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Ed Shoenbach – Board Chair  
Yakima Police Activities League  
602 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Yakima, Wa. 98901

Dear Mr. Shoenbach,

The administration of the City of Yakima wholeheartedly supports the application by the Yakima Police Activities League ("YPAL") for funding from the Washington Gang Repression, Intervention, and Prevention Project ("WA-GRIP").

Even though the violent crime rate in Yakima is considerably lower now than it was at its height in the late 1980s, gun-related violence has spiked over that last year-and-a-half. Law enforcement officials attribute much of the increased level of gun violence to gang activity, specifically retaliatory gang activity.

Breaking the cycle of gun violence and gang-related crime currently being experienced in Yakima will take long-term, sustained, intensive efforts. Public safety is the City of Yakima's single highest priority. In 2017, 43% of the General Fund budget, nearly \$34 million, is dedicated to criminal justice.

However, the City clearly recognizes that it alone cannot cure the crisis of violence being experienced in Yakima. The City is proactively engaging in strategic partnerships with faith-based, non-profit, and educational organizations, such as YPAL, to enhance existing and develop additional gang prevention and intervention strategies designed to offer at-risk youth an alternative to involvement in gun violence and gang-related crime.

Since it was founded in 2003, YPAL has been at the forefront of providing innovative, evidenced-based, successful programs and services that have proven to be effective at keeping at-risk kids out of gangs. YPAL is currently leading the efforts of a broad coalition of non-profit, governmental, and other partners that is dedicated to offering positive youth development opportunities aimed at significantly reducing the negative effects of gang violence and gang-related crime in our community.

Limited resources have so far prevented YPAL, the City, and our partners from expanding gang prevention and intervention programs and services throughout the community. Securing funding through WA-GRIP will ensure these programs and services are more widely available and accessible to our community's high-risk, high-need youth.

The administration of the City of Yakima endorses YPAL as the primary bidder for this funding opportunity and stands ready to support YPAL in any way possible as it seeks to enhance gang prevention and intervention programs and services in our community.

Sincerely,

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City Manager Cliff Moore