

CITY OF SPOKANE 2002 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Primary Appropriation Priorities

➤ **Monroe Street Bridge Rehabilitation Funding**

The City requests funding for the rehabilitation of the Monroe Street Bridge, an 896-foot long concrete arch spanning the Spokane River in the heart of downtown Spokane. This bridge is a major arterial from North to South for both private and public transportation. At the time of its completion – 1911 – the Monroe Street Bridge was the largest concrete bridge in the United States and the third largest in the world. It is listed in the National Register of Historical places. The cost of the rehabilitation project is approximately \$18.7 million. The City requests an appropriation of approximately \$2.5 million to ensure timely completion of the project with the least amount of personal and economic disruption to the citizens of Spokane and others who use the bridge.

Suggested account: Department of Transportation, Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program.

➤ **Law Enforcement Support and Funding**

The City will seek additional federal funding for law enforcement support as they are the first responders to any crisis, whatever the reason: crime, natural disaster or terrorist action. Funding opportunities, that are not now clear, will arise in the annual appropriations process. For example, the President has proposed to dramatically increase homeland security funding for local fire, police and emergency services. However, at the same time he is proposing reductions in long standing programs such as the Local Law Enforcement Block Grant (LLEBG). The LLEBG program has been very important to City law enforcement; therefore, the City supports full funding for LLEGB, including make-up funds for program funding reductions in Fiscal Year 2002. At the same time, the City will pursue additional funding opportunities to address the increased law enforcement responsibilities and pressures brought on by the September 11 attacks. Funding for personnel, equipment, training and other needs would be welcome to ease the strain on law enforcement resources caused by recent events.

Secondary Legislative Priorities

Transportation

The City requests funds, either via the annual appropriations process or TEA-21, or both, to expedite the construction of the I-395 North Spokane Corridor project. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21) will expire in 2003. This year it will be necessary to begin analyzing the City's needs in anticipation of the reauthorization of TEA 21. As the City determines its priorities, City leaders recognize the necessity of working with partners in the region in order to

speak with one voice. The City will work with its Congressional Delegation and the Washington State Department of Transportation to determine how best to expedite the funding for the City's many transportation needs.

Combating Methamphetamine

Together with the State and the Spokane County Meth Action Team, the City will pursue additional funding for methamphetamine law enforcement response and cleanup. Spokane has seen a dramatic increase in the number of property crimes and violence due to the prevalence of methamphetamine production and use in the City. Law enforcement, fire and medical operations are stretched thin covering their usual demands, but are now overburdened with additional homeland security concerns. The increasing presence of meth labs, together with the crimes and hazards associated with a large population of meth users, simply exacerbates an already critical situation. The City will work with other Washington State meth responders to pursue increased meth funding for state interests.

Regional Readiness Complex

Together with the Washington Department of the Military, the Spokane Chamber of Commerce, the Spokane County Sheriff's office and other local entities, the City supports the Washington Army National Guard's efforts to obtain funding for a Regional Readiness Complex. This complex would include a 24-hour joint training facility for the Guard, public safety, law enforcement and fire readiness personnel, plus an emergency operations center and a Washington Army National Guard Armory. The Complex would also include a communications center, which will include 9-1-1 response, City and County law enforcement and fire dispatch operations for all of Spokane County. This combined readiness concept was innovative before September 11, but since that date it has become crucial to emergency responsiveness and homeland security. The Spokane Fire Department has already obtained funding for and started construction on a training field house on the same site. In total, the City has committed over \$6 million for development of the joint facility. The Washington State legislature has approved \$5.3 million in matching funds. Federal funds for the Washington Army National Guard are the only monies outstanding for this project.

Legislation, Programs and Initiatives of Interest to the City

The Water Resources Development Act

WRDA will be reauthorized this year. While the bill focuses on Army Corps of Engineers projects such as dredging, beach reclamation, and flood protection, it also contains other environmental restoration projects that the City supports.

Sewer/Drinking Water bill

Congress is aware of the over \$20 billion of unmet sewer and drinking water needs nationwide and may address this in legislation this year. Prior to September 11th, momentum had been building for legislation to develop a financing assistance package for these needs to go beyond the severely limited Clean Water and Drinking Water Revolving funds, which have not been useful to

the City. Efforts will be underway to continue to regain focus on this priority, and the City strongly supports this legislation.

New Markets Initiative:

On December 20th, the Department of the Treasury released applications for receipt of New Market Tax Credits. Sometime during spring/summer 2002, the Department will be awarding New Market Tax Credits to certified Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI's) and Community Development Entities (CDE's). The City remains strongly supportive of the application of the Spokane Neighborhood Economic Development Alliance (SNEDA), which has already applied for such certification. The New Markets Initiative is intended to stimulate the investment of \$15 billion in new private capital in targeted communities that, in turn, will make investments in eligible businesses in distressed urban communities.

Rathdrum Prairie-Spokane Valley Aquifer

The City strongly supports the involvement of the City of Spokane, Spokane County and Washington State in activities and issues pertaining to the Rathdrum Prairie-Spokane Valley Aquifer and the Spokane River. This includes but is not limited to the environmental cleanup of the Coeur d'Alene Basin, water withdrawals from the Idaho side of the shared watershed and any other activity which may impact the quality and quantity of aquifer or river water; the primary drinking source for 400,000 people in Washington and Idaho. The City intends to work with its Congressional delegation to make sure that Washington interests have a voice in decisions impacting the aquifer and the river.

UPARR Parks Grants

The City of Spokane may want to pursue the acquisition of UPARR grants for the refurbishment and renovation of parks and facilities in the mature and/or lower economic areas of the City. Such grants provide significant opportunities for areas of the City that have not been able to further develop and/or renovate existing sites.

The City will pursue other grant opportunities as they become available for:

- Revitalizing brownfields;
- Downtown development and business growth;
- Emergency preparedness;
- Domestic violence prevention;
- Law enforcement; and
- Fire and emergency medical services.