



City of Yakima

News Release

Subject: Walter Ortman Parkway

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Link Under Construction to Connect Yakima Pathways

Pathway users in Yakima will soon have an easier time getting around town. Construction work began earlier this week on the Walter Ortman Parkway project that will eventually create a 6.5 mile pedestrian-friendly loop by connecting the Powerhouse Canal Pathway with the William O. Douglas Trail.

Funded with a federal grant obtained by Yakima Transit, the Ortman Parkway will add nearly a mile of new paved pathway to the City of Yakima system. Paragon Northwest of Yakima will serve as the primary contractor for the pathway project after having been awarded a nearly \$200,000 contract. The pathway work should be completed by late spring or early summer.

The project extends the pathway in North Central Yakima from Swan Avenue through McGuinness Park and eastward along Willow Street to 5th Avenue. From there, the pathway system heads north and connects with a section of the William O. Douglas Trail, an 80-mile recreational pathway that begins on 6th Avenue in Yakima and eventually leads to Mount Rainier National Park.

"This is a wonderful example of steps that are being taken to make Yakima an even better place to live" says Yakima Parks & Recreation Manager Ken Wilkinson.

"Pathways and urban trails provide great options to meet both the recreation and transportation needs of a community. The Ortman Parkway in particular will give kids in that part of town a safe alternative to walking in the street to and from school," said Wilkinson.

The 2012 City of Yakima Citizen Survey identified walking and hiking opportunities as a highly valued activity among community members. Walkways, pathways, and trails were identified by survey takers as priorities for City investment. As a result, the Yakima City Council in March approved an agreement with the Cowiche Conservancy to help promote recreational trail development by expanding pathway and hiking opportunities in the greater Yakima area.