

Issues Brief

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Yakima Air Terminal Hosts Military Exercise

City one of three sites in state to host first-ever exercise

Yakima Air Terminal-McAllister Field recently hosted a U.S. Air Force international military exercise lasted nearly two weeks.

The Air Mobility Command's Mobility Guardian 2017 exercise, the first of its kind, began July 31st and ended August 10th. Aircraft used during the exercise included C-17 and C-130 transport planes as well as Blackhawk and Chinook helicopters.

It ran 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It was planned as the most realistic real-world, scenario-driven training the Air Mobility Command has ever undertaken.

It was designed to allow the forces to "train like they fight" by developing and improving techniques and procedures that enhance air mobility operations.

"It was successful," said Yakima Air Terminal-McAllister Field Director Rob Peterson. "It's great to see the community be supportive of the exercise."

Yakima's involvement was made possible, in part, because the City Council last month approved a lease with the U.S. Air Force.



A British Royal Air Force A-400 lands at Yakima Air Terminal-McAllister Field during Mobility Guardian 2017.

"The community witnessed a lot of aircraft coming in and out of the airport," Peterson said. "There was an increase in aircraft noise and vibrations, but at night the Air Force was sensitive to the public."

Yakima was one of just three sites statewide chosen for the exercise. Joint Base Lewis-McChord and Moses Lake were the others

"The airport is a very good, central location and it's near the Yakima Training Center," Air Force Captain Sean Harte said.

Nations participating in Yakima included Australia, New Zealand, Colombia and England, which sent a Royal Air Force A400 plane to Yakima Air Terminal-McAllister Field.

"It's nearly new, only 18 months old," Flight Sergeant Andrew Prall of the Royal Air Force said of the A400. "The exercise is an opportunity to let people learn about the plane and its capabilities."

The exercise did not impact regular, day-to-day flight operations, Peterson said. "The military gave way to any aircraft and commercial aircraft operations," he said.

Ground troops also participated in support of the exercise. About 80 to 100 troops were expected for the training and they were housed in a "tent city" set up at the airport.

For more about the Yakima Air Terminal-McAllister Field, visit <https://yakimaairterminal.com>.

Councilmember Bill Lover Reflects on 12 Years in Office

** Editor's Note: This is the next in a series of articles written by Yakima City Council members that are being published each month in the City of Yakima Issues Brief e-Newsletter.*

During my tenure on the Yakima City Council, I have not made it a habit to speak much publically outside of City Council meetings about City business.

But since my 12-year run on the Council will come to a close at the end of this year, I think this is a good opportunity to share some of my perspectives about the importance of the job Council members perform and how I've tried to carry out that responsibility.

I have always believed that when establishing policy and making difficult decisions, critical thinking skills and the ability and willingness to ask tough questions are key to success.

I learned that approach during not only my 23-year career in the U.S. military, but also during my tenure at the Boeing Company as a quality assurance manager.

Many, if not most, of the issues that come before the City Council are complex and don't lend themselves to simple solutions.

It is important that policy makers take the time and invest the effort that is needed to fully educate themselves about the issues they are asked to make decisions about.

That's no easy task, but it's vitally important in order to make good decisions.



Bill Lover was first elected to the Yakima City Council in 2005 and currently holds the District #4 seat. Lover did not seek reelection in 2017. His tenure on the Council will end on December 31st of this year.

I could argue that the most important decisions the Council makes and its greatest responsibility is to ensure sound choices are made when it comes to the City's budget.

I think I'm known, at least I hope I'm known, as being rather fiscally conservative.

I believe budget choices should be primarily based on, number one, what the community can afford, and, number two, on what the appropriate role of government should be.

I have spent my entire time on the Council asking tough questions, especially about the City's budget, and applying critical thinking to the decisions I've been asked to make.

I have sometimes challenged my seatmates to do the same. The end result, I hope, has been a record of service to my community that my constituents have valued.

It has been a great honor to be part of the Yakima City Council for as long as I have. I've enjoyed serving the community for the last 12 years. I will miss spending as much time at City Hall as I have, for sure. But I'm also looking forward to having a little more free time.

I wish the next folks who are elected to the City Council the best of luck and I thank you, the community, for the support you have provided to me during my time on the Yakima City Council.

Improvements Planned at City's Randall Park

New footbridge, lights, parking lot in the works for park

A new footbridge and expanded parking lot are in the works for the City of Yakima's Randall Park.

Work began last month at the park, located at 1399 South 48th Avenue, to remove trees and tear out the park's existing parking lot on 48th Avenue.

"Trees will be removed in the parking lot for added parking spaces," City Parks and Recreation Manager Ken Wilkinson said. "A few new trees may be planted on the east side of the new parking lot."

Besides removal and replacement of the 48th Avenue parking lot, the project will include installation of new parking lot poles and light fixtures for added safety.

The 48th Avenue parking lot will be closed six to eight weeks during construction.

Park visitors can use the Randall Park Dog Park lot located south of Wide Hollow Creek while the 48th Avenue parking lot work is underway.



Work began last month at Randall Park with the removal of a few trees in preparation for resurfacing and expanding a parking lot.

Included in the project is the addition of a new bridge that will once again allow people to access the nature area in the northwest part of Randall Park, Wilkinson said.

Work on the new bridge, which replaces one removed in 2011 due to deterioration, is expected to begin about the middle of this month.

As always, the schedule for this type of project is subject to change daily dependent on weather and other delays.

For more information about the project, contact Yakima Parks and Recreation at 575-6020.

Though the 48th Avenue parking lot will be closed temporarily

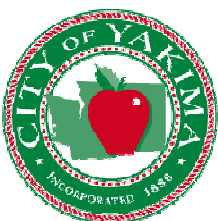
due to construction, visitors to Randall Park can still enjoy its many amenities.

They include a basketball court, Disc Golf Course (9-hole), nature trail, parking areas, pathway, dog park, picnic shelter and gazebo.

Randall Park also offers picnic tables, a playground, duck pond, restrooms and Wide Hollow Creek.

Randall Park is very popular with walkers, nature lovers, recreationists, and now disc golfers.

It ranks second for overall usage among City parks according to a recent Parks and Recreation survey.



The City of Yakima Issues Brief e-Newsletter is a monthly publication of the City of Yakima Community Relations Office. Questions or suggestions? Contact Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler at 509-575-6045 or randy.beehler@yakimawa.gov.

Visit <https://www.yakimawa.gov> for more information about the City of Yakima.