

Kathy Wetherbee

From: Kathy Wetherbee
Sent: Thursday, September 08, 2011 9:37 AM
To: 'roberth2@comcast.net'
Subject: FW: Letter to the editor

Thank you for your message. Your message will be included in the Correspondence for the Record for an upcoming City Council meeting.

Kathy Wetherbee
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City of Burien

From: roberth2@comcast.net [mailto:roberth2@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 07, 2011 10:06 PM
To: Public Council Inbox
Subject: Letter to the editor

Dear Mayor and Members of the Council,

For your information; I sent the following letter concerning annexation to the editor of the Highline Times and the B-Town Blog.

"How interesting to read the rosy interpretation of the BERK report in the Burien City News (Sept. 2011) and how it differs from the full report. It is surprising the city propaganda machine is trying to spin the newest BERK report to suggest that Burien really can afford to annex White Center. In their 2007 report, BERK made it clear that Burien could not afford to annex White Center. In the most current report BERK suggests that with a possible infusion of millions of dollars through sales tax credits (that lasts only ten years) Burien could afford to manage White Center for 10 years. However Burien will not receive funding to fix the Proposed Annexation Area's crumbling infrastructure which will cost anywhere from \$46 million to \$77million to repair. The BERK report also states that at the end of the 10th year, Burien will have a -24% deficit in its budget and there is no explanation of how White Center's infrastructure deficit will ever be paid for. In addition, without the excess sales tax monies, Burien will be in the same financial position that was pointed out in the 2007 BERK report which showed the city could not afford to annex White Center.

It really makes one wonder why the City Manager and the City Council refuse to accept the negative side of the report. Perhaps it is because the City Manager has tried to convince the City Council for two years, that everything is just great with the Burien budget. This new BERK report suggests this position is not true and has not been true for the last couple of years. Could it be the City Manager sees the promised sales tax credit as a way to get some monies to cover the shortfall in the city's budget, without having to face the hard issues? (Like no more salary increases for staff, reducing staff, cutting monies from the less important and less urgent projects in the city or raising taxes) Before the city takes on any more debt or further annexations, now seems to be the sensible time to table annexation and instead discuss bringing the city budget in line with the revenues it is taking in. No way will annexation of the PAA fix Burien's budget problems. Should they proceed with the annexation, the actual city deficit dollars will be significantly larger at the end of 10 years."

Sincerely,

Robert Howell

CFTR: 09/26/11

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