



# Issues Brief

City of Yakima e-Newsletter

## ✦ Rosalma Park Revitalized By Landscaping Project

For years, Rosalma Garden Club Park remained almost invisible, despite being located near one of Yakima's busiest traffic intersections. Tucked away near the southeast corner of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Tieton Drive, the tiny neighborhood park remained virtually unchanged for years.

But, that changed this summer when Hogback Development and Stephens and Sons Construction approached the City, offering to donate labor and materials to improve the park.

Earlier in the year, Hogback Development and Stephens and Sons had bid \$5,000 on a Russell Landscaping package during a fund raising auction for the Montessori School in Yakima. Hogback and Stephens and Sons then decided to use the package to help beautify the park.

Yakima Parks and Recreation crews prepared the site, and in October, Russell Landscaping began turning a barren patch of asphalt and dirt left behind by the removal of Yakima Valley Trolley tracks years ago into a landscaping showcase. Russell Landscaping added to the donation with its labor and materials. The improvements include new trees, ground cover, basalt rocks and flower beds.

With the addition of concrete pathway pavers donated by Western Building Materials and the planned installation of benches, the park has been turned into an attractive area for visitors and bus riders waiting at a nearby Yakima Transit stop on Tieton Drive.

"This is a wonderful example of making Yakima a better place to live," said Yakima Parks & Recreation Manager Ken Wilkinson. "It is another great display of a public-private partnership to improve the quality of parks in the city of Yakima."

The value of the improvements at Rosalma Garden Club Park is around \$20,000.

Rosalma Garden Club Park was named in January, 1979 after a donation of time and money was made by the club to improve the area. The park is located in Yakima City Council District 4, which is represented by Councilmember Bill Lover.

Next spring, Yakima Parks & Recreation crews will install a drip irrigation system to keep everything looking healthy.



***Thanks to the donation of labor and materials from local businesses, Rosalma Garden Club Park at 16<sup>th</sup> and Tieton has been beautified.***

## **Snow Routes in Effect in Yakima for Third Year**

In 2014, the Yakima City Council adopted a new snow removal plan that included establishing snow routes along which no parking would be allowed during plowing operations so those streets could be cleared more quickly.

As it has since the current snow removal plan was put in place, the City of Yakima will lean toward notification and education rather than imposition of fines during the first few significant snowfalls this winter.

Everyone is still becoming familiar with how the snow route concept works, said Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler. The first year the current snow removal plan was established, we didn't have to implement the Snow Route Alert system at all. Last year we issued a few Snow Route Alerts. The City used flyers placed on cars, businesses, and houses in the downtown area, announcements to the media, information on the City own communications platforms, and other means to get the word out, said Beehler. That will be the same plan again this year.



***Snow route signs are now posted along major streets to identify roadways along which parking will not be allowed during plowing operations.***

The City Council decided to revise the City's snow removal plan in 2014 after having heard complaints about how long it sometimes had taken to get downtown streets and main arterials plowed. Under the old plan, downtown streets were sometimes the last to be plowed. Car owners were given plenty of time to move their cars from downtown streets, which resulted in plows having to maneuver around them or simply avoid streets that had a lot of cars parked on them. The plan adopted by the Council in 2014 makes getting downtown streets cleared of snow a priority.

When a snowfall reaches three inches in depth, a Snow Route Alert is issued by the City letting car owners know they need to move their vehicles from designated snow routes by 8:00 pm that evening. With cars off of those streets, the work of plowing crews will be faster and safer. Cars that are not moved off of the designated snow routes can be towed and their owners fined \$50 per violation. But, as mentioned, the City plans to issue fines only if absolutely necessary.

Utilizing the snow routes approach requires the cooperation of people who park along those streets, said Beehler. Once the system is understood, we are confident that the community will be happy with the results. Our streets will be safer to drive on more quickly than what Yakima has been used to in the past, said Beehler.

When snow is falling, people can find out if a Snow Route Alert has been issued by looking at posts on the City's various communications platforms, paying attention to local media reports, or can call 576-6713.

To see a map of the snow routes, along with the rest of the priority plowing routes throughout the city, click on the following link - <http://www.yakimawa.gov/apps/snow-routes/>.

## ✦ City of Yakima to Pursue Highest Priorities in Olympia

The 2017 session of the Washington State Legislature is set to get underway on the second Monday of January, and the session is expected to be difficult and long. Legislators will be dealing with how to meet a deadline to fully fund education. Still, amid the ranker over paying for education, local government will be continuing to get lawmakers to focus on issues important to them.

When the session convenes on January 9<sup>th</sup> in Olympia, cities like Yakima will be busy convincing the legislature that even though education funding must be addressed, local issues can't be overlooked.

Adopted by the Yakima City Council in September, the City's highest 2017-2018 legislative and administrative priorities include passage of the Washington Voting Rights Act, efforts to address homelessness, affordable housing and human services, safe routes to schools funding, funding for gang prevention, intervention and suppression, funding for public defender costs, revenue options for cities, securing bicycle and pedestrian path grants, and funding for improvements to the old Boise Cascade mill site.

"The City's legislative and administrative priorities align with issues the City Council has identified as being the most pressing in Yakima," said Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler. "Many cities in Washington State have challenges similar to those we experience here in Yakima, and their priorities in Olympia, in many ways, mirror those our City Council adopted in September. So, Yakima is not alone in making its case to the legislature when it comes to several issues," said Beehler. "We're one of many voices sending the same message."

Additional priorities for the City during next year's legislative session include funding for the state's law enforcement academy, amending public records laws, and changing the formula related to how the state and local governments share funding from a federal transportation source.

The full list of the City of Yakima's 2017-2018 State Legislative and Administrative Priorities, as well as federal priorities, can be found on the City website by clicking on the following link - <http://bit.ly/2qM7pmi>



*The Washington State Legislature will convene in Olympia for the 2017 session on January 9<sup>th</sup>. In September, the Yakima City Council adopted priorities that the City will pursue during the session.*



Be Part of the Solution!

You can serve your community by becoming part of a citizen board committee, or commission. To learn more, contact the City of Yakima Clerk's office by phone (575-6037) or by e-mail ([sonya.claartee@yakimawa.gov](mailto:sonya.claartee@yakimawa.gov)).

**Yakima is our community – Be Part of the Solution!**