

## MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Yakima City Council  
From: Bob Harrison, City Manager  
Date: September  
RE: SWAT Costs

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City representatives (Police Chief and staff; Finance Director; City Manager) met with Sheriff Udell and staff along with Commissioner Anderson to discuss the cost distribution of SWAT and the three tenths public safety levy the Commissioners have indicated they plan to place on the ballot in November 2021. While the City of Yakima picks up the majority of the costs, the Sheriff's office and select other departments also pick up costs as they contribute personnel to the SWAT team. The current system however has many free riders who aren't contributing to the costs and are receiving the benefit of the SWAT team existence/readiness for a call. The City of Yakima is bearing a disproportional burden of the cost based on usage.

There are a variety of ways to devise a formula for the distribution of costs. That would be decided down the road by the policy makers of the various entities. The County did not display a willingness to bear the costs of the other municipalities directly, however would be willing to entertain an ILA that would capture a portion of the three tenths sales tax before distribution to the various cities and apply the SWAT allocation formula that would be agreed upon within the ILA. The appropriate location for that conversation is the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments. We could send a letter from the City of Yakima to the YVCOG, or a joint letter from the City and County, or we could request the other entities currently contributing to SWAT (e.g. Union Gap) to sign the letter as well. In whatever of the three options, the letter should come from the City Council.

The County agreed that the current cost burden is inequitable and that it is time to work towards a model to share costs in a fair manner.