



Have a Big Project in Mind? Consider a Tech Team

By Joseph W. Calhoun, Planner

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If your jurisdiction is planning an upcoming infrastructure project, it may be a good idea to involve a Tech Team to assist. Tech Teams convene federal and state regulatory, funding, technical assistance program staff, and local project staff at one table to develop a strategy for making a project successful. Available assistance includes framing infrastructure issues clearly, exploring possible solutions, identifying key regulatory planning and financing programs, and answering as many questions as possible. Typically the Tech Team meetings take place at the annual Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council (IACC) conference, but can take place at any time throughout the year by contacting the Public Works Board. Assistance can be obtained on a short - or long-term basis.

Some examples of how Tech Teams have been used in the past include:

- City of Mabton – Water system upgrades, including new well, reservoir, purchasing water rights, and replacing water mains;
- City of Clarkston – facility and equipment replacement at the wastewater treatment plant; and
- City of Tonasket – address health and safety issues related to sewage disposal.

For more information, visit <http://tinyurl.com/tech-teams> or contact Bruce Lund, Managing Director – Local Government Infrastructure Division at bruce.lund@comerce.wa.gov.

2014 Roadway Safety Guide

By Page Scott, Executive Director

The Roadway Safety Foundation has released the [2014 Roadway Safety Guide: A Primer for Community Leaders](#). This publication, originally released in 2000, provides thorough information on a variety of safety issues. The chapters cover safety topics such as understanding roadway conditions; learning roles and responsibilities for various public agencies; case studies of safety projects, safety for vulnerable road users such as young drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, and motorcyclists; building active coalitions; and data and organizations. The guide is designed to provide community leaders and elected officials with basic information to improve roadway safety in their communities, and may be appropriate to share through regional transportation planning organizations' boards and committees.

Learn more about the [Roadway Safety Foundation here](#) (<http://www.roadwaysafety.org/>).



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This is Your Brain ... *This is Your Brain on a Bike!*

By Brian Curtin, CTR Program Coordinator

There's nothing like a sensational headline to get your attention. Now that I have it (your attention that is), it's time to talk about bikes and their impact on our health and welfare! H.G. Wells said it best when he stated, "When I see an adult on a bicycle, I do not despair for the future of the human race." I'm not sure Mr. Wells had Commute Trip Reduction in mind when he uttered those profound words, but what the heck, with a little poetic license we can certainly make it fit with the concepts of CTR. When I see a car with more than one commuter in it; when I see a transit bus filled with patrons; when I see someone walking (rather than driving) to a local deli at lunch time; when I see a vanpool on I-82 headed towards Hanford; (you get the idea), I do not despair for the future of the human race.

Of all the commuter options, bicycling is by far the most efficient. For example, pound for pound, biking uses less energy per mile than any animal or machine; the second most efficient, the salmon, uses twice as much. A car consumes 8,000 calories of petroleum energy to go six miles, while a bicyclist only consumes 210 calories. And where is that energy directed? Ninety-five percent of the energy goes towards pushing the car — not the cargo/passengers. In contrast, about 80% of the energy goes towards moving the cargo/passenger on the bike.

Besides being the most ecologically sound choice for commuting, it is also the top choice for your physical as well as fiscal health. Sure, you can outfit yourself like Lance Armstrong and cruise on a bike that costs more than my first house. But for commuting to work, you might be more comfortable riding a Pee Wee Herman bike. Just like we pontificate during Wheel Options weeks, it's all about choices.



And for those of you who are thinking (or shouting at me through the page of this newsletter), "riding a bicycle to work just isn't practical for me." Again, you have options: bike to a bus stop and take the bus the rest of the way to work; drive to a park-and-ride and cycle to work from there; bike to a co-worker's home and carpool from there. Your choices are unlimited.



OK, I can hear you saying, "Let's get back to the reason I started reading this article in the first place — how do brains work their way into this conversation?" Well, here goes: a University of Illinois study published in the February 2003

issue of the Journal of Gerontology- Medical Sciences, found an inverse relationship between physical fitness and brain density/shrinkage in the three key areas of

the brain adversely affected by aging. In other words, the better shape you are in, the denser, bigger, and more efficient your brain. So make a promise to yourself, for that bigger and better brain: make the choice to leave the car at home and give bicycling a try. For more information about the benefits of bicycling as well as the rules of the road and safety tips visit these websites: <http://www.bikeleague.org/> and <http://www.bicyclealliance.org/>

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What's so great about YVCOG's new Facebook page? You can get important, timely news that might be too late by the time you read about it in the newsletter, and without YVCOG spamming your inbox every time there's a new opportunity we think you might be interested in. Keep up on news related to grants and funding, training, events, regional partnerships, local projects, and other news of interest to our members and the region. If you're a Facebook member, choose what types of notifications *you* would like to receive and where (email inbox or Facebook newsfeed). **If you're not a Facebook member, you can still check the page periodically like any website, to get all that up-to-date information.** In the "About" section of the page, you'll see links to YVCOG's important documents, and you can check on your latest TIP amendment. And we love it, because we can keep our members informed in a timely fashion, and it's so easy to update that we can put more of our resources into other vital services to our members.



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YVCOG Kicks Off Complete Streets Program with Free Workshop

By Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner

On April 17, YVCOG will help to facilitate a free Central Washington Complete Streets Workshop. “Complete Streets” is simply the concept of designing roadways for the benefit and safe access of all users – drivers, transit, walkers, bikers, children, elderly, and disabled.

The workshop will explore:

- ⇒ Economic, community, and health benefits of complete streets policies
- ⇒ The Washington Safe Streets Bill and Complete Streets Grant Program
- ⇒ Local Complete Streets policy development – concrete steps

This free workshop will be held **Thursday, April 17, 2014**, from 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Yakima Museum, 2105 Tieton Dr., Yakima. Lunch will be provided. Register at: <http://tinyurl.com/yakcs-reg>. To view the workshop flyer, visit our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/YVCOG> (you do not need to be a Facebook member to view information on the YVCOG page).

The workshop will also function as a kick-off for YVCOG’s Complete Streets program. YVCOG has received funding from the Active Community Environments (ACE) program to work with interested member jurisdictions to adopt local Complete Streets policies. ACE is a partnership of Washington State Department of Transportation and Washington State Department of Health, and receives funding from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

YVCOG has begun discussion with some cities that have expressed an interest in participation in the program. Assistance will consist of education and outreach regarding Complete Streets policies and state legislation, drafting an ordinance that meets jurisdictions’ needs, and assisting with adopting ordinances. If you are interested in learning more about participation in this program, please contact Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner, at 574-1550 or conrads@yvco.org.

The graphic below is from the WSDOT publication, “Washington’s Complete Streets & Main Street Highways Program,” and highlights how Grandview’s downtown ALIVE project accommodated diverse users.



PEDESTRIANS

Street furniture, trees, and landscaping elements were installed along widened sidewalks, enabling increased pedestrian activity. A pocket park was added next to the Veteran of Foreign Wars building, and a large mural of historic Grandview reinforces local character.

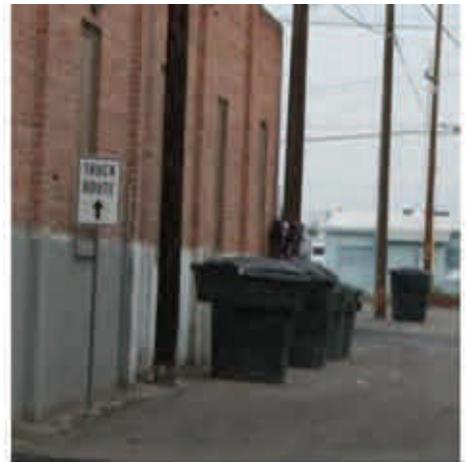
Pedestrian walkways are marked with textured paving. Bold stripes and bulb-outs make crosswalks safely visible.



CARS

The city cataloged available surface parking in the downtown core and found that one curb of angled parking could be converted to parallel parking, with a net loss of fifteen spots. This allowed for wider sidewalks, and those fifteen spots were replaced by downtown customer parking, previously pay parking.

Streets widths were narrowed from 36 feet to 24 feet, which has shown to auto collisions.



SEMI - TRAILERS

Previously, businesses in the downtown core received truck deliveries on the Main Street. The community wanted to reduce truck congestion from the downtown area while still accommodating deliveries.

The new plan reroutes trucks through the core by way of alleyways. Signs clearly mark the new routes and restricted areas.