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29 August 2011

Governor Christine Gregoire
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Gregoire:

SUBJECT: Concur with Carnegie Group Letter of 8 August 2011

I concur with the referenced Carnegie Group letter to you with the following comment:

It is predictable that a proposal to make 65/10/0 the standard for future development will be subject to push-back by corporations contending that it would be un-friendly to business. But experience elsewhere dispels this argument. Bringing Puget Sound back to life, preserving open space, and rebuilding our cities would create a magnet to attract people with money and creative energy. If we rebuilt cities within parks rather than parks within cities, the boldness of such an undertaking to preserve quality of life would become a beacon for the whole earth.

By contrast, our present paradigm has led to a toxic Puget Sound, long lists of threatened species, sprawl development extending for hundreds of miles, gridlock highways, ugly cities with acres of habitat for cars, polluted and neglected streams, and miles of brutally ugly strip commercial areas. As oil becomes scarce our automobile-based development patterns will likely lead to a massive economic failure. As Puget Sound dies and sprawl development spreads to cover every acre, companies and people with alternatives will relocate elsewhere. If low taxes and cheap land were the important factors, Microsoft would have located in Somalia.

No state or nation has made the kind of commitment to sustainability recommended by the Carnegie Group. But we have many examples of bold changes in paradigm that have led to economic revitalization. Leavenworth adopted a Bavarian development theme; Carmel, California has rigid architectural standards and imposes an extraordinarily aggressive tree preservation standard; Munich closed its old city to auto traffic; the Lake District in England has saved an enormous percentage of the region as open space, farms, and parks; British Columbia, through the Agricultural Land Commission Act has largely

closed the Fraser River Valley to development and this action has led to a major revitalization of the City of Vancouver; Singapore has committed to transform itself into a “city within a garden” with nearly 8,200 acres of parks within its boundaries. These initiatives took enormous courage and firmness in the face of opposition. But they have paid off in enormous economic dividends.

Puget Sound could become the model for environmental preservation in the world. A 65/10/0 development standard would be good for everybody, perhaps especially for the development industry. However the Carnegie Group’s call for a forum to set a build-out population for the Puget Sound Basin is a simple recognition that growth has a limit. It is better for us to recognize this reality and agree on such a limit than to force Mother Nature dictate it to us.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Holz, PE