



CITY OF BLAINE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Blaine City Council passes resolution for Transportation Benefit District funding

Sales tax would be dedicated to street and trail projects and programs

BLAINE, WASH. – On February 13, the Blaine City Council unanimously passed a resolution placing a two-tenths of one percent (0.2%) sales tax increase on the ballot for voter consideration during the April Special Election. The sales tax would generate approximately \$200,000 a year for street and trail projects and programs through a Transportation Benefit District.

“This is part of a larger economic development initiative to revitalize our community,” said Ravyn Whitewolf, Public Works Director. “Providing good transportation links is the first step to helping businesses bring people to shop and visit Blaine.”

This would provide a dedicated revenue source for streets and trails for the next 10 years. Revenue also can be used as matching funds for grant applications to help local tax dollars go further.

If approved by voters, the city sales tax would be 8.7%, which is the same as neighboring communities of Lynden, Ferndale and Bellingham. These communities have Transportation Benefit Districts, and fund them through a sales tax, as well.

Relying on a sales tax also means that visitors to Blaine, such as Canadians who use mailbox services, will contribute to street and trail improvements. Whitewolf said that city staff took this into consideration when looking at funding options.

Lois and Bob Franco, residents of Blaine living in the Semiahmoo neighborhood, thank the City Council for their decision to place the street and trail funding measure on the ballot. The Francos have long been advocates for trail connections and other economic development efforts in Blaine and support the Council's continuing efforts in these important areas.

“We are pleased that the City Council is seeking Blaine voter’s approval regarding funding decisions that will improve our community for all of us, as well as for those who visit or pass through. The projects that would benefit from the additional revenue are important– all would have positive impact on Blaine’s neighborhoods.”

A list of projects that could be funded by the TBD are on the city web site at www.cityofblaine.com. More information about the Transportation Benefit District also can be found at www.ci.blaine.wa.us/903/Transportation-Benefit-District-TBD.

Community members with questions about the TBD are encouraged to email TBD@cityofblaine.com. All communication is encouraged and becomes a matter of public record.

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The City of Blaine (pop. 4,900) is 110 miles north of Seattle and 35 miles south of Vancouver, British Columbia. The City is located between the beautiful Cascade Range and Puget Sound, and steeped in the rich history of a logging and fishing town. The natural beauty of Blaine attracts visitors from Canada and neighboring communities for shopping, professional services, and recreational opportunities. Visitors are central to a thriving economy in Blaine, which helps fund city services for local residents.