

ISSUES BRIEF

June 2023 - Vol. XIII, Issue 6, Number 130

City celebrates Nelson Dam removal

A ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 24th marked the removal of Nelson Dam and completion of Phase 1 of a project to improve fish passage, decrease flooding risks for nearby landowners and improve water supply reliability.

“One of the things I’ve always said about Yakima is that we do best those things we do together, and this is just a perfect example of that,” Yakima City Councilmember Patricia Byers said in remarks during the ceremony.

The project began in August 2021 and Phase 1 became complete and operational in May 2023.

The latest version of Nelson Dam, removed as part of this project, was a large, river-spanning concrete dam built in 1985. It held back tons of sediment and silt over the years, raising the river bed and causing the Naches River to overflow its banks and move into the surrounding community during even minor flooding.



Pictured (L-R) Washington State Dept. of Ecology Office of Columbia River Director Tom Tebb, Yakima County Commissioner Amanda McKinney, City of Yakima Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler, retired Assistant Public Works Director Dave Brown, Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife South Central Region Director Mike Livingston, Yakima City Councilmember Patricia Byers and Yakama Nation Fisheries’ Joe Blodgett.

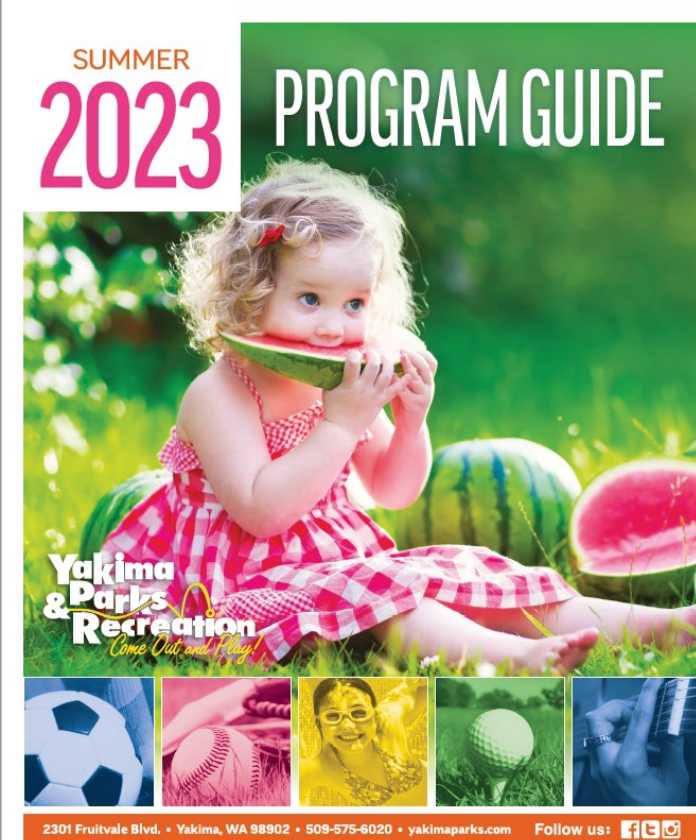
As the Yakima Basin’s second earliest recorded diversion, the Nelson site had provided irrigation water since nearly 1865, initially for the Nelson Homestead then for the first cooperative ditch associations – Union and New Schanno ditches. The original design did not allow fish passage.

Those partnering with the city in the \$28 million Nelson project include Yakima Basin Integrated Plan as well as the following:

Yakima County, Yakima County Flood Control Zone District, Resources Legacy Fund, Department of Ecology, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board, NOAA Fisheries, the Yakama Nation, Bureau of Reclamation, US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board.

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Concerts, camps and cinema, oh my!



From swimming to sports camps, softball leagues to volleyball leagues, there is plenty being offered this summer by Yakima Parks & Recreation. Details are available in the 2023 Summer Program Guide.

Highlights include the 17th annual “Paws in the Pool,” as well as activities at Washington Fruit Community Center. The 16-page Program Guide includes information about:

- “Dive ‘N Movie” at Franklin Pool
- Schedules for the free:
 - Viva La Musica series
 - Summer Sunset Concert series
 - Outdoor Summer Cinema series

For more information about City of Yakima organized summer activities, click the link above or call Yakima Parks and Recreation at 509-575-6020.

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Briefly

Lions Pool closed through June 18th

Lions Pool is closed through June 18th for construction and installation of a new air handling and dehumidification system.

For more about City of Yakima aquatic programs visit yakimaparks.com/aquatics

City offices to close for Juneteenth

City of Yakima offices and non-emergency services will close Monday, June 19, in observance of the Juneteenth holiday.

Closures include City Hall, the Public Works office, the Y-PAC office and the Harman Center.

Yakima Transit will not provide bus service on June 19. Garbage pick-up will not be delayed, but the Refuse Division office will be closed June 19.

Market on 3rd St for June 4, 11 and 18

Downtown Yakima Farmers Market will remain on 3rd St in front of the Capitol Theatre for the first three Sundays in June.

The City of Yakima will close 3rd Street between Yakima Ave and Chestnut Ave on each of those dates. The market is 9 am to 1 pm each Sunday.

Beginning Sunday, June 25th, it is scheduled to move to the new Rotary Marketplace located at 15 W. Yakima Avenue.

Visit [Downtown Yakima Farmers Market](https://www.yakimawa.gov/downtown-yakima-farmers-market) for more information.

Budget review meetings continue

Yakima City Council will continue its budget review study sessions through the summer.

The Council is holding the meetings at different locations to make them as accessible as possible.

Visit www.yakimawa.gov for meeting schedules, locations and topics.



Trail time at Chesterley

Just in time for summer, the City of Yakima has greatly expanded the walking trails at Chesterley Park!

Progress continues on the project, which is adding almost 2,200 feet of new walkway at the City of Yakima's Chesterley Park. The new walkway is on the southeast and south side of the park.

The City's Streets Division is working on the project which connects to existing walkway and utilizes the sidewalk along River Road.

At completion there will be over 4,500 feet of paved path at Chesterley Park.

Click <https://yakimaparks.com/parks/chesterley-park/> for more about Chesterley Park.



Downtown Summer Nights concerts return June 15th

The Downtown Summer Nights concert series returns for Summer 2023.

The free concerts organized by the Downtown Association of Yakima (DAY) are 5:30 to 9 pm each Thursday, June 15th to August 17th. Concerts are downtown on North Front Street between Yakima Avenue and Staff Sgt. Pendleton Way. Concerts begin at 6 pm.

Click <https://downtownyakima.com/events/downtown-summer-nights/> for the concert line-up.

Besides offering free live music from 2 different bands each Thursday night, the series features many local artists and vendors.

The Downtown Summer Nights concert series was created several years ago to create valuable community events for the public and to draw the community to Downtown Yakima. They have become a staple of the summer schedule.

Drivers are reminded the concerts will require the closure of North Front Street between Staff Sgt. Pendleton Way and Yakima Avenue.

Be alert for traffic signal upgrades

In May, City of Yakima crews will begin a series of traffic signal head upgrades. The project will continue in June and July at the following intersections:

- June 14 - 3rd St & Walnut
- June 21 - 6th St & Walnut
- June 28 - Summitview & Custer
- July 12 - 3rd Ave & Washington
- July 19 - 24th Ave & Washington
- July 26 - Front Street & Walnut

Signals at the above intersections will be out during project work hours of 6:30 am to 12 pm on their scheduled dates.

Crews will post stop signs in all four directions at the intersections while each traffic signal is dark. Traffic will be restricted to one lane in each direction with stop signs at the 4-way stop.

This traffic signal head upgrade project is similar to one the City of Yakima completed last summer along several intersections of Yakima Avenue.

Drivers are reminded the speed limit through all traffic-related work zones within the City of Yakima is 20 miles per hour.

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

For more information, contact Traffic Operations Supervisor Dan Nickoloff at 509-576-6746.



City of Yakima crews are pictured last summer during a series of traffic signal upgrades along Yakima Avenue. Crews are upgrading additional signals this summer.

City names new Water/Irrigation Manager

Longtime City of Yakima employee Mike Shane was recently promoted to Water/Irrigation manager.



He has served as water/irrigation engineer since 2004.

Prior to his promotion to water/irrigation manager in May, Shane was named interim water/irrigation manager after Assistant Public Works Director Dave Brown retired in February.

Brown had been with the city for 39 years. He was honored during the Nelson celebration by cutting the ribbon to mark the dam's removal.

"Nelson Project" continued from Page 1



Naches River before (top) and after Phase I of the Nelson Project

Removal of Nelson Dam enables the next undertaking, the Cowiche Confluence Complex project.

With the planned installation of large new irrigation pipes to North 40th Avenue, irrigation water for the Fruitvale and Old Union irrigation systems will be supplied from the new Nelson diversion, allowing removal of the Fruitvale and Old Union diversions just downstream which are partial barriers to coho and steelhead entering Cowiche Creek.

Together with future floodplain and culvert work on Cowiche Creek, a new FEMA-accredited 100-year levee will reduce City of Yakima flooding. A planned County Park will enhance recreation opportunities and river access to the newly opened reach of the Naches River.

For more about the project, contact Water/Irrigation Manager Mike Shane at 509-576-6480 or at Mike.Shane@yakimawa.gov

City Council action summary - May 2023

Yakima City Council action during its meetings in May included:

- Issuing a Missing and Unidentified Persons Awareness Month proclamation
- Introducing Purchasing Manager Kristine White
- Holding a discussion about establishing a coalition of community partners to address chronic repeat offenders of misdemeanor crime
- Authorizing \$125,000 of ARPA Funds for air service fund
- Amending the City of Yakima Municipal Code Section 1.34 related to the Community Integration Committee
- Receiving update on relocation of Refuse service from alleys to the street curb

Complete minutes and agendas from council meetings are available at [Agendas and Minutes | City Council \(yakimawa.gov\)](https://www.yakimawa.gov/agendas-and-minutes).

All council meetings air live on Y-PAC and online at [Live Stream | City Council \(yakimawa.gov\)](https://www.yakimawa.gov/live-stream).

Councilmember Byers earns Advanced Certificate of Municipal Leadership

Yakima City Councilmember Patricia Byers recently received an Advanced Certificate of Municipal Leadership from the Association of Washington Cities (AWC).



Those who earn the advanced certificate continue to strive for excellence by attending conferences and trainings, serving their community, and further developing leadership skills.

AWC's Certificate of Municipal Leadership program recognizes city and town elected officials for accomplishing training in five core areas:

- Roles, responsibilities and legal, requirements
- Public sector resource management
- Community planning and development
- Effective local leadership
- Diversity, equity and inclusion

To earn the Advanced Certificate of Municipal Leadership, Byers completed more than 60 hours of training and demonstrated local community service.

In 2021, Councilmember Byers earned the AWC's Certificate of Municipal Leadership which required 30 hours of training. She represents District 3 on the Yakima City Council. She was elected to City Council in November 2019.

Previously, she served nearly six years on the City of Yakima Planning Commission, serving as chair her last two years on the commission.

Visit [City Council \(yakimawa.gov\)](https://www.yakimawa.gov) for more about the Yakima City Council.

Visit [AWC Home Page \(wacities.org\)](https://www.wacities.org) for more about AWC.

follow the City of Yakima on social media:



watch City meetings any time, on demand:



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The City of Yakima *Issues Brief e-Newsletter* is published monthly by the City's Community Relations Office.

Questions? Suggestions?

Contact Community Outreach Specialist John Fannin at 509-249-6858 or John.Fannin@yakimawa.gov.

City Directory

Airport:	575-6149
Animal Control:	575-6038
City Clerk:	575-6000
City Manager:	575-6000
Codes/Licenses:	575-6126
* Fire:	575-6060
Human Resources:	575-6090
Municipal Court:	575-3050
Parks:	575-6020
Planning:	575-6183
* Police:	575-6200
Refuse:	575-6005
Streets:	575-6005
Transit:	575-6175
Utilities:	575-6080
Wastewater:	575-6077
Water/Irrig:	575-6154
YCTV/YPAC:	575-6092

* **NON-EMERGENCY. Call 911 in an emergency.**