



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
Mike Leita
Yakima County Commissioner
Rick Ensey
Yakima City Council
Area 1 — Dan Olson
Union Gap City Council
Area 2 — Loren Belton,
Toppenish City Council
Area 3 — Mario Martinez
Mabton City Council
Member At Large-
John Hodkinson, Jr., Vice Chair



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*Parks Assessment assistants
from Toppenish High School
Leadership class at Pioneer
Park*

Toppenish Plans For Parks

By Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner

YVCOG is working with the City of Toppenish to update their long-range Parks and Recreation Plan. As part of YVCOG's active partnership with the Yakima Health District (YHD) Healthy Communities Program, Toppenish's Parks and Recreation Plan update process will include a strong community outreach and visioning component at no extra cost to the City. To start off this effort, the City, YHD, and YVCOG completed a City-wide Parks Assessment on February 20th with the assistance of six students from the Toppenish High School's

Leadership class. These young people were trained prior to the assessment by YHD and took their jobs very seriously, expressing a great deal of enthusiasm for the effort, noting that the experience had opened their eyes to what their city parks had to offer, and providing feedback on what they would like to see in the future. We will build on this beginning with discussions with community organizations and stakeholders, a community workshop, and an open house to receive feedback on the Parks and Recreation Plan draft. The City plans to have the Parks and Recreation Plan completed by March 2014 to qualify to apply for Recreation and Conservation Office grants to fund additional parks and recreation facilities.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Federal Transportation Funding Made Easier

By Page Scott, Executive Director

Are you baffled by the maze of federal transportation funding programs and regulations? Does the thought of applying for and administering a federal grant make you uneasy? Well, the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highways Administration has an online resource just for you!

Federal-aid Essentials (www.fhwa.dot.gov/federal-aidessentials) offers a central online library of informational videos and resources, designed specifically for local public agencies. Each video addresses a single topic – condensing the complex regulations and requirements of the Federal-aid Highway Program into easy-to-understand concepts and illustrated examples.

Topics include:

- Federal-aid Program Overview
- Civil Rights
- Environment
- Finance
- Right-of-Way
- Project Development
- Project Construction and Contract Administration





Why Bike???

By Brian Curtin, CTR Coordinator

Spring is in the air and what a terrific time to dust off the cobwebs that have accumulated on that most efficient of all transportation modes, your Bicycle. I'm often asked the question, "I was *just wondering*, CTR Guy, what's in it for me to forsake my beloved car for the allure of a two wheeled beauty?" Here are five good reasons:

1. Ride for your health

Bicycle riding increases: cardiovascular fitness, strength, balance and flexibility, endurance and stamina, and calories burned. It can be done by people of all ages, from childhood through the senior years.

2. Ride for Your State of Mind

Bicycle riding is a proven stress releaser. Whether you are riding for pleasure or commute, you will arrive at your destination feeling relaxed, energized, and happier about the world and yourself. Plus, it's fun.

3. Ride for Your Community

Bicycling is also good for your community. You can go where you want to and one less car is on the road. You don't bring with you the noise of a car and are actually able to interact with people as you move. From a bike you can wave to a neighbor, say hi to a kid, or smell someone's dinner cooking. No polluting exhaust is released, no oil or gas is consumed, and resources used to build one automobile could create 100 bikes.



4. Ride for convenience

Riding a bike is convenient. Front row parking spaces are guaranteed no matter where you go. Traffic jams are also irrelevant. Though cars will certainly make better time on long trips, you'll find for many short trips or through heavy traffic, you can travel just as fast or faster on your bike. Zip in, zip out of large festivals and concerts.

5. Ride for your pocketbook

It costs between 50 and 60 cents per mile to operate a car, depending on the vehicle. This is based on expenses like gas, oil, maintenance, etc., that go up when you drive more. This doesn't include the hidden costs of vehicle ownership like depreciation, taxes, and insurance. By multiplying cost per mile to operate a car by the distance you ride, you can easily calculate how much money you save by riding a bike. For example: if my daily roundtrip commute is 16 miles and I do that just twice a week, I will save over \$800 in operating costs alone in the course of a year. (16 miles x 2 trips per week x 52 weeks x .50 cents per mile.) And don't forget to factor in parking, tolls, and the like.

Most important: Ride for you!

"Why Bike" continued above...

"Why Bike" continued from left...

When you ride your bike, you are doing a lot of good things, many of which are for the benefit of others. But ultimately, you benefit the most, through better health, peace of mind, increased confidence and self-reliance, and your pocketbook. So for all these reasons, get out there on your bike today. Even if you don't save the world in the process, you'll still have fun trying!



Sometimes I don't have all the answers, but I sure know where to find them. I paid a visit to the "source": The Bicycle Alliance of Washington www.bicyclealliance.org (twitter: @BikeWa) and the League of American Bicyclists www.bikeleague.org (twitter:

@BikeLeague). These websites are a treasure-trove of bicycle information to get you started.



Sidewalk Inventory

Input Sought

By Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner



YVCOG is continuing work on a regional sidewalk inventory to identify key sidewalk projects that can be prioritized for funding. To start the inventory, we are focusing on small cities the lower Yakima Valley . Future inventory will expand on this initial effort. The Transportation Improvement Board provided YVCOG with their existing sidewalk inventory data including presence or absence of sidewalks and condition. We will discuss how sidewalk projects can be prioritized with the MPO/RTPO Technical Advisory Committee in March and April.

But we can't do this alone . . .

What do you think are the most important criteria for prioritizing sidewalk projects? Are sidewalks that connect activity centers, such as downtowns, with neighborhoods most important? What about sidewalks connecting to schools or parks? Are dilapidated sidewalks in older residential neighborhoods most important? Please, tell us what you think is important in your community.

As the inventory is being assembled, we will provide maps to each jurisdiction for refinements. There is no substitute for local knowledge, so we will look to your community experts for input on the existing data and whether any improvements or changes are needed.



For more information on the sidewalk inventory, please contact Shawn Conrad at (509) 574-1550 or conrads@yvco.org.





Current & Upcoming Funding Opportunities

By Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner

Washington Traffic Safety Commission Flashing Lights for Schools program provides funding for school zone flashing beacons/lighting for legally-marked elementary school zones, including lighting hardware, computer software, signage and markings approved in the federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The proposal due date is **May 3, 2013**. Visit www.wtsc.wa.gov/grants/flashing-lights-for-schools/ for more information. The Yakima Health District can complete and submit applications on behalf of applicants for this program as part of their Healthy Communities program. If interested, please contact Lesley Schulte, Community Health Liaison, at (509) 249-6503 or Lesley.Schulte@co.yakima.wa.us.



Public Works Board applications are available for 2015 Construction Loans. The Public Works Board provides low-interest construction loans to local governments to finance critical public infrastructure systems. For more information, visit <http://pwb.wa.gov/> and click on "construction loans."

Community Development Block Grant Planning Only Grant program applications will be available April 1, 2013, and accepted and awarded until April 13, 2014, as long as funds are available. Planning Only Grants fund a variety of planning activities that meet program priorities. For more information visit <http://tinyurl.com/bx3jq9y>.

Transportation Improvement Board grant programs fund roadway and sidewalk projects. The call for projects is generally issued in June. Keep an eye out here or at their website (<http://www.tib.wa.gov/grants/Grants.cfm>) for upcoming information.

YVCOG can assist our members with planning or transportation-related funding applications. For more information, please contact Shawn Conrad at 574-1550 or conrads@yvco.org.

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.

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
Chris Wickenhagen, Administrative Finance Officer
Tamara Hayward, Office Specialist
Sarah A. Hyndman, Office Specialist



Extreme Mapping Errors

By John Rohrbaugh, GISP/IT

Geographers aren't perfect. As much as we may consider ourselves infallible, sometimes we unknowingly rely on less-than-accurate data, even from otherwise reliable sources. People make mistakes . . . even geographers.

New Caledonia is an island off of the east coast of Australia. Some charts and maps, including popular web mapping services, showed that New Caledonia had a 'sister' called Sandy Island a few hundred kilometers to the northwest. Sandy Island was reportedly uninhabited, but almost 60 square miles in size.

A research team from the University of Sydney, Australia, at sea on an unrelated research trip, ventured in the direction of Sandy Island. It was nighttime when the ship approached the island's mapped location. The ship's captain closely monitored depth readings to avoid running aground as they approached the not-yet-visible shoreline. When the ship reached the center of what should have been the island, the researchers found nothing but a deep blue hole. Sandy Island, identified on maps for years, doesn't actually exist at all!



A "lost" island is an extreme example of mapping data gone horribly wrong. Mapping the world, and even local cities, has its challenges. Technological advances in data collection and mapping in general can help solve these issues, but human hands still play a part. *To err is human . . .*

FEBRUARY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

MPO/RTPO Executive Committee & Policy Board—February 20

- 2013 Regional STP Project Prioritized List
- February MTIP Amendment

YVCOG Executive Committee—February 20

- YVCOG Strategic Planning Report: Vision & Mission Statements adopted, highlights summarized, and 2013 goals to be discussed on March 18.
- YVCOG Executive Committee Code of Conduct approved.
- 2013 Indirect Cost Rate & Certification effective March 1, 2013 approved

2013 STP Projects Prioritized

By Deb LaCombe, Senior Planner

YVCOG received 15 applications for the 2013 Surface Transportation Program (STP) Regional Call for Projects. On February 20, 2013, the MPO/RTPO Executive Committee approved the ranking of the prioritized list as recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee. The ranking, project sponsors, and project titles are summarized below.

2013 STP Regional Priorities

1	Yakama Nation	Robbins Road
2	Zillah	Vintage Valley Parkway Extension
3	Tieton	Summitview Road Improvements
4	Moxee	Morrier Lane Extension (Duffield Road to Mieras Road)
5	Union Gap	Ahtanum Road (Goodman Road to 15th Avenue)
6	Toppenish	Lincoln Avenue/ Dayton Avenue/ Beech Street Improvements
7	Selah	Valleyview Avenue/ Third Street/ Southern Avenue
8	Granger	Bailey Avenue Reconstruction
8	Harrah	Harrah Road
9	Mabton	Main Street Reconstruction
9	Sunnyside	Sixth Street Improvements (Decatur Avenue to North Avenue)
10	Naches	Railroad Street Extension
11	Grandview	Old Inland Empire Highway (Grandridge Road to Elm Street)
12	Yakima County	Naches-Tieton Grade Reconstruction Project
13	Yakima	East Nob Hill Blvd. & Fair Ave. Intersection

YVCOG General Membership Meeting

WHERE: Community Center
812 Wallace Way, Grandview

WHEN: March 20, 2013
6:30-9:30 p.m.

DINNER: \$18 at 7 p.m.

Reservations and cancellations for a voting quorum and the caterer are appreciated no later than **Friday, March 15, 2013 at noon**. Please RSVP to Sarah or Tami at (509) 574-1550 or email to haywardt@yvcog.org.



MARCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS



LOCATION: 311 North 4th Street—Yakima
* The 300 Building * 2nd Floor *

MPO/RTPO Technical Advisory Committee
Thursday, March 14 at 10:00 a.m.

**YVCOG MPO/RTPO Executive Committee &
Policy Board & YVCOG Executive Committee**
Monday, March 18 at 1:30 p.m.

For more info, call (509) 574-1550.