold steps we can take in the near future. We'll put pen to paper and plan those steps over the course of our next few Homeless Planning & Policy Council meetings.



The work of the Homeless Planning Council will help us create our Five-Year Plan to reduce homelessness in the Valley.

From left to right: Al Brown (Yakima Greenway); Kathy Tierney (NW Justice); and Sherry Raymond (Mayor of Selah)



From left to right: Janice Gonzales (City of Zillah); Avery Zoglman (YVCOG); Joan Davenport (City of Yakima); and Verlynn Best (Yakima Chamber)



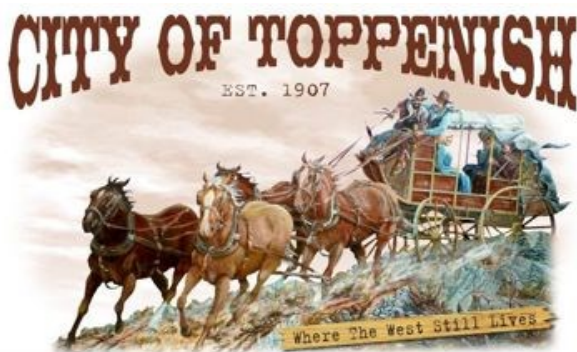
Regional Cooperation Saves

By: Lance Hoyt, Toppenish City Manager



Read on to learn how the cities of Toppenish, Wapato, and Mabton saved money and resources through interjurisdictional cooperation!

The City of Toppenish budgeted and planned to perform crack sealing for street maintenance. They started in fall 2014 and found that the cost of renting a new state-of-the-art crack sealing machine that would melt the crack sealing material to the best and most efficient temperature for application would be very expensive to rent or lease for two weeks. The monthly price would be about the same as the two week lease price.



The same held true for the purchase and delivery from Spokane for the crack sealing material. Purchasing a full semi truck load (20 pallets) of crack sealing material would give the best price, and the freight costs would be the same for one pallet or 20 pallets.

Art Kroes, Toppenish Public Works Supervisor, visited with some of the small cities and towns in the

area to see if anyone was planning to perform any street maintenance in 2015. Toppenish offered to administer the project and bill each participant for the portion of their use and materials at the lower monthly/full semi price.



The City of Wapato and City of Mabton each decided to take advantage of the “co-op” pricing. The City of Toppenish used the equipment for two weeks, Mabton for one week and Wapato for one week to secure the monthly lease price. Toppenish also

purchased a full 20 pallets of crack sealing material and split those costs proportionately. The crack sealing materials were delivered to the City of Toppenish Public Works site, where Mabton and Wapato picked up their materials.



City of Toppenish received the training for the operation and maintenance of the crack filling machine. Both Mabton and Wapato sent a public works representative for the training and to view the crack sealing operation. The vendor, Arrow Construction Supply, Inc. from Spokane, was agreeable to the “co-op” and billed each entity separately.

A great economic and efficiency event through interagency cooperation.

“Being At the Right Place at the Right Time”

Continued from Front Cover

In order to begin the implementation process, the City took the following steps:

- Considered three types of maintenance recommendations which were a Class “A” BST, a grind and asphalt overlay and of course a total reconstruction program.
- Estimated a cost of each of the three maintenance recommendations.
- Completed a roadway pavement rating survey in order to determine which maintenance treat would be recommended for each road project.
- Held public meetings to receive buy in from the public.
- Divided the estimated new revenue into three categories which were asphalt pot-hole patching, neighborhood street maintenance and utilizing some funds for matching dollars should grant funds become available.
- Advertised which projects were being funded by the new TBD and constructed a four-foot by eight-foot sign identifying that the project was being funded by the \$20 TBD funds.

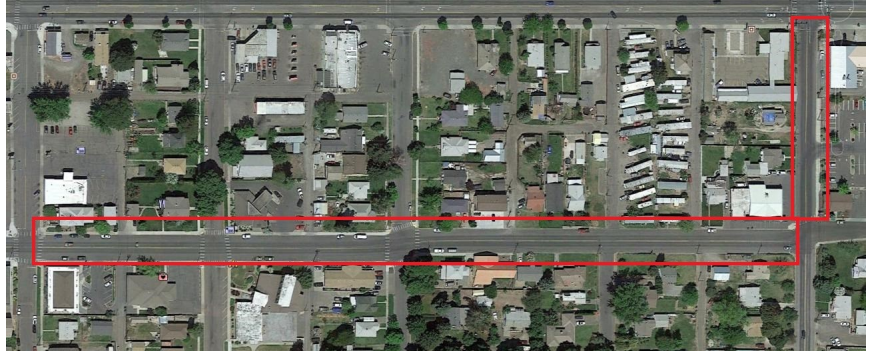


Photo of: West 2nd Street and Elm

During the presentation, we identified that we would only receive approximately \$120,000 in new revenue. In 2012, which was the first year of the program, we applied and received a \$200,000 grant from the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB). We used \$20,000 from the TBD to match the grant. We were able to leverage the funds by 10:1 because we used \$20,000 and constructed \$200,000 worth of roadway improvements. In addition, we completed a larger section of Class “A” BST seal-coat treatment which also gained valuable support from the public. We were given thumbs up from the public as they drove by because we were doing what we had committed to do with the TBD. We continue to use our TBD to leverage grant funds. For example, we have used approximately \$135,000 in TBD funds to leverage approximately \$3,000,000 for street construction in the three-years of existence.

We continue our educational efforts with the public as to how we are using the TBD funds. We have a map that identifies projects and funding sources as well as how the required match is provided. Our Mayor does annual presentations to local civic groups and distributes copies of our map to those in attendance. The merchant that operates the local vehicle licensing office has a copy of the map at his store to show people how their \$20 tab fee is improving the community of Grandview.

In closing, the success to a TBD is to educate the public, have a plan in place and most importantly, execute your plan. Do not sit on the funds because people want to see “their tax dollars at work”.





What a great first year back!

Transportation Program – Year in Review

By: Deb LaCombe - MPO/RTPO Manager



Can you believe it's been just over a year since I was welcomed back to assist with the managing of the Yakima Valley MPO/RTPO. So many things have been accomplished in a short time and many more are bubbling on the back burner.

It was definitely a year for refreshing and revitalizing. Shortly after getting my chair adjusted the office moved (literally down the hall) and YVCOG's Executive Committee brought on a new Executive Director. I tried to feed Larry Mattson information at a sane rate, but as many of you can guess that turned into more like delivery by firehose. So many things were happening not only on a local and state basis such as retirements, reorganizations, and the development of a state transportation bill, the national transportation arena was in flux as well. Luckily, I was able to slow the delivery just a bit and instead was able to concentrate on taking care of the MPO/RTPO home front here in Yakima Valley.

In February the Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Board became reacquainted with Title VI as it was time to rewrite our Plan and enquire about our members' plans.

I pulled together a rather large and unwieldy but

informative MPO/RTPO tasking master schedule highlighting the timing and tasking vital to accomplishing the customary requirements of YVCOG's MPO/RTPO roles and responsibilities. Not quite a formal Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) but pretty close.

Through late winter the emphasis was on developing the SFY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The UPWP was drafted in greater detail than ever before and when the feds came to town (representatives of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA)) with WSDOT regional planning folks, we invited TAC and Policy Board members to attend the review meeting to open dialog and improve transparency of the planning process.

As a kick-off to the update of the Long-range Plan, the necessary Public Participation Plan (PPP) was updated. Since there are more ongoing outreach efforts to the public than updating the Long-range Plan once every four years, we enhanced the PPP to show when and how YVCOG will reach out for public participation in the Transportation Improvement Programs and the Human Services Transportation Plan in addition to the Long-range Plan outreach.

Life was breathed back into the region-wide transportation demand model and we organized and delivered a workshop to talk about potentials and

limitations of using travel demand modeling for transportation evaluation and planning. The workshop was open to all MPO/RTPOs across the state – thanks WSDOT for the funds to make that happen! The model development should be completed early this coming spring.





Project Homeless Connect & Point in time Survey

By: Ellie Lambert - Homeless Network



The last week of January is very busy for those who are working to prevent and reduce homelessness. The Homeless Network of Yakima County holds two very important events to reach out to the local homeless community and address issues of homelessness. They are also give community members, service

providers and local businesses an opportunity to help people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and also get a better understanding of the realities of this issue.



The first event, Point in Time, is a survey conducted by service providers and volunteers to collect important information about homelessness in Yakima County. Surveys are conducted at emergency shelters, Project Homeless Connect events and through outside outreach. People are asked questions like where they became homeless and what year they became homeless. It also asks for reasons people became homeless and what people need to help end their homelessness. The data helps service providers better serve the homeless by identifying where people are homeless, what resources and services are helping, and what new programs and services can be created. An annual report is created and is available to the public. It can be found on the Homeless Network of Yakima County's website. This event is an



opportunity to get a better scope about homeless from the people who are experiencing it.

Project Homeless Connect is held in four communities. Each site brings service providers, nonprofits and businesses together to offer resources for people who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless. Essential survival items such as warm clothing and hygiene items are on hand for people to pick up.

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What a great first year back!

Transportation Program – Year in Review

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To ensure that we were meeting public participation requirements for our Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (M/RTIPs), the MPO/RTPO brought the review and submittal of the RTIP amendment process back under the YVCOG roof. Thank you WSDOT-SCR Local Programs for taking on those duties for us for so long.

In the spirit of looking at what processes the MPO/RTPO had been accomplishing through gentlemen's agreements, other programs and efforts have come back to be performed directly by YVCOG staff such as the maintenance and operation of the YVCOG traffic counter program and the development of the Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) and coordination of the associated coalition of special needs transportation partners. Thanks go out to City of Selah's Public Works for maintaining and facilitating the traffic counters all these years, and to People For People who have been the lead for the HSTP and Special Needs Transportation coalition. You have both been stellar stewards!

New working relationships have been fostered this year as the MPO/RTPO has been in the midst of the Long-range Plan update. Earlier this year, the Confederated Bands and Tribes of the Yakama Nation (Yakama Nation) worked with YVCOG to prepare a grant application that could address public transportation coordination and outline a feasibility study to determine best practices that could be implemented for regional benefits. YVCOG was informed in mid-December that the Yakama Nation received the full funding as described in the application and that we will be working closely together to kick that effort off in the new year. This summer, as the MPO/RTPO sought to better understand the potential of including more detail for emergency transportation planning in the Long-range Plan a working triad of Yakima County/City of Yakima/YVCOG has formed to cooperatively fill in more depth into the existing emergency planning efforts of Yakima County and the City of Yakima. That relationship is new and the group has just started

working together but there appears to be great potential for common planning efforts and we look forward to continuing that past the update of the Long-range Plan.

The end of the year for me has felt like all roads have led to the update of the Long-range Plan. The momentum and acceleration to get all of the information in as the draft is being written really is something to behold. Although the draft release will be a little later than I expected, it'll be completed in plenty of time for the long public review necessary before it is adopted in March.

The end of the year for other staff helping with MPO/RTPO tasking probably spans differing levels of completion or progress depending on who you ask: the 2016-2019 Metropolitan and Regional TIP was spearheaded by Brian Curtin as will be the ongoing monthly amendments. Joseph Calhoun and Shawn Conrad have really only scratched the surface of Certifying the Transportation Elements of the 14 comp plan updates being written throughout the Valley. Joseph completed the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) annual update and updated the national database with our regional projects. Shawn has gingerly kept the Complete Streets and Safe Routes to Schools flames alive between funding sources. There always seems to be another state or federal query about freight, rail, performance measures or the like and now we'll be analyzing what the new (and appreciated) federal transportation bill FAST Act means for the Valley.

An exciting and notably attractive difference in the working environment of the MPO/RTPO since I've returned is the inclusion of various YVCOG staff sprinkled throughout the many processes. I have taken the direction of cross-training seriously as have the YVCOG staff and all together we have built an integrated team of people working hard for the membership. Without the assistance of each person I would not have been able to step into the manager's position at the MPO/RTPO and taken on that role. Thanks for a great year and for the trust you've given me to help you!



Project Homeless Connect & Point in time Survey

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This was made possible by generous donations throughout Yakima County and collected by high school students, businesses and caring community members. Services are available to help people take steps to end their homelessness; medical, dental, vision and mental health screenings are done at each site, Washington DOT is also there to help people get their driver's licenses or IDs and information about domestic violence and housing programs are available as well. Although it would seem like

tackling such a serious issue and interacting with people who are suffering could be daunting, these events feel more like a family reunion. People are connecting with each other and getting empowered as they are part of solving problems for the day.



Volunteers throughout Yakima County help with both events. This year, Grandview high school students with "Hounds with Hearts" and Sunnyside high school leadership class came to the Sunnyside event to help for the first time while others have been volunteering for years. One of the largest groups of volunteers is the homeless themselves. They are integral in helping outreach workers connect with people who might be hesitant to talk with strangers about their lives. These events could not be possible without such support.

Point in Time and Project Homeless Connect happen every year. Please contact us if you are interested in donating, volunteering or participating next year.

Please contact the YVCOG office for more information. (509) 574-1550

Grandview: Implementing a “Transportation Benefit District”

Continued from Front Cover

RCW Chapter 36.73 authorizes cities and counties to form a transportation benefit district (TBDs), quasi-municipal corporations and independent taxing districts that can raise revenue to specific transportation projects, usually through vehicle license fees or sales tax.

RCW 36.73.015(6) allows TBD revenue to be used for transportation improvements included in a local, regional, or state transportation plan. Improvements can range from roads and transit to sidewalks and transportation demand management. Construction, maintenance, and operation costs are eligible.



YVCOG Staff:

Larry Mattson, Executive Director
Christina Wickenhagen, Deputy Director
Deborah LaCombe, MPO/RTPO Manager
Brian Curtin, CTR Coordinator
Tim Sullivan, Homeless Housing Program Manager
Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner

Joseph Calhoun, Planner
John R. Rohrbaugh, GIS Analyst/Systems Admin
Avery Zoglman, Homeless Housing Program Analyst
Tamara Hayward, Office Specialist
Jessica Hansen, Office and Communication Specialist

Save the Date: YVCOG General Membership Meeting

WHERE: Ahtanum Youth Barn - Union Gap 1000 Ahtanum Rd, Union Gap, WA 98903
WHEN: *March 16th 6:30-9:30 p.m.*
DINNER: *\$20 at 7 p.m.*

Please make checks out to Jean's Cottage Inn

Our menu will be: Beverages will include coffee, iced tea, lemonade and water. Dinner will include Caesar salad, Top sirloin steaks, baked potatoes and dinner rolls. Vegetarians large Caesar salad with a baked potato. Gluten-free diets we can offer salad, Top sirloin steak and baked potato. We will have other salad dressings available upon request. Dessert will be white cake.

PROGRAM: Kurt Stiles - VERG (WSDOT)

The Visual Engineering Resource Group (VERG) provides clear and effective communication of project development, design, and delivery issues through visual media made with a wide range of 3D modeling, animation, video, and other graphic software packages. From planning and communication to design and construction, VERG products are strategic to project success.

Reservations and cancellations for a voting quorum and the caterer are appreciated no later than **Friday, March 11, 2016 at noon**. Please RSVP to Jessica at (509) 574-1550 or jessica.hansen@yvcog.org

YVCOG: 311 North 4th Street, Suite 204 Yakima, WA 98901



509-574-1550 / www.yvcog.org



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