

What is the Yachats web site upgrade?

Currently, the city has three web sites. The original site is more than 12 years old, GoYachats and the document library. The web project will merge the sites, add new features, simplify management of site content, and extend support for public works staff working in the field.

Why is this upgrade needed?

The original site doesn't support mobile devices; can only be managed from one computer and will not support most of the new services planned. Compared to most small cities, Yachats operates with a very small staff. To continue in this mode in an increasingly complicated world, improve communications with the public, meet growing service needs, we need to work smarter and the best way to do that is to provide staff with better knowledge tools. The upgraded site will make it easier to locate information about city facilities; support businesses services (licenses and taxes); present reports of city finances and activities; keep the public better informed about city news.

What new services will be added?

Improved navigation and simplify access to information
Upgraded calendar functions - public notices; what's happening; news
Mobile support for cell phones & tablets used by staff in the field
Improved property inventory tools
Water consumption reporting for all water meters in town
Property search and analysis tools
Integration with the utility billing and new accounting systems
Improved search capability using Google's search engine
A new e-mail tool capable of reaching target groups across the entire village
Integration with County Assessor's property value data

How much will the upgrade cost?

The city budgets \$10,000 a year or \$833 a month for software development. Each year this amount is matched by a grant. The initial work is estimated to take roughly 6 additional months to complete. Estimated cost for the city share of development cost ranges between \$7,500 and \$10,000.

Why does it take so long to construct a web site?

The work involves integrating five databases and constructing a data warehouse which is defined as "*a large store of data accumulated from a wide range of sources within a company and used to guide management decisions*". (1) This is necessary to provide one data portal for comprehensive data searches, analysis, data retrieval and reporting. In the past, most web sites contain static content in the form of text and images. Today, most web sites utilize a database for data storage and management. What we are building is more like an application. It includes logic and knowledge about users and residents. It will function more like the software a doctor might use to track patient treatment and history. Data is complex and dynamic. This means the instant a change is made, the next user to access that area will see the new data. It also means data will be more accessible for analysis and research. The results of any search can be exported to Excel with one mouse click.

Are there other factors complicating this upgrade?

Concerns about data security due to a number of recent database breaches are forcing all web and data providers to upgrade system security. The City of Yachats has relied on conventional database security for the past six years. We do not believe this approach is sufficient and plan to move our web security to a social media providers like Facebook or Google who have the resources to adapt and protect against evolving security threats. This also eliminates staff time to support web security.

Are there other benefits from this project?

There is reason to believe significant staff time spent maintaining the site, producing reports, entering data can be saved. It will eliminate the need for special software for web content. Staff time savings could be as much as one full-time position after three years. In other words, the productivity savings will more than offset the initial cost of development. Long term this investment will provide a framework for monitoring city service delivery performance. This phase will provide a simple way for citizens to make requests for city services; monitor the status of those requests and automatically be notified when the work is complete or that the request has been closed.

How will this impact the community?

Residents will have better access to city information, events, property data, water consumption, tax information, and city news. Out of town property owners will be able to monitor their vacant homes for water consumption.

How will businesses be affected?

One objective will be to provide businesses with relevant and useful city information about their business. We already display graphs of business gross receipts and tax payments to the City. In the future we will look for additional business related information that will be useful. Another objective will be the elimination of paper for data collection and reporting. Business feedback about the new tax reporting system has been universally favorable. One business reported a monthly savings of \$280 now that their CPA no longer has to fill out the paper tax report. E-mail delivery options will be enhanced and directed to specific business areas like hotels, restaurants or tax paying businesses.

(1) The five sources that will feed information to the “data warehouse” are the utility billing system, document library, new accounting system, YachatsOregon.org, and GoYachats.