



City of Yakima

# **News Release**

**Subject: River Road Dedication**

**Contact: Design Engineer Randy Tabert – 576-6579**

**Communications & Public Affairs Director Randy Beehler – 901-1142**

**Release Date: Friday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

## **Dedication for River Road Rebuild and Expansion**

Dedication ceremonies marking completion of major improvements to River Road in Yakima will be held on Tuesday October 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2:00 pm. Representatives from the City of Yakima, Washington Fruit, the Yakima School District and the State of Washington have been invited to attend the ceremony to discuss the importance of the project to Yakima's economy. The event will be held in front of Stanton Academy at 802 River Road.

A joint public-private partnership paved the way for major improvements to a heavily-used vehicular and freight based section of River Road that provides access to numerous businesses as well as to Yakima School District's Stanton Academy. The 10-block section of River Road between 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue has been reconstructed and widened. The project also included the installation of new curbs, gutters, sidewalks, lighting, and stormwater system infrastructure.

Funding for the \$1.4 million project, which began in June, included \$300,000 from Washington Fruit, more than \$211,000 from the Yakima School District, \$639,000 from the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board. The City of Yakima paid the balance of the project costs.

Washington Fruit has more than 100 apple trucks arriving daily at its packing and cold storage facility on River Road, and efficient and quality access is a top priority for the company. During a typical operating day, 40,000 cases of apples are packed at the facility and sent out in refrigerated containers to destinations across the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The facility packs fresh apples all year long, and during the peak harvest season the River Road operation runs 20 hours a day, 7 days a week. Several other neighboring agricultural and freight-related businesses also use River Road as a quick and convenient connection to the State Highway System.

The Yakima School District's Stanton Academy, with more than 350 students and staff, also benefits from the project by having improved access and increased safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Stanton Academy is a high school for at-risk students and opened at its new location on River Road in 2012.

Completion of the roadway finishes the River Road Corridor which runs from 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Fruitvale Boulevard. The infrastructure investment should ensure that River Road remains a major commercial, industrial, and fruit processing area for years to come.

- end -