



MAP-21 and the Highway Trust Fund

By Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner

MEMBER JURISDICTIONS:

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

YVCOG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

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Mike Leita

Yakima County Commissioner
Micah Cawley

Mayor, City of Yakima
Area 1 — Dan Olson

Union Gap City Council
Area 2 — Loren Belton,
Mayor, City of Toppenish

Area 3 — Mario Martinez
Mayor, City of Mabton

Member At Large-

John Hodkinson, Jr., Vice Chair



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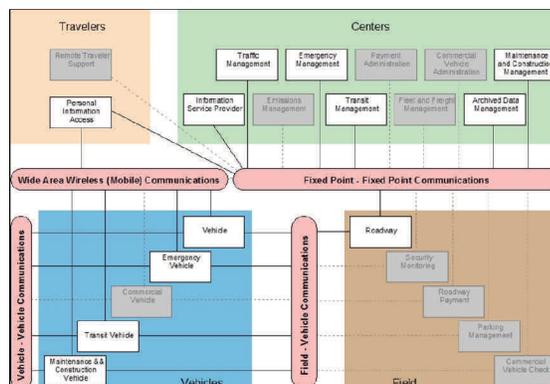
Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), the federal transportation bill, expires September 30, 2014. The Obama Administration and the Senate have both put forward proposals to replace MAP-21, and there has been some talk of extending the existing bill as a temporary measure.

However, the primary source of funding for the bill is the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) which is projected to become functionally insolvent by the end of August, prior to the MAP-21 expiration (see the USDOT HTF Ticker at <http://www.dot.gov/highway-trust-fund-ticker>). Focus on a new transportation bill has stalled as lawmakers grapple with a temporary or long-term fix to the HTF. Given this is an election year, a temporary fix is generally seen as more likely. Without a fix, the U.S. Department of Transportation will be forced to begin slowing reimbursements to states in July during construction season, putting projects and jobs at risk. Many proposals have been tossed about, including using funding gleaned from stopping Saturday mail service, closing corporate tax loopholes other changes to the tax code, or increasing the gas tax. So far none of these proposals has gained traction. Members of the House and Senate return home for the Congressional recess this week, and the following weeks will be crucial for the future of transportation funding.

Yakima Regional ITS Architecture Approved

By Joseph W. Calhoun, Planner

On May 19, 2014, the MPO/RTPO Executive Committee voted to approve the Yakima Regional ITS Architecture. The Architecture, or plan, will provide a consistent framework for how ITS projects will be implemented in the Yakima Valley. ITS, or Intelligent Transportation Systems, incorporate technological advances in the design and use of transportation systems and facilities. By creating this regional architecture, local projects in the Yakima Valley can consistently implement new technologies. Besides tracking ITS projects and keeping a comprehensive



list of local stakeholders, the ITS Architecture provides detailed charts which show how the various ITS components interact with travelers, stakeholders, and vehicles.

The complete plan can be found at <http://www.yvcog.org/pages/trans/ITS14/web/index.htm>.

NARC 48th Annual Conference and Exhibition

By Christina Wickenhagen, Interim Executive Director

I just returned from Louisville (pronounced Lou-bull), KY, where the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) met for their 48th Annual Conference and Exhibition. I had the privilege of listening to experts in *Collaboration In and Beyond Regions*. Focused on transportation, environment, community development, and homeland security, these experts shared stories and insight of the benefits of collaborating; working together to improve our communities; reduced costs; and making local communities more successful. I would like to highlight two of the outstanding presentations.

The Honorable Penny Gross, NARC President, talked of the importance of local governments knowing and understanding what COGs do. David Warm, Executive Director, Mid-America Regional Council; and Lyle Wray, Executive Director, Capitol Region Council of Governments, spoke on Regional Cooperation and Shared Services. These topics are on the top of my list of being informative and interesting!

The Honorable Penny Gross spoke of her passion for her region. Being able to provide her region with services and offer programs they may not be able to offer independently is a privilege she shared. She discussed in detail how collaborating services benefits everyone. All governments, federal, state, and local, are cutting back. For services to continue at the high level we all expect, we need to rely on the great work COGs deliver. Her understanding of the positive impact COGs provide makes me proud to work here at YVCOG for you.

David Warm and Lyle Wray talked about the awareness cities have about their region. Whatever is happening in a neighboring city impacts their own city's livability, for the good or for the bad; cities already understand this, and a regional approach to regional development is the time we live in. It's the future. They shared stories of the importance of how COGs are able to build public information teams with city leaders to address issues of the region. They talked

about how regional cooperation comes in many forms, but everyone has the same objective: **highest service at a reduced cost.**

As I am organizing my thoughts after this conference, my main focus is on you, your community, your needs, and our shared region. We realize here at YVCOG, that if one city in the Yakima Valley is successful, then that success trickles into other cities. We understand our region and the benefits of collaborating together for the success of our region. I would like to leave you with food for thought (and yes, the food in Kentucky is as good as people say): what could our region accomplish if we collaborate together to come up with solutions for problems we all may be facing? How can we regionally promote the Yakima Valley? What services would you like to provide to your residents that the city next door would like to offer, too? I'm looking forward to our future together.



JUNE MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

MPO/RTPO TAC — cancelled

**MPO/RTPO Executive Committee & Policy Board—
cancelled**

YVCOG Executive Committee — June 16

– Adopted Resolution 2014-3 Approving Declaration and Disposition of Surplus Property

Your YVCOG Staff:

Chris Wickenhagen, Interim Executive Director / Administrative Finance Officer
 Brian Curtin, CTR Coordinator
 Vacant, Senior Transportation Planner
 Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner
 Joseph Calhoun, Planner
 John R. Rohrbaugh, GIS Analyst/Systems Administrator
 Tamara Hayward, Office Specialist
 Vacant, Office Specialist



NARC 15th District Representative Re-Elected to 2nd Term

Congratulations to Jim Restucci, YVCOG Executive Chair, on being unanimously re-elected to his 2nd term as 15th District Representative for NARC!

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) serves as the national voice for regionalism by advocating for regional cooperation as the most effective way to address a variety of community planning and development opportunities and issues.

The 15th District COGs are:

Oregon

- [Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization](#)
- [Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization](#)
- [Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization](#)
- [Lane Council of Governments](#)
- [Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation](#)
- [METRO-serving Portland and the surrounding counties](#)
- [Mid Willamette Valley Council of Governments](#)
- [Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments](#)
- [Rogue Valley Council of Governments](#)
- [The Salem-Keizer Area Metropolitan Planning Organization](#)
- [Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council](#)
- [Umpqua Regional Council of Governments](#)

Washington

- [Benton-Franklin Council of Governments](#)
- [Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments](#)
- [Grays Harbor Council of Governments](#)
- [Puget Sound Regional Council](#)
- [Skagit Council of Governments](#)
- [Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council](#)
- [Spokane Regional Transportation Council](#)
- [Thurston Regional Planning Council](#)
- [Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council](#)
- [Whatcom Council of Governments](#)
- [Yakima Valley Conference of Governments](#)

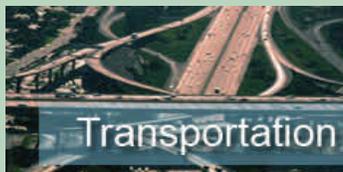


James A. Restucci
NARC 15th District Representative



(NARC District Representatives. Jim Restucci, third from right.)

Congratulations, Jim! Check out NARC's website at www.narc.org



Grants and Funding Update

By Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner

USDA Rural Development Housing Preservation Grants

The Housing Preservation Grant (HPG) provides grants to sponsoring organizations for the repair and rehabilitation of low- and very low-income housing. Eligible entities include state and local governments; non-profit organizations, including faith-based and community organizations; tribes; and consortia of eligible entities.

Pre-applications are due **July 28, 2014**. For more information: <http://tinyurl.com/USDA-HPG>.

Transportation Improvement Board

Don't forget — the annual Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) call for projects is still open. TIB funds arterial street and sidewalk projects in urban areas and small cities. Deadline for applications: **August 22, 2014**. Application evaluation and field reviews will be held September through October 2014, and the final project list will be presented to the board November 20-21, 2014. For more information: <http://www.tib.wa.gov/grants/Grants.cfm>.

CDBG Planning Only Grant

The next round of Community Development Block Grant Planning-Only Grant (POG) application materials will be available in **mid-September**. Applications will be accepted year round, starting **October 1, 2014** until all funds are awarded. But don't wait until then! Go to <http://tinyurl.com/GrantPrep> and click on "What can I do now to prepare a 2014 Planning-Only Grant?" For early preparation tips or more information about the POG: <http://tinyurl.com/PlanGrant>



JULY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

MPO/RTPO Executive Committee & Policy Board & YVCOG Executive Committee
Monday, July 21 at 1:30 p.m.

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

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

Coming Soon: Amtrak Roll-On Bike Service

Reprinted with the permission of Washington Bikes

Have you dreamed of traveling to a distant state by train with your bike, but cringed at the thought of having to box your bike for the journey? Dream again. Amtrak roll-on bike service is on its way! Amtrak announced plans to include bike storage racks on its new long distance equipment. The new baggage cars will be installed on all 15 long distance routes by the end of 2014.

That includes the Coast Starlight and Empire Builder routes serving Washington state. "It's clear that



Americans want a national system of intercity passenger rail and Amtrak is moving ahead to build new equipment to meet customer demand," said Amtrak President and CEO, Joe Boardman.

Washington Bikes executive director Barb Chamberlain is looking forward to switching to trains for her long distance travels. "Roll-on bike service will make me choose Amtrak over air travel every chance I get. I've been waiting for this to transform my vacation choices. This will open up a huge market for Amtrak since bike travel is growing like crazy and legs sometimes need a rest," she stated.

Bicyclists traveling by train in western Washington and Oregon have been accustomed to roll-on bike service on Amtrak Cascades service sponsored by WSDOT and ODOT. All Amtrak routes in Washington will have roll-on bike service with the expansion to Coast Starlight and Empire Builder routes. See more at: <http://wabikes.org/2014/06/24/coming-soon-amtrak-roll-on-bike-service/#sthash.QXoUIq85.dpuf>

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.yvcog.org/title6.pdf> or call (509) 574-1550.

YVCOG Second Quarter Activities

What has YVCOG done for you lately? Here are some highlights for the second quarter of 2014:

Transportation & MPO/RTPO Activities

- Reviewed MAP-21 planning and performance measure rules for comment
- Tracked federal and state legislation development and funding activities and informed members on developments
- Began preparation of 2015-2018 Metropolitan/Regional Transportation Improvement Program
- 2014 State Transportation Improvement Program book balancing and project projections
- Contacted potential Commute Trip Reduction alternative program participants and processed CTR program affected employer surveys
- Continued development of regional sidewalk inventory
- Completed travel demand model requests for City of Yakima
- Participated in MPO/RTPO Coordinating Committee. DRYVE, TRANS-Action, and Special Needs Coalition meetings



Community Planning

- Grandview: assistance with parks plan update development
- Granger: provided land use planning technical assistance
- Harrah: assisted with development of comprehensive plan update elements
- Wapato: assisted with mapping for CDBG Planning Only Grant income survey. Provided land use planning technical assistance
- Tieton: provided land use planning technical assistance
- Yakima County: assisted development and distribution of Yakima County Trails Plan update.



Regional Projects

- HOME Consortium: developed five NEPA environmental reviews for housing rehabilitation projects. Facilitated HOME Board and TAC meetings.
- Healthy Communities: Assisted development of five Safe Routes to School funding applications for cities of Yakima, Union Gap, Mabton, and Wapato. Worked with Union Gap, Mabton, Sunnyside, and other stakeholders on complete streets policy development. Facilitated regional complete streets workshop. Developed Health Impact Assessment grant application for Mabton.
- Yakima County: Participated in discussions with Yakima County regarding urban growth area update and tracked progress



- Technical Assistance Development: worked with Department of Commerce on development of regional advanced Short Course on Local Planning for fall

Yakima County HOME Consortium Rehab Program Underway

By Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner

The Yakima County HOME Consortium is a consortium of six jurisdictions in the Yakima Valley that are able to receive U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds to expand affordable housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income households. The jurisdictions that currently form the HOME Consortium are Grandview, Mabton, Sunnyside, Union Gap, Wapato, and Yakima County. The Yakima County Department of Public Services is the lead agency. YVCOG provides services to Yakima County to complete environmental reviews, facilitate meetings, and assist with administrative tasks for the HOME Consortium.

The HOME Consortium has built seven new single-family homes in member jurisdictions, which were sold to families at or below 50% of the area's median family income and with a 15-year affordability period. Five units were also constructed in a 41-unit multifamily development in Grandview.



A single-family home in Toppenish constructed through the Yakima County HOME Consortium.

The HOME Consortium has now proceeded to address a critical need in Yakima County: housing rehabilitation. The HOME Consortium has developed a housing rehabilitation program and is now accepting and processing applications. The rehab program provides 0% interest loans to low- and moderate-income homeowners for basic repairs and improvements, including repair or replacement of plumbing, heating, roofing, insulation, windows, doors, bathrooms, paint, and more. Work can include improvements addressing health, life, and safety concerns; structural defects; energy conservation; and weatherization.

Qualifying individuals must be the owner of a single-family home to be rehabilitated in one of the HOME Consortium member jurisdictions. The owner must be living in the house, and the property taxes and house payments must be current. Households must be at or below 80% of the area median income.

Individuals who would like to determine if they are eligible and apply for the program should contact: Andrea Reyes, (509) 574-2239, andrea.reyes@co.yakima.wa.us.