

I ran for Mayor to give the depth of my knowledge and experience back to my hometown. The intent of my wife and I was to assist in making this a better place for all of us — for our children and future generations. I have been told that I did not do enough to change the minds of the voters by not presenting solutions on what I would specifically do were I elected Mayor and by “playing my cards too close to my chest.” This advertisement is presented to communicate my ideas without being edited, abridged, or altered before you have the opportunity to read it. This is about the future of our town.

The following is from my “Playbook” that would have gone into effect on November 9 were I the Mayor-elect. I give my action plan to Mayor-elect Harding, the Yelm City Council, Yelm City Administrators, the voters of Yelm, and all of the greater Yelm community. Use any part or all of it as you see fit:

## COMMUNICATION

**A.** Call a Town Hall Meeting open to the greater Yelm public for early December. Thank the community, the voters, and my opponent for their participation in the election. Clearly and briefly lay out my vision for the next four years. Then have a major question and answer session where I can get the pulse on the issues concerning my fellow area residents and allow the citizens to voice their views to me.

**B.** Explain to the citizens that 50% of the registered voters actually voted for Mayor, which equates to one quarter of the 4,455 residents within Yelm’s City limits, or 10% of the population of the greater Yelm economic area, as defined by the Yelm EDC. That means I must have an outreach program to be better “in touch” with the larger greater Yelm area. Explain how I would do that in a regular newspaper column, ads, and monthly Town Hall meetings.

**C.** Immediately form a Mayor’s Advisory Board of 10 persons from all segments of the community, including people that would be considered my adversaries. Meet with these people monthly to get their input, advice, and guidance on the issues facing the city.

**D.** Work with the City Council to rescind the “moratorium on moratoriums” placed into effect on public testimony by the City Council on April 13, 2005. Remove any blocks from the public speaking about anything before the City Council which was placed by the mayor and previous Council. Hire a second legal council at my own expense, if necessary, to support the citizens’ rights in speaking about anything before this City Council.

**E.** Enlist more Yelm area coverage from The Olympian and Tacoma News Tribune, which will generate more daily readership for them here and provide area residents more balanced and in-depth coverage on important issues.

**F.** Establish a Mayor’s website to communicate with and hear from Yelm citizens directly.

## TRAFFIC

**A.** Yelm needs to take inner-city traffic into its own hands and work new ideas. Much of the traffic is through-traffic from Thurston and Pierce Counties passing through to other areas. A Yelm bypass is many years in the future. Yelm needs an aggressive traffic policy for itself now, taking traffic answers into its own hands with the Mayor leading the way. During the campaign, traffic was the issue residents mentioned the most as needing direction from the Mayor and City Council. Make this Priority #1.

**B.** Form a Yelm Traffic Task Force comprised of Washington State Legislators, State, County, and City Traffic Engineers. Get everyone in one room together at the same time to “brainstorm” ideas and craft solutions for this area’s traffic. The present idea exchange of letters, e-mails, and speaking at each other publicly is not working. The major residential and commercial growth coming on-line in 2006 will exacerbate the problem.

**C.** Examine making Washington St. one way eastbound from Longmire to 3rd St. and opening it up to through traffic at 1st St. across Yelm-Tenino Trail.

**D.** Investigate the use of roundabouts on Yelm Ave. at Longmire and at 3rd St. and other potential intersections.

**E.** Investigate making the soon-to-be constructed center turn lane on Yelm Avenue a through lane westbound in the mornings and eastbound in the evenings from 93rd Ave. to 3rd St. with no turns permitted during rush hour. Other cities such as San Francisco’s Doyle Dr. and Louisville, Kentucky’s Bardstown Rd. have done that successfully for decades.

**F.** Work with State, County, and City traffic personnel to use City of Yelm Police to direct traffic from 6:45 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. Monday through Friday at Yelm High School to mitigate traffic. This is a huge bottleneck for Yelm area workers and emergency responders until the new turn lane and bus entrance on 93rd are completed.

**G.** Yelm’s Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a program of transportation projects that contains federally funded, state and local significant street improvements. The current STIP covers the period 2003-2008 and was created in August of 2002. This needs to be reviewed and updated starting in 2006.

## GROWTH MANAGEMENT

**A.** The second most talked about issue from the campaign was growth management. With a City Council that approves every project, this area is heading into overwhelming issues for our town to address. We must tackle this now and decide what we want Yelm to be — our sweet town or urban sprawl.

**B.** Dust off the 1995 Yelm Vision Statement and meet with the creators of that document to get their input on what needs to be updated and changed now. For example, in speaking to those creators, one should understand they envisioned “big-box” retail on the east end of town comprising 75,000 sq. ft. stores. No one ever thought a 185,000 sq. ft. store would be built there, as is the case with Wal-Mart’s entry. This city needs to examine the idea of ordinances that put “teeth” into the Vision Statement that would protect its intent. It was supposed to be updated every 5 years. We should be in our second revision now, and nothing has been done to update this document.

## GROWTH MANAGEMENT CONTINUED...

Do the citizens of Yelm want every piece of land developed with major corporate stores to be the core of our commercial area, businesses that take their locally earned profits back to their home states? The citizens need a chance to be heard on this issue. Perhaps hiring a survey firm to poll local residents on this would be a wise use of funds.

**C.** Are we prepared with an infrastructure to support the growth? Infrastructure does not mean just roads and bridges but includes adequate fire/police protection, water resources, and waste disposal. The Fire Levy failed, and other areas of infrastructure need critical attention now (police, fire, water, waste disposal) due to the projected growth. Communicate these issues with the public. The public needs more and better information to make an informed decision and the Mayor/City Council need public input greater than what has been done previously.

**D.** The City of Yelm Web site lists an emergency action plan. Do the citizens know what that entails? Educate the public on Yelm's Emergency Action Plan through Town Hall meetings, City mailings, and ads in the local newspapers.

**E.** Utilize Low Impact Land (LID) development patterns to approach land development, planning, and design. The 2006 City of Yelm budget says the population will grow here by 75% and the dwellings will increase by 50% in five years. Do our citizens know that? We need to enlist their support for this massive growth to reduce the impact on this fragile environment. LID is one way to do this.

## SUPPORT OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES

**A.** Work to support small businesses. They own property, pay taxes, hire local staff, and put their profits back into the local economy. Teach them how to differentiate their products/services to be more effective with the onslaught of international megacorporations here. Work with the Yelm Chamber of Commerce to present speakers that can show our local businesses how to operate more effectively in Yelm's changing business climate.

**B.** City government should not bail out small businesses; however, it can be effective in teaching small businesses how to work better. Show them that know-how. We're all in this together.

**C.** Work with the Yelm Chamber of Commerce to expand their membership to include Yelm's very talented and extensive Internet businesses and list those on their Web site.

## ENVIRONMENT

**A.** Work with the Nisqually River Council to place Yelm as seat of Nisqually watershed, working to protect and provide further understanding to area residents on watershed issues and water resources.

**B.** Work with Nisqually Tribe on water management issues.

**C.** Communicate with Yelm public to make them more aware of water resource issues as a result of major growth. The added consumption from increasing residential and commercial water use will press this city's abilities to provide adequate resources along with storm water runoff from more streets and parking lots and added pollution to the fragile aquifer from the increasing number of vehicles.

**D.** Work with developers and city planners to utilize Low Impact Land (LID) development patterns to identify environmental protection opportunities. This means we do more to consider Yelm's growing footprint on the environment than what has been done in the past.

## PUBLIC SECTOR

**A.** Work with city development officials to make Longmire Park active.

**B.** Enlist support from prominent Yelm families, asking them to donate monies for a Yelm Youth Center and naming a room or center after them, depending on the level of gift.

**C.** Increase interface with new Yelm Adult Community Center on programs supporting our seniors.

**D.** Work with Yelm Community Schools to use new 500-seat Performing Arts Center for a new Drew Harvey-type community theater in conjunction with City Hall support. This has been done successfully in North Thurston School District and other cities nationwide. This city derived great benefit from the talent displayed at the Drew and attendees were drawn to Yelm from as far away as Seattle.

This is not about "WE VS. THEY." This is not about gentile or Jew, newcomer or second generation families, military or civilian residents, or citizens within Yelm city limits vs. residents living outside of city limits. This is about all of us who call the Yelm area and Nisqually Valley home and how all of us must work together to understand that we all live in this area and contribute to the future here — for our sake, the sake of our children, and our future generations. Please use any of these ideas to support this town and its people. If the people do not participate in their town's government, their vision of the future will not be heard and considered and then they will have no one to blame but themselves.

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