

August 10, 2004

Dear Shoreline Residents:

On behalf of the many residents who have worked hard on the Aurora Corridor Project over the years and who continue to tell me that improving Aurora is one of the most important responsibilities the City has, I need to correct the misinformation, distortions and omissions of key pieces of information in an Aug. 6 advertisement in the *Enterprise*.

The ad referenced the City's 2002 Citizen Survey pointing out concerns residents expressed about the Aurora Project. But the truth is that a higher percentage of people identified more benefits from the project, including making Aurora more attractive, improving traffic flow, improving pedestrian safety and improving safety in general.

These are the benefits that have driven this project from the beginning. Improving Aurora was actually a major reason for incorporation. Since Aurora impacts nearly everyone in Shoreline, the City went through an extensive public participation process to get the community's needs, views and concerns on the table so the design could serve the most people and meet the most needs. After extensive public review that incorporated many changes suggested by the community – both residents and businesses – and a detailed environmental review process, the City Council adopted the design concept in December 2002.

Designing a project that meets so many needs – pedestrian and traffic safety, transit operations, traffic flow and economic development potential – is the major reason Shoreline has been so successful in receiving grants to fund the project. Shoreline has leveraged a \$2.4 million City contribution into approximately \$21 million in grants for the first phase of Aurora. We anticipate similar success in obtaining grants for the next two miles. And, our cost projections compare favorably to similar successful projects in SeaTac, Federal Way and Des Moines.

The sidewalk/amenity zone referred to in the ad is actually a seven-foot sidewalk and four-foot landscape buffer or amenity zone. The amenity zone is essential for undergrounding utilities; enhancing pedestrian safety; and providing space for street amenities such as fire hydrants, lighting and bus stops.

One of the biggest reasons Aurora is so unsafe is the two-way left turn lane that allows vehicles coming from many directions to compete for the same piece of

pavement. The medians and left turn pockets that will replace the two-way left turn lane will bring some order and predictability to what is now chaos, which will make Aurora safer for everyone. We have included as many breaks in the medians for u-turns and left turns into businesses as the Washington State Department of Transportation would allow. And, the WSDOT has repeatedly said medians are required for this project.

The ad's comments about sidewalks do not take into account that nearly all of the City's major capital improvement projects include adding sidewalks—Aurora, North City and Third Ave. Drainage Improvement projects—beyond what the City spends on a yearly basis for its sidewalk program in other parts of the City. The City's adopted 2005-2010 CIP adds approximately 7 miles of sidewalks.

With all the authorizations in place for this project, we're rapidly proceeding with property acquisition and expect to be in construction this time next year. Look in the next issue of the Aurora newsletter, due out early next month, for a more detailed project update.

I'm confident that once people see the reality of the benefits of this first phase – safety, transit, traffic flow, beautification and enhanced economic development – we'll be able to move quickly to finish the rest of Aurora. I look forward to the day when the first phase is complete and I'm hearing people say hurry up with the next two miles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Hansen", written in a cursive style.

Ronald B. Hansen  
Mayor