



the Pulse

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Pasco Citizen's Survey

The City will be once again working with the National Research Center to conduct the National Citizens Survey (NCS), a biennial community survey effort consisting primarily of standard questions regarding the availability and quality of municipal services.

The City has contracted for this survey to be completed in odd years since 2005. The results of this statistically-significant survey have served as a valuable tool for the City Council in goal setting efforts and decision-making with respect to public investment and focus areas. With several cycles of experience, Council, City staff, and the public can identify trend lines where the City has made progress in the opinion of respondents, and where the City has opportunity to improve. The survey results and subsequent analysis provide the City with reliable information on which to make decisions and how Pasco compares in terms of performance with other

cities utilizing the NCS as a tool. Historically, the City has conducted the NCS in the fall so the information is available for the Council's post-election cycle goal setting retreat, in this case in early 2016. With the potential for more than 1400 households to participate and provide input to their City government, the NCS is one of the City's largest interactive community outreach efforts in terms of numbers involved.

In addition to the questions specific to residents' view of the community and the major services provided by the City, the Council has elected to include "policy" issues to be included as questions in the survey, including questions on solid waste recycling, traffic safety cameras, and general election voting by district only for City Council positions that represent a district.

Surveys will be sent to a random sampling of City utility customers; additionally, the City will be utilizing online and Spanish-language versions of the survey. If you are selected as a survey respondent, please be sure to fill out and return the survey!

Sidewalk and Intersection Upgrades – Improving Mobility & Safety

In 2010 the City adopted Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for sidewalks and intersections, and in 2013 adopted an ADA Transition Plan to meet higher federal requirements. The standards and plan are aimed at meeting accessibility needs for sidewalks and intersections, including ramps and transitions, for all residents. Pasco's ADA Transition Plan has since received national recognition as a good model for smaller communities, most notably in the April 2013 edition of the American Public Works Association's Reporter.

Since adoption, the City has been very proactive in implementing the plan. Court Street, for example, was one of

the high priority locations identified in the plan, and the City received a \$500,000 grant toward improving accessibility on Court. A total of 114 ramps and driveways along Court (from 4th Avenue to 28th Street) were upgraded, with 14 along 4th Avenue (from the I-182 interchange to Sylvester Street) and 54 ramps on Sylvester Street (from 3rd Avenue to 28th Avenue). These accessibility improvements help our residents with mobility and sight issues to safely utilize public rights-of-way. The City plans further enhancements in other areas; for more information, contact Public Works at 543-5738.



MATRICS Moving Ahead



The City has been working in concert with Franklin and Benton counties and the cities of Kennewick and Richland toward the consolidation of the two Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) serving these agencies and others in the Tri-Cities region since 2007. Advances in technology and associated limitations have created a situation where it is not uncommon for cellular calls meant for one of the PSAPs to go to the other. When this happens, the call has to be answered, the call-taker must determine that the call is meant for the other center, the call must then be manually transferred to the intended PSAP. This process adds extra time to critical and sometimes life-threatening situations and increases the chance of errors.

Progress has been made on the radio portion; The Pasco Police Department and the Franklin County Sheriff’s Office have recently switched to 800MHz radios (the same as Benton County). The switch is possible by a “patch” through the Benton County PSAP system; however, the agencies remain dispatched by Franklin County. While this has improved the communications capability between public safety agencies in the two counties, a “patch” is just that, a patch, and cannot be relied upon indefinitely. Accordingly, as a long-term solution, the PSAPs will need to consolidate.

The agencies involved in MATRICS have negotiated in good faith, representing a high degree of collaboration among the Tri-City agencies. Approval and execution of the MATRICS agreement is a major step toward consolidation of the two PSAPs serving the Tri-Cities region, and lays the groundwork for subsequent agreement(s) to resolve other matters relating to consolidation (e.g. transfer of equipment and/or technology, personnel, etc.).

A group made up of representatives of each of the agencies, working with experts, concluded that consolidation of the two PSAPs will not only resolve the critical interoperability and call intake issues noted above, but will result in economies of scale that would translate into operational savings for taxpayers. Accordingly, consolidation of the two PSAPs into one, operating on an 800 MHz radio platform, is a City Council goal. The consolidation process has yielded an organization called Multi-Agency Three Rivers Information & Communication Services or MATRICS.

Senior Services Changes

One of the City Council’s stated goals for 2014-2015 was to “provide an appropriately sized and located Senior Center, to replace the current facility.” The goal was amended earlier this year to “Community Center” with a senior activities element, rather than a “Senior Center.” Part of the strategy to fund



and sustain a new Community Center is to sell the current Senior Center facility (located on 7th Avenue). While a solid building, from a logistical and programming standpoint, the current structure is not sustainable as a

senior center or a community center. Changes in the wants and needs of the senior population have resulted in a reduced use of the facility as a “Senior Citizens Center.”

Late in 2014, the Pasco School District approached the City about purchase of the building. The District would repurpose the structure for education purposes. The City has negotiated with the District on the sale of the property, together with an additional vacant lot located adjacent to the east, which will occur in 2016.

The City is working on a plan for a new Community Center that would include vibrant senior programming. In the interim, senior services will be provided in a facility to be located next to the Pasco Intermodal Center (the bus and train station) on 1st Avenue.

More information on the transition is available via the Senior Citizens Center at 545-3459.

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HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE

City offices will be closed Friday, **December 25** for Christmas Day and Friday, **January 1** for New Year’s Day. City Offices will be closed Monday, **January 18**, 2016 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

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