



City of Yakima

# News Release

**Subject: 2017 Second Saturday Cruisin' The Ave Events**

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## Second Saturday Cruisin' The Ave Returns to Downtown Yakima

As it has for more than a decade, Downtown Yakima will again play host to several modern-day cruising events this summer that harken back to a once bygone era.

Free, family-friendly Second Saturday Cruisin' The Ave events will take place on four Saturdays this summer. June 10<sup>th</sup>, July 8<sup>th</sup>, August 12<sup>th</sup>, and September 9<sup>th</sup>. The City of Yakima, in partnership with the Downtown Association of Yakima (DAY), is hosting the events, which will allow cruising on Yakima Avenue between 6<sup>th</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm each of the four nights.

Earlier this year, the Yakima City Council decided the Second Saturday Cruisin' The Ave events would be held in honor of former Yakima City Councilmember Ron Bonlender, who was instrumental in reviving the cruising tradition several years ago.

The cruising events are like a flashback in time that provides a chance to relive a part of our community's past, said Economic Development Manager Sean Hawkins. They are great opportunities to see your neighbors, interact with the community, and watch cool cars go by.

For generations of Yakima Valley teenagers, cruising Downtown Yakima was a tradition. Driving up and down Yakima Avenue, meeting friends, showing off cars, and just hanging out were all part of cruising the Ave.

However, concerns about safety brought an end to the practice in the mid 1990s. According to a law that was adopted in 1994, drivers cannot contribute to traffic congestion, obstruction of streets, sidewalks or parking lots, impediment of access to shops, restaurants or other buildings open to the public, or interference with the use of property or the conduct of businesses in the area adjacent thereto." That's a complicated way to say cruising is generally prohibited.

But in 2005, a group of business owners, which included Bonlender, who passed away in 2011, came up with the idea of holding special, family-friendly cruising events as part of efforts to reinvigorate Downtown Yakima. The Yakima City Council approved the plan and has since permitted cruising on a limited basis a few nights each year.

DAY, which is partnering with the City to put on the Second Saturday Cruisin' The Ave events, is a private, nonprofit organization committed to the preservation, development, marketing and promotion of Downtown Yakima through focused efforts to build and maintain public and private partnerships that will foster financial and creative investments in our future while embracing and celebrating our history.

For more information about DAY and its efforts to make Downtown Yakima a prime Northwest destination, click on the following link to see the organization's official website -

<https://downtownyakima.com/>.