



CITY OF RICHLAND
POLICE DEPARTMENT
871 George Washington Way
Richland, WA 99352
(509) 942-7340



TO: Chief Mehline, Toppenish Police Department

FROM: Christopher Mason, Commander

DATE: February 27, 2025

INCIDENT: RPD 25-008280

SUBJECT: Toppenish Police Department Assist

On January 14, 2025, Richland Police Department Chief Martin Pilcher informed me of an assistance request from the Toppenish Police Department. The request sought an investigation into a potential violation of RCW 35A.12.030.

Eligibility to hold elective office.

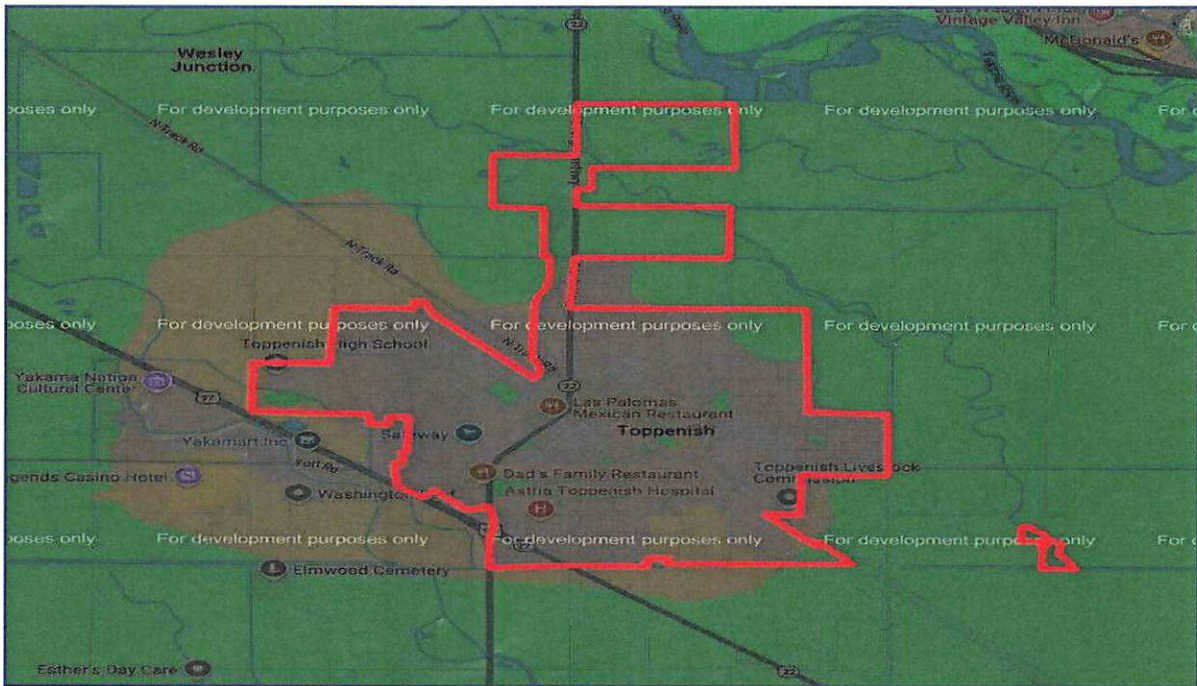
No person shall be eligible to hold elective office under the mayor-council plan unless the person is a registered voter of the city at the time of filing his or her declaration of candidacy and has been a resident of the city for a period of at least one year next preceding his or her election. Residence and voting within the limits of any territory which has been included in, annexed to, or consolidated with such city is construed to have been residence within the city. A mayor or councilmember shall hold within the city government no other public office or employment except as permitted under the provisions of chapter 42.23 RCW.

City of Toppenish Council Member Ezequil Morfin is the subject of this investigation regarding allegations that he falsely listed his residence as 327 South Division St, Toppenish, WA, while residing at [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) [REDACTED]. The latter address is outside the Toppenish city limits and within a Yakima County district. The investigation was initiated following an anonymous tip submitted to the City of Toppenish Police Department on November 25, 2024.

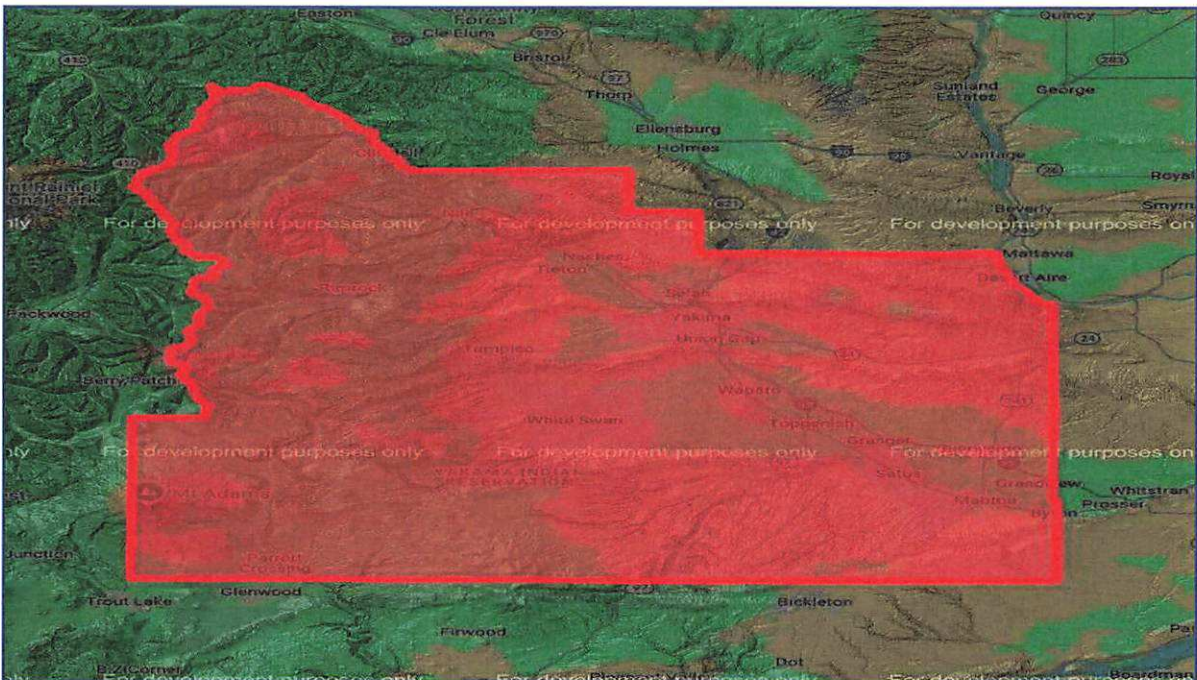
City Limits and County Boundaries

The website boundaries.us was used to review the limits and boundaries of the City of Toppenish and the County of Yakima. This site collects data from the United States Census Bureau and was last updated in 2024.

The City of Toppenish boundaries as provided by boundaries.us



The County of Yakima boundaries as provided by boundaries.us



Review of Application for Appointment to City Council

Mr. Morfin's application for appointment to the city council lists his residential address as 327 S. Division St, with a mailing address of [REDACTED] RCW in [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d). The application indicates that he has been a resident of Toppenish for 49 years. It is stamped as having been received on February 14, 2024.

Further, the declaration statement stating, "*I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing information I have provided is true and correct*" does not have a signed date and time.

Review of Utilities

A City of Toppenish utility account change form indicates that Mr. Morfin applied to update the utility billing on April 5, 2024. This document is accompanied by a billing statement detailing water consumption at the location from October 2023 through October 2024. The statement is addressed to Dino and Veronica Ruiz at 327 South Division St., Toppenish, WA.

Review of Mr. Morfin's Residence History

Using a database provided for investigations, I reviewed Mr. Morfin's address summary on January 29, 2025. Mr. Morfin's address is listed as [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) WA (Yakima County), from January 1, 2025, to the date of the inquiry request. A previous address of 365 Pomel Dr. Apt C10, Vista, CA, states Mr. Morfin resided at the location from April 7, 2019, through July 13, 2021.

[REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d)

(Yakima County)

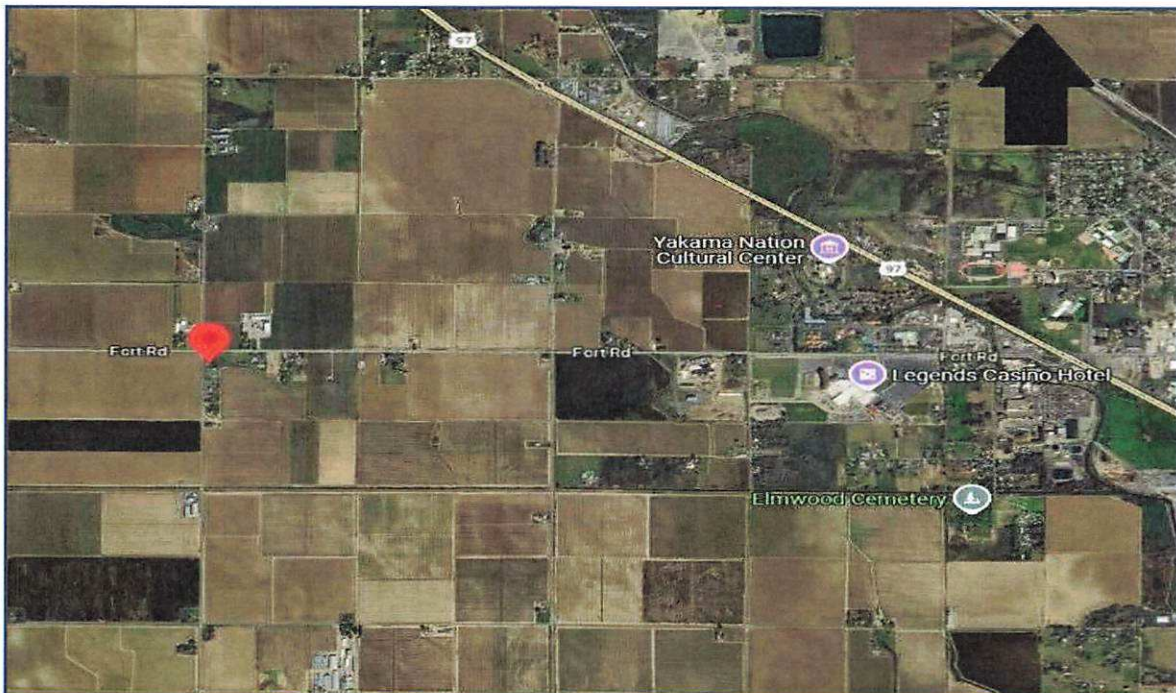
On January 12, 2010, Mr. Morfin purchased this location for residential purposes. The purchase includes a residence of approximately 4,990 square feet of building space and 2,495 square feet of living space situated on a plot measuring about 84,942 square feet. The residence was built in 1995 and was last assessed in 2023. Mr. Morfin is listed as the sole owner of the conventional loan for the purchase.

The residence is a single-story, white-colored rambler-style home with 3 bedrooms and a covered car storage to the north end. The residence is near the intersection of South Olden Way and Fort Rd, within Yakima County and outside of the city of Toppenish limits.

Images of residence captured on 01/29/2025 at 1150 hours with department iPhone



Screen capture of Google Maps location of residence and city of Toppenish



Review of RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) and City Limits and County Boundaries

The boundaries.us map data shows the city of Toppenish's limits to extend west State Route 97 and Ward Rd, approximately near the Toppenish High School. Using a straight-line measurement, the residence of RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) is approximately 1.89 miles outside of city limits.

Review of 327 South Division St

Using the same database to review RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) I inquired about 327 South Division St, in Toppenish, WA. The residence is listed as owned by Dino and Veronica Ruiz. Mr. Ruiz is listed as having owned this residence from April 1995 to the date of the inquiry request. Mr. Ruiz has other residences listed under his name in Maricopa County, Arizona, which concluded no later than 2014.

327 South Division St, Toppenish, WA

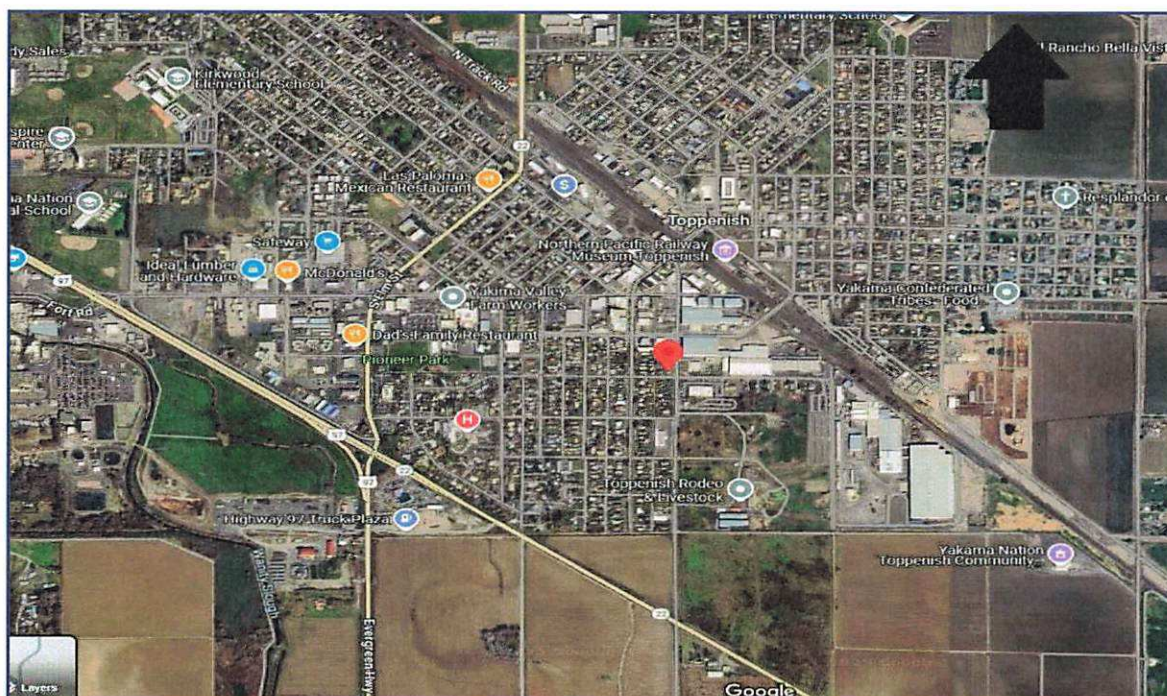
The records for this location show that Dino and Veronica Ruiz purchased it for residential purposes. However, due to multiple deeds and loans for this location, the earliest date of purchase I can locate appears to be July 15, 2005. The purchase includes a residence of approximately 1,456 square feet of building space and 1,456 square feet of living space on a plot measuring about 7,647 square feet. The residence was built in 1971 and was last assessed in 2023. Dino and Veronica Ruiz are listed as the loan owners for purchase.

The residence is a single-story, blue-colored home with four bedrooms surrounded by a chain-link fence and a driveway on the south end. It is near the intersection of South Division St and W 3rd Ave.

Image of residence captured on 01/29//2025 at 1207 hours with department iPhone



Screen capture of Google Maps location of residence and city of Toppenish



Review of 327 South Division Way and City Limits and County Boundaries

The boundaries.us map data shows the location is within the city limits of Toppenish.

Review of Body-Worn Camera Footage

I received a USB drive containing video footage from May 11, 2024, related to a burglary complaint near 1767 South Olden Way. In the footage, Mr. Morfin approaches Toppenish Police Department Captain Schwarder wearing a white button-up, long-sleeved dress shirt, and gray slacks. He is holding a hammer in his right hand during the interaction

As the officers approach the incident scene, Mr. Morfin greets them and tells one of the officers, "I'm working on nails." The officer responds, "As long as you're not working on me, we're good with that." Mr. Morfin laughs and says, "Yeah, I live over there" (indicating [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d)). He then hesitates and corrects himself, adding, "Well, that's my house; it's all my things, but [indiscernible]."

The officers contact the reporting party and inform him they will do a scene security check until Yakima County Sheriffs arrive, as the location falls under their jurisdiction.

Review of Mr. Morfin's DOL Registration Information

Mr. Morfin's State of Washington Department of Licensing record shows the following information as of January 29, 2025:

Mr. Morfin's listed mailing address is [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) This information was updated on May 21, 2024.

Mr. Morfin's physical location is listed as 327 S. Division St, Toppenish, WA. This information was updated on May 21, 2024.

Mr. Morfin's previously listed address is [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) Toppenish (Yakima County), WA. This information was updated on May 21, 2024.

Mr. Morfin's driver's license lists his physical address as 327 South Division St, Toppenish, WA, and his mailing address as [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d)

Mr. Morfin has a black-colored 2006 Land Rover Range Rover Sport bearing Washington state plate CEJ3996 registered to him. The registered address is [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) (Yakima County), WA, and the registration expires on August 18, 2025. This indicates that the registration was updated on August 2024 after Mr. Morfin updated his driver's license information, indicating his residence is 327 S. Division St, in Toppenish, WA.

Mr. Morfin has a blue-colored 2015 Dodge Challenger bearing Washington state plate EZEKIEL registered to him. The registered address is [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) (Yakima County), WA, and the registration expires on February 8, 2025.

Mr. Morfin has a blue-colored 2007 Dodge Caliber bearing Washington state plate CLP90777 registered to him. The registered address is [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) (Yakima County), WA, and the registration expires on January 16, 2026. This indicates that the registration was updated on August 2024 after Mr. Morfin updated his driver's license information, indicating his residence is 327 S. Division St, in Toppenish, WA.

Identification of Primary-Use Vehicle

The City of Toppenish participates in the use of FLOCK camera systems throughout their city. The FLOCK camera system is a network of automated license plate reader (ALPR) cameras designed for law enforcement, neighborhoods, and businesses to enhance security by capturing and analyzing vehicle data. These cameras use AI-driven technology to detect license plates, vehicle characteristics, and travel patterns, storing data for a set period for investigative use. FLOCK systems integrate with law enforcement databases, allowing real-time alerts on stolen vehicles, wanted suspects, or crime investigations. I am familiar with the system and have used it in numerous criminal investigations.

I conducted a cursory search of Mr. Morfin's currently registered vehicles in FLOCK with the parameters set to the city of Toppenish. The selected review dates ranged from January 1, 2025, at 0400 hours through February 25, 2025, at 1700 hours.

The Land Rover, license plate CEJ3996, returned with 0 FLOCK hits.

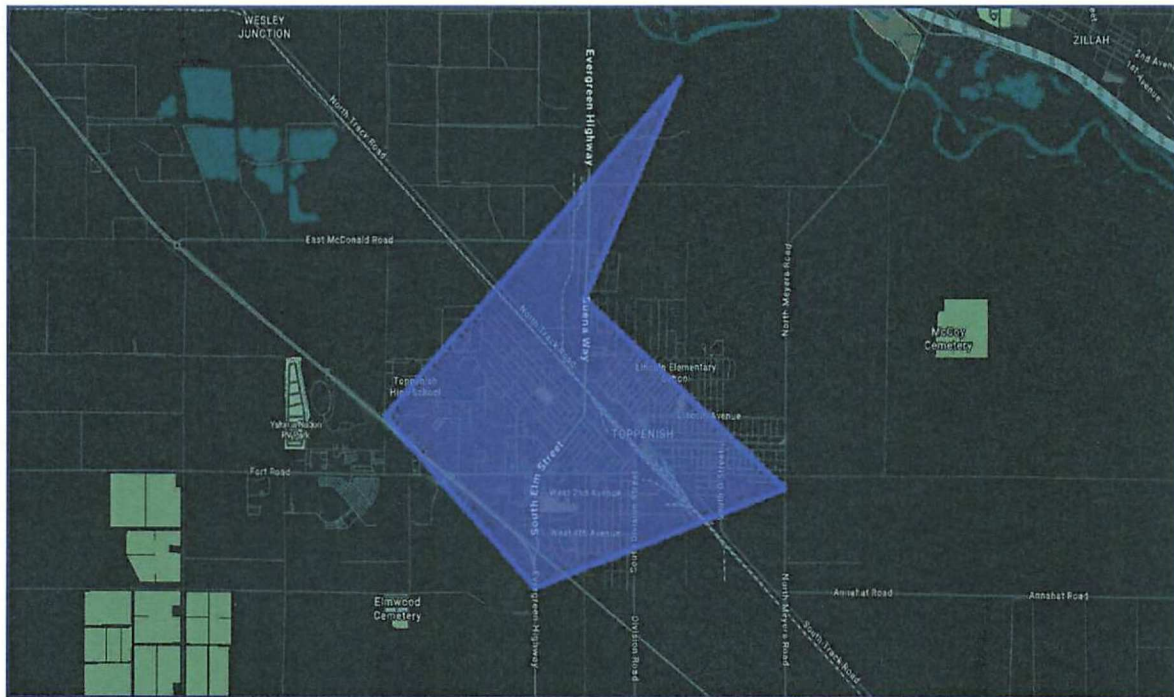
The Dodge Challenger, license plate EZEKIEL, returned with 3 FLOCK hits.

The Dodge Challenger was captured on FLOCK on February 2, 2025, only.

The Dodge Caliber, license plate CLP9077, returned with 60 FLOCK hits.

The available evidence indicates that Mr. Morfin primarily uses the Dodge Caliber as his personal vehicle. Consequently, the investigation will proceed under the assumption that this is his primary mode of transportation. However, this assumption may be reevaluated if new information becomes available.

Screen capture of the city of Toppenish FLOCK system locations



On-site Review of Locations

January 29, 2025

At approximately 1145 hours, I checked on the location of [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d). There, I located two vehicles parked in the covered car storage: a blue Dodge Charger and a black Land Rover, both registered to Mr. Morfin. The residence appeared well-kept, with the exterior clean and free of debris.

At approximately 1205 hours, I checked the location of 327 South Division St. There, I located a blue-colored Nissan truck with a tribal license plate parked along the chain-link fence on Division St. Debris and waste sat along the fence surrounding the residence.

February 5, 2025

At approximately 1550 hours, I checked on the location of [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d). There, I located two vehicles parked in the covered car storage: a blue Dodge Charger and a black Land Rover, both registered to Mr. Morfin. Both vehicles were in the same position in which I viewed them during the visit on January 29. The residence appeared well-kept, with the exterior clean and free of debris.

At approximately 1605 hours, I checked the location of 327 South Division St. No vehicles were in the front of the residence or the driveway. The same debris and waste sat along the fence surrounding the residence.

February 19, 2025

At approximately 1745 hours, I checked on the location of [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) I located the Dodge Caliber bearing Washington state license plate CLP9077 parked in front of the residence's main entrance. Additionally, the blue Dodge Charger and black Land Rover were parked in the same position in which I viewed them during the previous visits.

Image of residence captured on 02/19/2025 at 1750 hours with department iPhone



At approximately 1605 hours, I checked the location of 327 South Division St. A dark-colored Nissan Altima bearing Washington state license plate CJJ5929 and a light-colored Honda Pilot bearing Washington state license plate CPU0008 were parked in the residence's driveway. The same debris and waste sat along the fence surrounding the residence.

Image of 327 South Division St captured on 02/19/2025 at 1800 hours with department iPhone



Review of Vehicles Parked at 327 South Division St

Using the Department of Licensing database, I searched both vehicles seen at 327 South Division St on February 19, 2025. DOL reported the dark-colored Nissan Altima is registered to Dino and Isaac Ruiz, the registered address is 327 South Division St, and the registration is current with an expiration of June 16, 2025, indicating it was last updated on June 2024. The light-colored Honda Passport is registered to Alicia Zamora, the registered address is 327 South Division St, and the registration is current with an expiration of October 11, 2025, indicating it was last updated in December 2025.

A review of the DOL returns for the vehicle suggests that the registered owners reside at 327 South Division St. Additionally, based on the registration dates, it is assumed that the updates were made after Mr. Morfin submitted his city council application and tenant information for utilities.

February 25, 2025

At approximately 0640 hours, I checked on the location of [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) I located the Dodge Caliber bearing Washington state license plate CLP9077 parked in front of the residence's main entrance. Additionally, the blue Dodge Charger and black Land Rover were parked in the same position in which I viewed them during the previous visits.

Image of residence captured on 02/25/2025 at 0645 hours with department iPhone



At approximately 0656 hours, I checked the location of 327 South Division St. The dark-colored Nissan Altima and light-colored Honda Passport were parked in the driveway.

Image of 327 South Division St captured on 02/25/2025 at 0700 hours with department iPhone



Review of Traffic Routes and FLOCK Database

After reviewing the available information and noting that Mr. Morfin's primary vehicle was not observed on January 29, 2025, and February 5, 2025, I decided to conduct a route examination on dates when the vehicle was located at [RCW 42.56.250(1)(d)] specifically, February 19, 2025, and February 25, 2025. Given that the vehicle was present on the evening of February 19, 2025, it is reasonable to assume that if Mr. Morfin resided at 327 South Division St, the vehicle would have been observed in that area after 1800 hours on the same date. Furthermore, under this assumption, if Mr. Morfin lived at 327 South Division St, the vehicle should have been seen near the residence before 0700 hours on February 25, 2025.

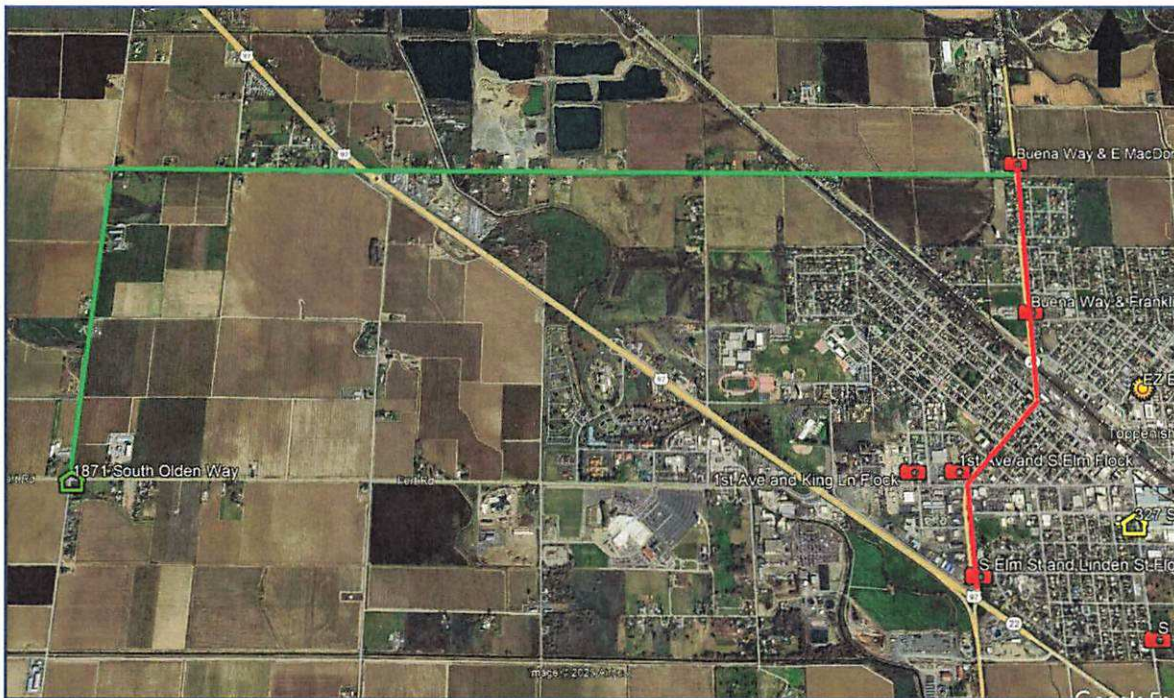
February 19, 2025, Route Examination

On February 19, 2025, at approximately 1750 hours, I witnessed the Dodge Caliber bearing Washington state license plate CLP9077 parked in front of the [RCW 42.56.250(1)(d)] residence in Yakima County, WA.

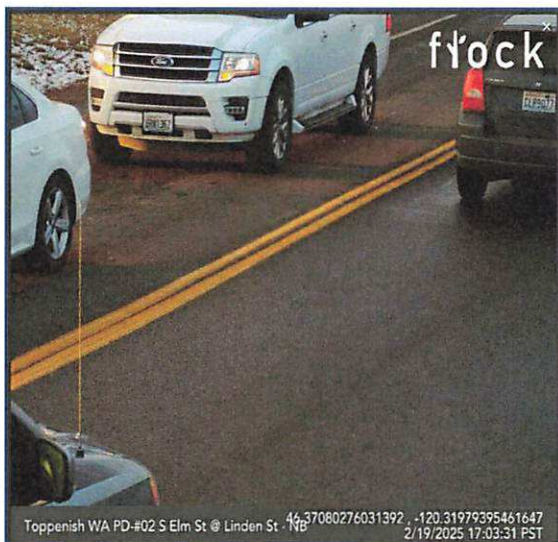
In reviewing FLOCK Camera systems located in Toppenish, at 1703 hours, the Caliber is captured heading northbound on S Elm St and Linden St (Device Name: #02 S Elm St @ Linden St - NB) and subsequently captured heading northbound on Buena Way at East MacDonald Rd (Device Name: #05 Buena Way @ E MacDonald Rd - SB) around 1706 hours as indicated in the red outline below. There are no additional FLOCK captures for this vehicle on February 19. This indicates that the travel route to [RCW 42.56.250(1)(d)] likely occurred along MacDonald Rd westbound to an intersecting road leading southbound to the South Olden Way residence (as indicated in green below).

Subsequently, the absence of additional FLOCK captures suggests that the Caliber never arrived at the residence of 327 South Division St, as doing so would result in an evening capture from FLOCK at either the South Division St camera location (Device Name: # 01 South Division St @ W 6th Ave NB) or at previously witnessed intersections.

Travel route of Dodge Caliber on 02/19 (Red) and assumed travel route (Green)



Screen captures of FLOCK on 02/19



A review of Google Maps supports that travel northbound was uninterrupted and consistent with what was represented by FLOCK, as the average travel time along this route is 4 minutes.

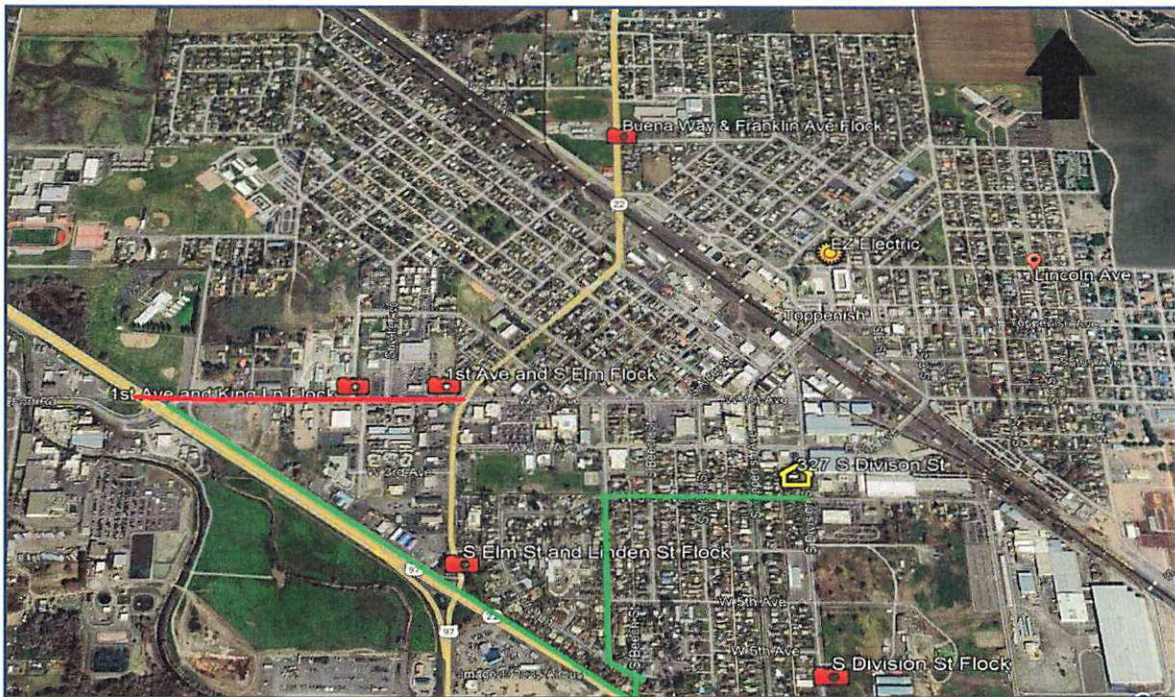
February 25, 2025, Route Examination

On February 25, 2025, at approximately 0705 hours, I witnessed the Dodge Caliber parked in front of the residence on South Olden Way. Additionally, I checked the residence of 327 South Division St and located the same vehicles parked in the driveway that were present on February 19.

At 0746 hours, the vehicle seen at South Olden Way is viewed traveling eastbound on 1st Ave and King Ln, in Toppenish via FLOCK Camera (Device Name: #03 W 1st Ave @ King Ln - EB). Shortly afterward, the vehicle is spotted traveling eastbound on 1st Ave through S Elm St via FLOCK Camera (Device Name: #26 1st Ave @ S Elm St WB).

This series of captures indicates that the vehicle likely traveled from the residence on South Olden Way, as indicated in the red outline below. Conversely, if the vehicle were to have traveled from South Division St, it would have to avoid the FLOCK camera located on Division, traveling southbound and or following arterial streets toward SR22 to arrive at 1st Ave without signaling 1st Ave and S Elm beforehand, as outlined in green below.

Travel route of Dodge Caliber on 02/25 (Red) and hypothetical travel route (Green)



Toppenish City Council Meetings

According to the City of Toppenish's website, Toppenish.gov, the city council meets on the first Monday of every month at 1700 hours, the second Monday of every month at 1900 hours, and the fourth Monday of every month at 1900 hours.

Mr. Morfin attended the city council meetings on January 6, 2025, at 1700 hours, January 13, 2025, at 1900 hours, was absent for the meeting on January 27, 2025, at 1900 hours, was present on February 3, 2025, at 1700 hours, and February 10, 2025, at 1900 hours.

The city council meetings are held at Toppenish City Hall, 21 West First Avenue, in Toppenish, WA. The location is approximately .2 miles from 327 South Division St and approximately 3.1 miles from [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d)

FLOCK Travel Route Review of City Council Meetings

January 6, 2025

No records are available.

January 13, 2025

No records are available.

February 3, 2025

No vehicles are located on FLOCK.

February 10, 2025

At approximately 1825 hours, Mr. Morfin's Dodge Caliber is located at the intersection of W 1st Ave and King Ln traveling eastbound (Device Name: #03 W 1st Ave @ King Ln – EB) and viewed at the intersection of W 1st Ave and S Elm St at approximately 1826 hours (Device Name: #12 W 1st Ave @ S Elm St -NB). This travel route would not occur if the departure location originated from 327 South Division St and appears consistent with a departure from [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) This route supports Mr. Morfin traveling from [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) to City Hall for the council meeting.

At approximately 2023 hours, the Dodge Caliber was detected at the 1st Ave and S Elm St intersection, traveling westbound (Device Name: #26 1st Ave @ S Elm St WB). This pattern suggests that Mr. Morfin likely traveled from the city council meeting to the [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) residence. [REDACTED] RCW 42.56.250(1)(d)

Additionally, the Caliber was next recorded at the intersection of S Elm St and Linden St at approximately 1133 hours on February 11, 2025 (Device Name: #02 S Elm St @ Linden St NB). If this route had originated from 327 S Division St, the vehicle would have likely appeared at another FLOCK-monitored intersection beforehand. More specifically, if Mr. Morfin had departed from 327 S Division St, there would have been a high likelihood of the Caliber being detected near the intersection of South Division St and W 6th Ave (Device Name: #01 S Division St @ W 6th Ave – NB).

Intersection South Division St and W 6th Ave

Mr. Morfin's Caliber is spotted once at the intersection of South Division St and W 6th Ave (Device Name: #01 S Division St @ W 6th Ave -NB) out of the 60 FLOCK captures. The Caliber is found to have crossed the intersection on February 24, 2025, at approximately 1842 hours.

Given Mr. Morfin's travel history, particularly the consistency with which his vehicle is found at the intersections along S Elm St, it seems very unlikely that any of Mr. Morfin's travels begin at 327 South Division St. For this to happen, Mr. Morfin would have to avoid all monitored intersections and take a significant detour from South Division St. to circumvent the intersection and arrive west of South Division St.

Summary of Investigation

The investigation into City of Toppenish Council Member Ezequil Morfin was initiated based on allegations that he falsely listed 327 South Division St as his residence while actually residing at [RCW 42.56.250(1)(d)] in Yakima County. Public records, surveillance, and FLOCK camera data were reviewed to verify his primary residence. The key legal issue revolves around RCW 35A.12.030, which requires council members to reside within city limits for at least one year before their election. The evidence indicates strong inconsistencies between Mr. Morfin's claimed residency and his living situation.

A review of utility records and property ownership raised questions about Mr. Morfin's claim of residency at 327 South Division St. The property is owned by Dino and Veronica Ruiz, with utility accounts listed in their names. Meanwhile, Mr. Morfin's vehicles and driver's license were updated to reflect 327 South Division St in May 2024, but the timing coincides with his city council application, raising concerns that this change was made for eligibility rather than reflecting an actual move.

FLOCK camera data analysis strongly supports the conclusion that Mr. Morfin does not primarily reside at 327 South Division St. His most frequently used vehicle, a 2007 Dodge Caliber, was captured 60 times within city limits, yet only once at the intersection near South Division St. In contrast, the vehicle was routinely seen near [RCW 42.56.250(1)(d)]

RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) suggesting that his travel routes originate from that location. Additionally, route analyses conducted on February 19, 2025, and February 25, 2025, further demonstrate that his travel patterns align with departing from South Olden Way rather than South Division St.

Physical surveillance of both locations also contradicts Mr. Morfin's claim. Visits to RCW 42.56.250(1) on multiple occasions (January 29, February 5, February 19, and February 25) consistently found his vehicles parked at that residence, including in the early morning hours. In contrast, checks at 327 South Division St revealed no evidence of his presence, and the vehicles observed there belonged to other registered owners. The lack of personal belongings, vehicle activity, and overall residential indicators at 327 South Division St suggests that Mr. Morfin does not live there.

Taken together, the evidence overwhelmingly supports the conclusion that Mr. Morfin does not reside at 327 South Division St. His utility records, vehicle registration patterns, FLOCK data, surveillance, and historical address records all indicate that his primary residence is RCW 42.56.250(1)(d) which is outside the city limits of Toppenish. Given this, it is likely that his declaration of residency in Toppenish was made to meet city council eligibility requirements rather than reflecting an actual place of residence.

Redaction Log

Redaction Reasons by Exemption

Reason	Description	Pages (Count)
RCW 42.56.250(1)(d)	(d) The following information held by any public agency in personnel records, public employment related records, volunteer rosters, or included in any mailing list of employees or volunteers of any public agency: Residential addresses, residential telephone numbers, personal wireless telephone numbers, personal email addresses, social security numbers, driver's license numbers, identicard numbers, payroll deductions including the amount and identification of the deduction, and emergency contact information of employees or volunteers of a public agency, and the names, dates of birth, residential addresses, residential telephone numbers, personal wireless telephone numbers, personal email addresses, social security numbers, and emergency contact information of dependents of employees or volunteers of a public agency. For purposes of this subsection (1)(d), "employees" includes independent provider home care workers as defined in RCW 74.39A.240;	1(1) 3(4) 5(3) 7(6) 8(4) 9(2) 10(1) 11(1) 13(5) 16(5) 17(2) 18(4)