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City of Spokane
2009 State Legislative Agenda
2009-2010 Biennial Session
Adopted by the Spokane City Council _____, 2008

Economic Development

WTE Industry Development. In line with the Governor's Next Washington initiative, the City seeks funding from the Governor's Strategic Reserve Fund for a public investment to deliver infrastructure to re-use electricity and steam generated by the City's Waste-to-Energy facility as an incentive for industry to cite near the WTE facility in west Spokane. In 2011, electricity now generated at the WTE facility and sold to the market will be available for local economic development. Steam that is generated by the WTE could also be available with infrastructure improvements. This will be a catalyst initiative for growth, particularly in clean technology and green industries. Partners include Spokane International Airport and Greater Spokane Incorporated.

Clean Technology/Green "targeted incentives" to spur green building growth, clean technology business and industry as identified by the Governor's Climate Action Team (HB 3120).

Main Street Neighborhood Business Centers (CTED). Amend RCW 82.73.030 to allow tax credits (Utility and B&O) for Main Street business programs in cities with a population greater than 190,000.

North Spokane Corridor Redevelopment Study. The City's Economic Development Division requests \$500,000 to study and plan land use designations, zoning, mitigation, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, business retention strategies and economic development opportunities in anticipation of the construction of the North Spokane Corridor.

Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB). Led by AWC and WEDA, seek permanent funding for CERB and support technical corrections that simplify the program, increase flexibility and expedite application review and approval.

Community Empowerment Zone (CEZ). Led by Tacoma, amend CEZ corporate headquarters legislation to define an industry cluster within a CEZ, exempt state B&O for certain number of years, qualifying business must pay wages/benefits above average for cluster and make a financial contribution to a two-year community or technical college training program (or a local four-year college or university academic program). The contribution must equal some percent of the B&O tax that was otherwise due.

Local Infrastructure Finance Tool (LIFT). Led by AWC, WEDA and others, this effort seeks to fund renewal of this authority, and expands its use by repealing the one project per county restriction.

Transportation, Public Works & Infrastructure

The following projects were prioritized for support in a regional collaborative process.

Capital Road Projects:

North Spokane Corridor. The Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) submits the North Spokane Corridor (NSC) project for consideration and prioritization. The proposed corridor is a High Priority Corridor of the National Highway System and a major freight corridor between Canada and Mexico. This is the region's highest transportation priority.

US 195/Spokane-Cheney Road Interchange. Support WSDOT's \$12.5 million request to fund a partial interchange at US 195 and Spokane-Cheney Road. US 195 is a designated highway in the National Highway System and a Highway of State Significance on which about \$40 million of freight is transported each day. Since 2000, residential development along this corridor has significantly grown and safety has become a very real concern.

Bridging the Valley's Barker Road Overpass. This \$25 million project would build an overpass over the Burling Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) mainline near SR 290 (Trent Avenue), significantly improving safety.

Non-Motorized Transit:

Fish Lake Trail. Support \$1 million City request to partially fund the completion of Fish Lake Trail. The City received \$1 million from the 2007 legislature, for which it is very appreciative. The City has requested \$2 million in federal funding, and with local partners expects to raise the final \$2 million. The trail is an important link in the region's expanding trail system, connects the Centennial Trail and the Columbia Plateau Trail, and provides a major recreation facility and an alternative transportation link to Cheney and EWU.

STA Vanpool Expansion. Support \$650,000 request to expand STA's vanpool fleet, essential to the region's commute trip reduction goals.

Studies:

University District Division Street Gateways/Streetscapes. The City and the Downtown Spokane Partnership will partner to seek \$500,000 to address urban blight at the City's main entrance from I-90 at Division Street. The intent is to create a much more attractive and inviting entry to the City of Spokane and the University District.

Spokane County Northwest Connector. This would provide an arterial connection between north Spokane County and the West Plains area. Preliminary modeling suggests shows that the corridor has the potential to relief current and future traffic congestion in north Spokane, SR 291, SR 2, I-90, the Medical Lake interchange, and several north/south arterials in the City of Spokane.

Other Transportation Matters:

Ban studded tires. Support legislative effort to ban studded tires from roads, streets and highways.

Street Utility. The City supports education of key audiences including potential supporters and opponents over the next several months and proposing amended legislation that would allow cities to charge a fee based on *trip generation* that would better define the purpose of a street utility as a benefit to public health and safety, focused on benefitting the street utility service area.

Public Works Infrastructure Funding. Increase existing grant and loan programs in order to stay current with construction inflation. These programs include the Public Works Trust Fund, Transportation Improvement Board, and Highways and Local Programs. Oppose efforts to divert funds elsewhere from the Public Works Trust Fund.

Communities Facilities Districts (CFDs). Enabling legislation may be introduced by the business community to fund infrastructure of cities and counties. Funding is proposed as CFD Special Tax Bonds secured by special taxes (explicitly **not** ad valorem property taxes) paid by property owners within the boundaries of the CFDs.

Transportation Studies/Impact Fees. Support change in state law to allow government to use a portion of impact fees to develop or maintain traffic studies.

Environment, Land Use & Energy

Renewable Energy Credits for City's Existing Resource Recovery Assets. Support amendments to Initiative 937 that would define existing municipal solid waste energy generated at Spokane's regional waste-to-energy (WTE) facility, methane produced at the City's landfills and solid waste treatment plant, and the hydropower generated at the City's small Upriver Dam as renewable, as part of the City's collection of resource recovery assets in support of clean economic development.

Water Adjudication. The Department of Ecology may seek legislative funding for a Water Adjudication process in Washington State because Idaho's adjudication is moving forward. The City will monitor this matter.

Municipal Water Rights. The City supports the State's appeal of a King County Superior Court decision on inchoate water rights, and preservation of its water rights for future needs.

Climate Change. Monitor recommendations from the Governor's Climate Action Team and the CTED study authorized by SSB 6580 to provide legislative recommendations to the Governor and Legislature by Dec. 1 to describe local government actions to address climate change, describe amendments to GMA and other statutes to help address climate change through land use and transportation planning, recommend funding to help government, and consider impacts to affordable housing, employment, transportation costs, and economic development that result from addressing climate change impacts.

Annexation Reform. Advocate for changes to annexation statutes that better facilitate annexations, as required by the Growth Management Act, and support proposals to encourage cities and counties and other special districts to better coordinate boundary and governance transition issues.

Public Safety & Criminal Justice

Municipal Court Clarification to RCW 3.50: Support joint proposal with Spokane County to clarify components of the 2008 amendments to RCW 3.50 in order to allow optimum flexibility to contract for judicial and court services as deemed necessary by the contracting city. The 2008 amendments granted exclusive original jurisdiction to *both* the hosting jurisdiction and the contracting RCW 3.50 court, which creates a jurisdictional challenge as an unintended consequence; the joint proposal contains corrective language. The joint proposal also includes minor changes to the chapter that more clearly define the available options and clarify the application of provisions that would otherwise frustrate the contracting entities' flexibility, which was the stated purpose for the 2008 amendments.

Attorney-Client Privilege. Oppose legislation that limits a public agency's attorney-client privilege to only communications related to an actual lawsuit, and only while the lawsuit is pending in court. This drastically narrows the privilege and restricts records that can be claimed as an attorney work product.

CBRNE/Funded Regional Hazardous Materials Teams. Support the Washington Fire Chiefs' highest priority for a regional response for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE), funded by the State and supported by existing local team all with identical SOPs, equipment and training throughout the state. Spokane would benefit from this funding.

EMS Levy Rate Increase. Support an increase from of the EMS levy rate from 50¢ per \$1,000 AV to 75¢ to cover rising emergency medical services expenses largely due to inflation and static revenue.

Gun/Youth Violence. Seattle wants to build coalition to support legislation that would prohibit concealed weapons in public buildings/spaces and those used by the mentally unstable. (Chief

Kirkpatrick said that, in response to Council members inquiries, this would be very hard to do as state pre-empts local jurisdictions. (McLaughlin, Kirkpatrick)

Health Care, Housing & Human Services

Public Health Funding. Support the Joint Select Committee on Public Health Financing's recommendation to the legislature to provide \$100 million a biennium in dedicated public health funding aimed at specific public health gaps in basic local services.

Health Care Authority. Support the Health Care Authority's continued funding of the Community Health Care Collaborative Grant Program with sufficient funding for both grants and program administration, which in turns supports Project Access.

Health Care Reform. Monitor the five health care reform proposals from a citizens' work group that are due to Governor and Legislature by December 15, 2008.

Spokane County/RSN. Support Spokane County's Regional Support Network legislative requests on behalf of the mentally ill. Suspend closing 30 beds in 2009 at Eastern State Hospital; suspend until 2010 state hospital penalties for use of state hospital beds to allow Spokane RSN to open a 16-bed Evaluation and Treatment Facility, or allocate \$3.1 million non-Medicaid funds in 2009 to Spokane for penalties; reallocate hospital beds at Eastern State Hospital from 87 to 117 based on historical use and need; provide for an independent Utilization Management function over state hospitals for admission and discharge; transfer penalties from the RSN to the state departments responsible for developmentally disabled and dementia client not gravely disabled due to mental illness; address the acute short stay admissions to EHS; fund local study of movement of individuals from bordering counties and states to Spokane County, and fund housing for Spokane's mentally ill (50 units and 25 congregate care facility beds).

Municipal Finance & Flexibility

Fire/Library Annexation Authority. Amend existing legislation to allow municipalities with population over 100,000 to annex to an adjacent Fire or Library District.

Brokered Natural Gas may need a legislative remedy to Div. II, Court of Appeals decision that ruled Tacoma's local brokered natural gas use tax used by GP Gypsum does not apply because Gypsum took control of the gas when it first entered the state in unincorporated Whatcom County near Sumas. State AG's office has filed a review by state Supreme Court, but if sustained, local BNG use tax for all cities is eliminated (affects 40 cities who in 2006 received \$11million in local BNG use tax). In addition to loss of current revenues, there is potential for refunds.

State and Federal Telecommunications Policies. The City strongly opposes franchise proposals that cause loss of local control, loss of local revenue, and elimination of build-out requirements that assures equal access for all citizens and eliminates and local venue for redress.

Education & Workforce Development

Support full funding for early learning education, K-12 and higher education and workforce development for specific priority operating and capital projects requested by **Washington State University, Eastern Washington University and Community Colleges of Spokane, Sirti, and the Applied Sciences Laboratory.**

In the area of workforce development, the City supports the Spokane Area Workforce Development's 2009 state legislative agenda whose goals it is to a) achieve more with existing training resources, grow the middle class, and save our high school students. The City also

supports the agenda of the School's Out Washington Afterschool Care Program and statewide and local efforts to address youth dropout concerns

State Capital Budget/Community Needs (In no particular order)

2010 U.S. Figure Skating Championships, Star USA – Support \$600,000 request by StarUSA to help fund and host the 2010 U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Spokane.

Armed Forces & Aerospace Museum -- Support \$3 million request for state funding for the Armed Forces & Aerospace Museum that benefits education, tourism and airport development.

Friends of the Falls – Support \$100,000 request to fund a feasibility study supporting the creation of a Spokane “river corridor parks district” under the State’s Metropolitan Parks District (MPD) statute. If adopted, the MPD would be funded by local taxes.

Inland Northwest Health Systems – Support INHS’ Eastern State Hospital information systems at \$1,575,000 capital request and annual operations and maintenance of \$240,000.

Iron Bridge – The City strongly encourages funding for Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) sufficient to include the Iron Bridge across the Spokane River. This important project ranked very highly as No. 11 of 35 projects on the WWRP project list, and will begin improving the built environment in the University District, encouraging private investment.

City of Spokane Elected Officials

Mary B. Verner, Mayor
Joe Shogan, City Council President
Michael Allen, City Council
Bob Apple, City Council
Steve Corker, City Council
Al French, City Council
Nancy McLaughlin, City Council
Richard Rush, City Council

For information on the City of Spokane legislative priorities, contact:

Tom Parker, Parker Northwest, (206) 200-7898, tparker011@comast.net.