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CITY OF BURIED

October 3, 2011

City Council members, Staff, members of the Public:

I would like my comments about annexation read into the public record. As you may know, I am a candidate for Jerry Robison's seat. About six months ago when this position was vacated by Kathy Keane, I applied. The position was given to Jerry, I believe, because of his position on annexation. Qualified and recommended individuals were not even interviewed. It is little wonder now that Jerry is one of the most outspoken proponents of annexation. The council in their quest for a majority vote were not objective in their search nor are they now objective in looking at the facts of annexation. Additionally they are pushing the subject to a vote because they know their time may be shortened on this issue by the upcoming election.

If you truly are a representative body and have any power at all, you should surely demand performance on neglected issues such as storm water management from the county before annexing. You will have no leverage to do so once you pull in White Center and make it your own. Right now you have some leverage that you will lose by rushing to a decision.

Berk mistakenly added increases to revenue from a 3% expected property tax increase. This is a wrong assumption. Property tax collections will continue to decline until the recession is over. With no foreseeable end in sight, it is a mistake to rush through on annexation. For the following reasons it is also not prudent, wise or the best use of representative power to rush into this decision:

- 1) The state may eliminate the tax credit and it is not presently guaranteed. (The city may want to sue to extract it should it be eliminated, but should actually extract a guarantee so the city won't have to spend further resources suing the state where there is no guarantee of success)
- 2) Infrastructure costs to White Center are far greater than what the city can afford now or in the future
- 3) Parks, recreation, human service needs and maintenance of fire district needs have all been significantly understated in Berk and by the council so costs may be much higher than anticipated

Many individuals living in Burien have admonished the council to reconsider this decision. While residents of the representative area are very worried, residents of White Center are putting pressure on the council. The council does not represent this latter group and should listen to the residents they do represent and stop annexation plans until the economy picks up, recovers, or at least, until the county agrees and performs some of the work on many items that have been severely neglected over the years. Burien and its residents will be irreparably harmed if these higher costs than anticipated use up Burien's scant financial resources.

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CFTR 10/10/11

