

March 31, 2006

SRIP Members,

The 2006 Supplemental Transport Budget bill was signed by the Governor today. The budget includes an "add" of \$200,000 for "... county and city studies of flood hazards in association with interstate highways. The first priority shall be given to threats along the I-5 corridor."

Senators Haugen and Spanel are directly responsible for this funding in response to your request of them earlier this year. While it is appropriate to say they are genuinely supportive of the communities' efforts to deal meaningfully with flooding in a comprehensive manner, it is also necessary to say that Senators will remain skeptical until they can see something meaningful delivered and broadly accepted.

In making the supplemental funding request, we suggested that the legislature could expect to see a realistic plan and strategy by the end of the year as the result of the evaluation of numerous measures now on the table.

Our goal should be that prior to the 2007 Legislative session, you are able to present to Senators Haugen and Spanel a comprehensive strategy and plan - including the specific evaluation of benefits to the I-5 corridor. This last point is especially important since the State funding is from a Transportation budget with that specific proviso. A plan/strategy must be embraced by all the Impact Partners and have the acquiescence of regional WSDOT planning. It must include a timeline and a projection of both future funding needs and of likely funding sources. It need not be detailed - in fact it's better to be brief - but it does need to be comprehensive.

Our ability to successfully seek future state funds depends on this "product" being delivered as promised by the end of 2006. If that is accomplished, it is possible that we can have access to additional modest funding through the end of the biennium beginning in January. The potential for continued state participation in 2007-09 biennium and beyond can be determined as part of the finalization of the plan/strategy.

I can summarize with two points:

- 1) Comprehensive strategy communicated to Senators Haugen and Spanel by end of 2006 and supported broadly by the partners.
- 2) Make the connection to flood protection of the I-5 corridor both prominent and apparent.

We are on the right track, so let's get those who can help us what they need to continue doing so.

Sincerely,



Bud Norris
Mayor of Mount Vernon