



City Administrator Update

From the desk of Michael Grayum

August 1, 2021

Our Mission

To provide essential public services and infrastructure to keep Yelm a desirable place to live, work and learn.

Our Vision

To make the City of Yelm a safe, healthy, happy home for all, with:

- Safe neighborhoods and schools.
- Sustainable, cost effective essential infrastructure.
- A strong, diverse economy.
- Vibrant public places with an enduring connection to our history.
- Best run government.

Our Values

We believe in and strive for collaboration, innovation, and excellence in everything we do.

Appreciation BBQ a saucy success!

It was great seeing everyone's smiling faces last week at our open-air employee appreciation BBQ! Special thanks to Brad Chatwood, Eric Kolb, Karen Bennett, Lori Lucas, and Becky Jackson for making this a great event! From the burgers and hot dogs, to the rousing games of corn hole, it was great to be with you and see so many members of our team in one place. It feels like forever since we were all together and I want to recognize that we are able to have events like these because you all maintain vigilance in adhering to the requirements we all must abide by from the CDC, Public Health Officials, and the Department of Labor and Industries.



The timing of our event was ironic as it happened while the Governor held a media event to recommend masks be worn indoors by everyone, regardless of vaccination status, in order to maximize protection from circulating variants and slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community. We will continue to adhere to all CDC and public health guidelines. We've come a very long way with very few of our team members getting sick and us starting to have great all-staff and community events again. Thank you all for coming together, having fun, and appreciating the work each of you do to do make the City of Yelm, as Mayor Foster often says, "a safe, healthy, home for all."

Masks to be worn indoors by all employees

In alignment with the latest Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance, Thurston County Public Health officials strongly encourage everyone to wear a mask while indoors in public settings regardless of their vaccination status. According to the CDC website, Thurston County is now one of several areas with substantial COVID-19 transmission.

As you read in the Mayor's heartfelt email on Friday, effective immediately and regardless of vaccination status, all city employees will wear masks at all times when inside public buildings. This includes lobbies, open work areas, restrooms, breakrooms, meeting rooms, and other gathering spaces. Working alone in individual offices, cubicles, and driving alone in a City vehicle are the only exemptions.

As we continue to do what we need to do to put COVID in the rearview mirror, let us remember that vaccinations remain a personal choice. We should always be respectful of our co-workers regardless of their choice. There is no need to ask about other employees' status. Mask up and keep up the great work!

Get free money from our Well City Award

As part of our health and wellness program, every employee can download the Castlight app, go to the Benefits tab on the bottom banner, click and scroll down to complete a short Health Assessment and Survey, then go to the More tab on the bottom banner, click and scroll to Reward Center. You should have a 350 point balance. Pick your \$35 Reward and Redeem for Home Depot, Amazon and other awesome gift cards.



By participating, not only will you get free money to spend as you wish, if we get 50% participation of employees to achieve our AWC Trust medical premium discount of 2% that we pass on to you in the medical coverage we provide for you and your families. If you have any questions or want someone to walk you through downloading the app and getting your rewards, Karen Bennett in Human Resources at 253.686.2036 or KarenB@yelmwa.gov. You can also reach out to Castlight User Support at support@castlighthealth.com or call 855-716-2888. Their support is AWESOME!

Community events and continuous improvement

We have had several awesome community events in the park over the last few weeks – Nisqually Valley BBQ Rally, Mermaid Fest, and Farmers Market – and we have a few more on the horizon with Prairie Days and our infamous Jazz Festival on August 6-7. The work everyone does to make the grounds and facilities beautiful and ready for these great events is greatly appreciated. Special thanks to our Parks and Water Departments, and Tim Robinson! Do you have any suggestions for us to improve these events – both the preparation and implementation? As part of our culture of continuous improvement, we will be holding after-action-review meetings with each event coordinator to identify ways we can make each event even more successful. If you have any suggestions or ideas please let us know by sending an email to Cody Colt or me. Your opinions matter.

Confusion from law enforcement reform legislation

As you may have seen in the news, several changes for Washington State law enforcement took effect on July 25th due to legislation enacted from the Washington State Senate and House of Representatives. Although we are early in the process of analyzing and applying the intent and effect of the legislation, it seems to have already created a noticeable decrease in radio activity throughout Thurston County. This could be attributed to several factors. Fortunately, our police department has had significant training and extensive Q&A sessions over the last month about these changes. Despite the confusion this legislation has created, our Officers will continue to rise to the challenge. We continue working closely with our county and regional partners to ensure alignment and consistency in the important law enforcement services the City provides. The transition will be an ever evolving process, but with consistency of training and communication, we will find a new normal. I have full confidence in our dedicated officers to continue to shine in their service to our community who appreciates them so much. Thank you Yelm Police Department.

<https://www.king5.com/article/news/politics/officials-await-clarification-over-new-law-enforcement-reform-bill-misconceptions/281-b5c882e2-6e5d-4536-8dd3-f5f54f971232>