

NEWS

Municipal Research

Resources for Local Government • September 1999

Initiative 695

Local government impacts

This article is to inform our readers of the potential revenue impacts of Initiative 695 on local governments. It is provided for informational purposes in response to questions received from local officials. It is not intended to express support or opposition to I-695. MRSC is attempting to summarize objective information on I-695, suggest ways you can present local information to your communities, and refer you to other resources that address I-695. We strongly stress the importance of following the election activity regulations established by the Public Disclosure Commission. (See "Ask MRSC" column on page 8.)

A motor vehicle excise tax (MVET) of 2.2 percent is currently applied to the value of motor vehicles. A license fee of \$23.75 is also required for registration renewal. Initiative 695 would replace the motor vehicle excise tax with a \$30 license tab fee, **and** require voter approval of all future tax and fee increases. If approved by the voters, the initiative would take effect January 1, 2000.

If passed, this initiative would directly affect city and county programs. The MVET also provides revenues for public transit, carpool lane construction, highway projects, and ferry services that benefit local government.

In addition, the MVET is the primary funding source for Municipal Research & Services Center (MRSC). Approximately 84 percent of MRSC funds are derived from the cities' distribution of the motor vehicle excise tax. (Please read related article on page 7.)

Voters will decide the fate of Initiative 695. Absentee ballots will be received on October 14; voters will go to the polls on November 2.

Effects on City Revenue

Passage of this initiative would have significant budget implications for all cities beginning in the year 2000. Cities would receive the last quarter distributions from the 1999 MVET collections in January 2000 and nothing after that. Cities directly receive almost \$100 million annually from the MVET. The state collects the tax, and then shares a portion of it with cities to be used for public safety, criminal justice, and sales tax equalization.

Cities would lose all their public safety distribution beginning January 1, 2000. This is a per capita distribution of approximately \$10.50 per person in the year 2000 and \$14.52 in 2001.

Cities would also lose the portion of criminal justice assistance that comes from the MVET. In the year 2000, this is about 41 percent of the total allocation of criminal justice assistance to cities; the other 59 percent comes from the state general fund and is not affected by the initiative. In 2001, cities will lose approximately 55 percent of the allocation.

Currently, 168 cities and towns whose per capita local sales and use tax collections are less than 70 percent of the statewide average are entitled to distributions from the municipal sales

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WEB SITE

For complete information on these topics, go to www.mrsc.org.

- Join in the discussion - coming soon - chat boards
- Download sample documents - ordinances, job descriptions, policies, forms
- Seeking a consultant? - browse the new service directory
- Looking for a management intern? - advertise online
- Initiative 695 - keep up with the latest developments
- Year 2000 - what's the compliance status of your equipment?
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About this Newsletter

Municipal Research News is published quarterly by the Municipal Research & Services Center of Washington, 1200 5th Avenue, Suite 1300, Seattle, WA 98101-1159. Your ideas and comments are appreciated. If you have news you would like to share or if you would like to write a short feature article, please contact us.

Editor: Connie Elliot **Desktop Designer:** Holly Martin

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and use tax equalization account. Also, cities that do not impose the second 0.5 percent sales tax receive a distribution from this account. These cities would lose approximately 75 percent of sales tax equalization money in 2000 and all of it in 2001.

For transportation purposes, cities over 2,500 population are to receive \$18.25 million (\$5.70 per capita) in March 2000 and \$19.6 million (\$6 per capita) in March 2001. The distributions will *not* be made if I-695 passes.

Effects on County Revenue

Counties would no longer receive the public health, criminal justice, sales tax equalization, or rural/distressed county assistance they have previously received from the MVET distribution. The amount of revenue at risk is approximately \$60 million in 2000 and \$95 million in 2001.

In 2000, counties would normally receive about \$28.1 million from the MVET for law and justice purposes and \$29.6 million in 2001. These monies are used for courts, jails, prosecution services, public defense, sheriff operations, probation services, and the like.

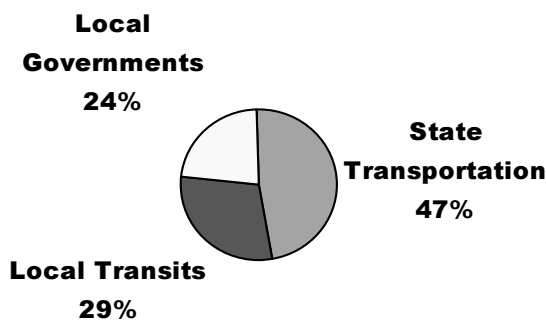
About \$25.5 million in public health money is at risk in calendar year 2000 and \$26.9 million in 2001. These monies are used for a variety of health services: disease prevention, environmental health, individual counseling, and community-based services. Several years ago, cities gave up a portion of their MVET to pay for health

services that were shifted over to the counties. If Initiative 695 passes, there will be pressures to give these responsibilities back to the cities. Since public health MVET distributions are a source of local matching funds for grant funds, the loss of public health dollars is potentially greater than shown.

If the initiative passes, counties would lose a scheduled distribution of \$10

projects that benefit local governments. The Washington State Department of Transportation is estimating a revenue loss of over \$500 million from the MVET in the 1999-2001 biennium, if I-695 passes. This loss would grow to over \$800 million in the next biennium. Additionally, the department will not be able to sell approximately \$600 million in bonds authorized by the legislature as a result of Referendum 49 passed by the voters last November.

Current Distribution of MVET Revenues 1999-2001 Biennium



Potential local impacts include higher transit and ferry fares, reduced services, or both; and delays of road projects aimed at easing congestion, creating and maintaining carpool lanes, and improving freight mobility.

Effects on Future Revenue Increases

I-695 would require that all future tax and fee increases

million dollars in road monies from the state transportation budget in 2000.

Also lost would be \$7.8 million earmarked for "rural/distressed counties." Eleven million dollars would be lost in 2001. These monies are meant for public facilities (sewer, water, and roads) that encourage economic development and job creation.

Counties will lose about half their sales tax equalization monies in 2000 and all of it in 2001.

Effects on Transportation Projects and Services

Approximately 75 percent of MVET revenue is used for transportation purposes including transit services, ferry operations, and transportation

be subject to voter approval. Before your city or county could raise *any* tax, fee, or charge for service, it would have to be approved by the voters. This includes everything from property taxes, utility rates and developer charges, to park fees, business license fees, and pet license fees.

What Should Local Government Do?

Citizens and the media will be interested in the impacts of I-695 in your community. Local officials should follow a well thought-out process to determine where legislative bodies will have to make cuts if Initiative 695 passes. Since absentee ballots go out in mid-October, start looking at the facts now. Provide

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Adoption of Utility Rate and Fee Increases in Light of I-695

With the adoption of city and county budgets and the fate of I-695 looming on the horizon, local officials have asked when utility rate and fee ordinances or resolutions should be approved to be effective before January 1, 2000. The answer, for the most part, is dependent upon local rules and practices. (Different rules may apply to tax increases; this article does not address these issues.)

State law sets relatively few rules for rate adjustments. Except for garbage/solid waste rates, adjustments can be made without specific notice, public hearings, or delayed effective dates. For cities and towns that contract for the collection of solid waste or provide the service directly, RCW 35.21.157 and RCW 35A.21.152 require that public notification of proposed rate increases be mailed to each affected ratepayer or published once a week for two consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the collection area. The notice must be given to

ratepayers at least 45 days prior to the proposed effective date of the rate increase.

Resolutions can be effective upon adoption; ordinances typically go into effect upon publication, or five days following, depending upon the class of city involved or charter requirements. (Rate increases are not subject to the referendum process, as the setting of rates is a grant of power to the governing body. See *State ex rel. Haas v. Pomeroy*, 50 Wn. 2d 23 (1957).) Thus, to determine when an ordinance can go into effect without the vote required by I-695, one should count back from the end of the year, adding any statutory delay in the effective date (e.g., five days from publication) and, for garbage rates, the 45-day notice. Another possible "delaying factor" might be local rules that require multiple readings of ordinances or resolutions, perhaps at successive meetings, before final adoption. Obviously, if a charter or local rule

requires multiple readings, public hearings and notice, or any other delay, that rule must be considered in determining when an ordinance or resolution can go into effect.

Another issue that has recently been discussed is whether rate increases adopted in 1999 can provide for automatic, stepped increases in future years. This is an open question, and caution should be exercised in adopting such an increase. I-695, if adopted, would require a public vote after January 1, 2000, for any rate or monetary increase in an existing tax, rate, or charge. I-695's provisions are to be liberally construed to effectuate its policies and purposes. MRSC encourages city and county officials to discuss such rate increases with their city attorneys and county prosecutors before adoption; questions can, of course, also be posed to MRSC consultants. □

*Paul Sullivan, Legal Consultant
Municipal Research & Services Center*

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accurate information and analysis. September is a critical month for preparing educational materials in response to public and media questions. Your jurisdiction will be a credible information source if you approach this issue openly and thoroughly. Above all else, be certain you understand what you may or may not do to support or oppose a public ballot measure. □

*Rich Yukubousky, Executive Director
Municipal Research & Services Center*

This information is provided for analytical/educational purposes only and is not provided as an expression of support for or opposition to the November ballot proposition.

Where to get more information:

The Association of Washington Cities (AWC), (360) 753-4137, and the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC), (360) 753-1886, have prepared assessments of the possible impacts of I-695 on cities and counties.

MRSC is hosting an I-695 resource center with links to background information prepared by others such as AWC, WSAC, the state budget office, as well as proponents and opponents of the initiative at www.mrsc.org/focus/i695/i-695.htm.

Other Web sites with financial data regarding Initiative 695 include:

- The Office of Financial Management at www.ofm.wa.gov/i-695/695august.htm
- Washington Department of Transportation at www.wsdot.wa.gov/i-695/

Municipal Web Sites

Things to consider when a municipality “goes online”

The Internet has become an efficient and effective medium for distributing information to and collecting information from the public. Citizens now expect their local governments to provide access to current and comprehensive information via a municipal site on the World Wide Web. When a municipality creates a Web site to harness the power of the Internet, several concerns should be addressed.

Make sure you own the rights to your Web site. A municipality may wish to hire a developer to design and code the Web site. This should be governed by a written agreement specifying that the municipality, rather than the developer, owns the copyright to the Web site. Without such a written agreement, the developer may have a legal claim to the copyright.

Choose your domain name carefully. Be sure you have registered your Web site address, or domain name. The new world of domain name registration coexists uneasily with the much older world of trademarks and service marks. On the Internet, only one entity can have a given domain name. A municipality may wish to register several addresses and direct them all to its official Web site to avoid confusion with competing Web sites.

Designate an official responsible for material posted to the Web site. The technology involved in creating and maintaining an attractive and useful Web site changes rapidly. Those responsible for maintaining a municipality’s Web site may have a background in information technology rather than communications or public relations. It is important for municipi-

palities to establish procedures for evaluating and approving material that is posted to a municipal Web site. A Web site is simply another medium of expression; nothing should be posted that would not otherwise be released in writing. Remember, a municipality’s Web site is accessible not only by local users, but by users throughout the world.

Consider how links are provided to other sites. A link from a municipal Web site may imply sponsorship of the linked site. When users leave a site, the site should prominently disclaim any liability for what users might find in the online world at large. It is good practice to obtain permission from sites to be linked. Written linking agreements between two sites may become a common practice. Some sites even post terms and conditions spelling out the kinds of links permitted. In the absence of a written agreement, link to the home page of the desired site. Links to pages deep within a site may bypass advertising and other important information posted to the home page.

Municipalities may be able to provide links to selected sites on the basis of an established policy. For example, a Tennessee city established a policy of only permitting links to sites that promoted tourism, economic welfare, and industry in the city. The city refused to establish a link to the site of a local alternative newspaper. The federal district court held that the municipality’s decision to restrict access to its Web site was reasonable, and it upheld the city’s policy.

Establish rules. Municipalities may wish to establish rules for users of their

Web sites and require users to click on a button signifying that users agree to abide by those rules in exchange for access to the Web site.

Clearly designate pages as public or non-public. The degree to which a municipality may regulate the content posted to its Web site depends on whether the municipality designates the forum to be public or non-public. For example, a municipality could create a “Sound Off to the City Council” public forum page. In a public forum, the municipality may not regulate the content of speech unless the regulation is needed to serve a compelling state interest and is narrowly drawn to achieve that end. Municipalities may impose content-neutral “time, place and manner” regulations that, for example, limit the amount of data posted to a Web site by any person during a certain time period. In a non-public forum, a municipality may regulate the content of speech as long as the regulation is reasonable and not an effort to suppress any speaker’s view.

What about advertising? A municipality should be able to sell advertising on its Web site, much as it would sell advertising on a bus or in a stadium. The municipality may wish to establish standards for the type of advertising it will host.

The Public Disclosure Act applies to Web sites. A municipal Web site is a public record within the meaning of the state public disclosure law. It is unlikely that material linked to a municipal Web site would constitute a public record merely because of that link. As a practical matter, any

material on a municipal Web site may be copied by any person having access to the Internet. A municipality may resist a request for inspection or copying its Web site only if the Web site itself falls within an exemption of the state public disclosure law. The most likely exemption was passed by the Legislature in 1999 and allows a municipality to protect source or object code from disclosure if the code was obtained by the municipality within five years of the request for the disclosure and the disclosure would produce private gain and public loss.

Don't violate the Copyright Act.

Copyrighted materials cannot be copied, including posting to a Web site, without the express written permission of the owner of the copyright. The Washington Supreme Court has held that a request for copies of engineering drawings to be used in preparation for comments and criticism in public hearings fell within the "fair use" exception to the Copyright Act. Public entities should ensure that any copyrighted material posted to a Web site without the permission of the copyright owner falls within this or another exception to the Copyright Act.

Be selective in posting information on convicted criminals. Public agencies in Washington are authorized

to release information to the public regarding sex offenders and kidnapping offenders when the agency determines that disclosure of the information is relevant and necessary to protect the public and counteract the danger created by the particular offender. Some municipalities are now disclosing information regarding certain sex offenders on their Web sites. Municipalities should be aware that different states may have enacted more restrictive laws regarding privacy, and disclosure of information in those jurisdictions may run afoul of such laws. For example, unlike Washington, neither Arizona nor Illinois authorizes the dissemination of information regarding sex offender registration to the general public.

Protect privacy. Users may expect you to protect information such as names, social security numbers, and credit card numbers. Make your privacy policy known to your Web site users. Laws governing privacy can change rapidly. The United States Supreme Court announced that it will decide whether or not states have the right to sell or distribute personal information collected from driver's license applications. The Court will review a lower court holding that there exists no constitutional right to privacy in public records.

Keep your site current. A Web site can easily become a repository of old press releases and stale announcements. Establish a policy for removing or updating material as part of the municipal records retention procedures. One alternative is to clearly segregate material into "Current News" and "Archives." A disclaimer advising the reader that archived material will not be updated is also advisable.

Stay tuned. Municipalities are subject to all the laws that govern private Web sites as well as federal and state constitutional and statutory provisions that govern public entities. The law regulating the Internet is evolving rapidly. Consult your legal advisors regularly to ensure that your Web site remains in compliance. □

*Jordan J. Breslow and
Marc R. Greenough, Attorneys
Foster Pepper & Shefelman PLLC*

Jordan J. Breslow is co-chair of the Intellectual Property Group and Marc R. Greenough is a member of the Municipal and Public Finance Group of Foster Pepper & Shefelman PLLC. Both may be reached at (206) 447-4400 or via the firm's Web site at www.foster.com.

MRSC Board of Directors

We are pleased to announce the addition of **Mary Place**, councilmember for the city of Yakima, to our Board of Directors. Welcome, Mary!

Leaving our board is **Barbara Harrer**, mayor of the town of Harrah, and **Mark Erickson**, city attorney for the city of Olympia. We appreciate the support, encouragement, and direction given to MRSC by these past directors. Thank you, **Barbara** and **Mark**!



MRSC Services at Risk

The motor vehicle excise tax (MVET) is the primary funding source for Municipal Research & Services Center. Approximately 84 percent of MRSC funds are derived from the cities' distribution of the MVET. The remainder of MRSC funding comes from the counties' distribution of the liquor excise tax. If I-695 passes, MRSC will have to eliminate or significantly reduce the services we provide, unless replacement funds are secured.

MRSC services currently include:

Inquiries ("Help Desk") MRSC responds to inquiries and provides advice and information on virtually every facet of local government. Staff expertise includes budgeting and finance, municipal law, public management and administration, planning and growth management, public works and utilities, and local government policy. Last year MRSC responded to 7,500 requests for professional assistance. While MRSC serves all cities and counties, its services are especially vital to smaller local governments that do not have sufficient staff and resources to develop specialized knowledge or skills.

Library The MRSC library contains the state's largest collection of local government reference documents: local ordinances, codes, budgets and financial reports, comprehensive plans, and documents illustrating virtually every function and operation of local government.

Web Site The MRSC Web site (www.mrsc.org) is one of the most comprehensive local government sites in the United States. This site can be used to search the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), the Washington Administrative Code (WAC), municipal and county codes and ordinances, and a wealth of Washington State local government information. All citizens of the state with Web access have access to this information. More than 60,000 users currently visit the MRSC Web site each month.

Publications MRSC produces comprehensive and timely publications addressing a broad range of local government subjects. MRSC also works with elected officials and staff to develop professional training opportunities.

In summary, MRSC serves local governments by providing dependable, professional advice on practical solutions to governance at the local level. We do this by addressing your specific need, sharing sample documents on virtually everything done by local governments, offering informative publications, and sharing a wealth of local government information through our library and Web site. Local governments tell us that MRSC services save them time and money. By sharing pooled resources, MRSC can provide services that individual cities and towns cannot afford alone.

If you have any questions or suggestions you would like to share with us, please give us a call at 1-800-933-6772. Thank you.

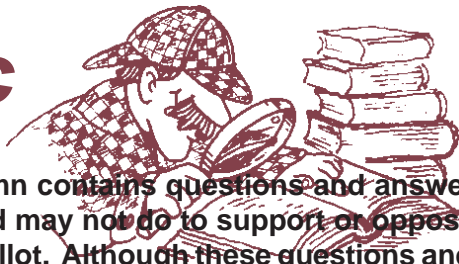
A Revenue Guide for Washington Cities and Towns



The new publication, **A Revenue Guide for Washington Cities and Towns**, is now available.

Copies have been sent to all cities and towns in Washington. You may also find it on our Web site at www.mrsc.org/revguide.pdf.

Ask MRSC



This "Ask MRSC" column contains questions and answers concerning what local government officials and employees may and may not do to support or oppose Initiative 695, which will be on the November 1999 general election ballot. Although these questions and answers have appeared in other informational literature already distributed to Washington cities and counties, we feel they are important enough to include here in our newsletter.

May local government staff or officials prepare or distribute campaign materials during working hours in support of or in opposition to Initiative 695?

No. Clearly this would violate the prohibition in RCW 42.17.130 against use of public office to support or oppose ballot propositions. This prohibition applies to elective and appointive officials and employees of counties, cities, towns, school districts, port districts, transit districts, and other special districts.

May a local government officer or employee campaign for or against Initiative 695 on his or her own time?

Yes, this is permissible. As long as public facilities are not utilized and the work is done on private time, there is no violation of state law. This is expressly authorized in WAC 390-05-271(1), which provides that RCW 42.17.130 does not restrict the right of any individual to express his or her personal views concerning, supporting, or opposing a ballot proposition so long as such expression does not involve a use of public facilities.

May local government employees or officials prepare and distribute to citizens a neutral fact sheet concerning the impacts of Initiative 695 on agency revenues and possible impacts on expenditures?

Yes, and this may include using staff to research the impact of a ballot

proposition for the purpose of gathering facts. The Washington Administrative Code in WAC 390-05-271 specifically allows a local government to make an objective and fair presentation of facts relevant to a ballot proposition, when such action is a normal and regular part of the conduct of the local government. This information may be distributed to citizens using the normal methods of communication that each local government uses to communicate with its citizens – such as newsletters, utility mailings, and so on.

May a local government officer or employee write, on his or her own time, a letter to the editor of the local newspaper expressing a position on Initiative 695?

Yes, and the officer or employee may also identify in the letter his or her position with the local government. However, there should be no implication in the letter that the writer of the letter is expressing an official position on behalf of the local government concerning this initiative.

May a local governing body, such as city council or a board of county commissioners, pass a resolution in support of or in opposition to Initiative 695 at an open public meeting?

Yes, this may be done if two procedural steps are followed. First, any required notice for the meeting must include the title and number of the ballot proposition. Second, members of the legislative body or the public who hold an opposite view must be

given an approximately equal opportunity to express their views at the meeting. If these procedures are followed, the elective governing body of a local government may pass a formal resolution in opposition to or in support of Initiative 695.

May a local government elected official make a statement in support of or in opposition to Initiative 695 at a press conference?

Yes, this also is allowed as an exception to the general prohibition. This exception only applies to elective officials and not to other staff or employees. The exception is limited to making the statement; it does not allow staff to distribute the statement at public expense.

May a local government allow use of a public meeting room on a nondiscriminatory basis for a public forum to discuss or debate the impacts of Initiative 695?

Yes, a local government may do this if it has a policy that routinely allows use of one of their meeting rooms by the public. Use of the meeting room as a forum for a debate would then be a part of the normal and regular conduct of the local government. The meeting room should be made available on the same terms as apply to other groups who use the room. For example, rent should be charged for use of the meeting room if that is the normal

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policy. Also, both proponents and opponents of Initiative 695 must have access to the meeting room on a nondiscriminatory basis.

What resources are available if there are further questions concerning this subject?

The legal staff at Municipal Research & Services Center (MRSC) is available to help answer questions concerning the prohibition on use of public facilities in ballot campaigns. MRSC can be contacted at (206) 625-1300, by fax at (206) 625-1220 or by E-mail at mrsc@mrsc.org. Also, the staff at the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) will help local government officials interpret and apply this law. The PDC may be contacted at (360) 753-1111 or by fax at (360) 753-1112, and it maintains a Web site at <http://web.pdc.wa.gov> that contains much useful information. □

Clarification

In the "Ask MRSC" column of the June 1999 issue of *Municipal Research News*, there was a question concerning public records disclosure that was misleading. It should have read as follows:

Is a city or county required to *respond* to a public records disclosure request electronically? Specifically, if a requestor asks that copies of specific public records be faxed, e-mailed, or provided via diskette, must the city respond as requested?

A city or county is under no legal obligation to respond *electronically* to a public disclosure request. A local government agency can adopt a policy of only providing paper copies of public records. However, if the person requesting the records asks that copies be provided in an electronic format, city staff can choose to respond electronically, if that will be easier. We expect that gradually more individuals will ask for copies in an electronic format, and as staff become more comfortable and proficient with the various options, more responses will be made in those ways. Remember that the costs involved with transmittal can be charged to the requesting individual. For instance, the jurisdiction can require payment for the cost of a diskette and postage.

1999 Information Technology Survey



Sixty-nine percent of Washington's 277 cities and towns responded to the 1999 (fourth annual) MRSC Information Technology Survey (67% responded in 1998). Of those responding, 32% of the cities are less than 1,000 in population, 29% between 1,000 and 5,000, 17% between 5,000 and 10,000, and 21% more than 10,000. (Compare to actual distribution of all cities: 34%, 33%, 14%, and 20% in the respective categories from small to large.)

Internet access continues to grow. Eighty-three percent of cities and towns now have Internet access, up from 64% in 1998, 55% in 1997 and 28% in 1996. Among cities less than 1,000 in population, 66% of the responding cities have Internet access (compared to 33% in 1998 and 8% in 1997) while among cities more than

10,000 in population, 100% now have Internet access.

The movement toward Microsoft software marches ever forward with 76% of cities now using Microsoft Office and 81% using some version of Word compared to 17% using some version of WordPerfect. In the 1996 survey, we found a fairly even split between WordPerfect and Word, and in 1997 found that 66% of cities used Word, and 45% WordPerfect (some used both). In 1998, we found that 84% used some version of Word and 30% used some version of WordPerfect.

For network operating systems, Novell NetWare remains most prevalent but is also losing ground to Microsoft: 45% use some version of NetWare while 40% use some version of Windows NT.

Last year, 50% used some version of NetWare while 28% used Microsoft NT (in 1997, 65% and 21% respectively).

Forty percent of cities use some type of Geographic Information System with AutoCAD, ARC/INFO and ArcView remaining most prevalent. Last year, 23% had GIS systems, also most often running some version of ARC/INFO or AutoCAD.

Regarding the Year 2000 computer problem, 64% of the respondents said their city or town is more than 75% along in evaluating and fixing the problem (as of April 1999) with 39% expecting to complete their fixes by June 30, 1999. Sixty-eight percent had begun developing a contingency plan in the event of utility or other Year 2000-related system failures. □



Heads Up

Emerging Information for Local Government

Intergovernmental Cooperation in Washington

With the guiding motto of “providing a cost efficient result to the community by sharing services and facilities,” 27 government agencies in southwest Washington are cooperating in the areas of grounds, equipment, and maintenance. GEM is a regional network of public agency employees who meet regularly to exchange successes, concepts, and general information to promote efficiency in government. Its acronym, GEM, represents the maintenance and operation of Grounds (& Buildings), Equipment (Fleet Management), and Maintenance (all street/utility activities). The agencies include the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the Washington State Patrol, and cities, counties, school districts, water/sewer districts, and fire districts in the area. For further information, see GEM’s Internet site www.tntwebcraft.com/gem/.

Fostering Downtown Development

Tacoma has launched an innovative program providing information about downtown commercial properties available for sale or lease. The Web site, www.TacomaSpace.com, is in partnership with the Local Development Council, which manages the downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA), and the Economic Development Board for Tacoma-Pierce County. Similar to a residential real estate multiple listing service, the city is providing a free platform for these groups to get together and sell downtown Tacoma.

Area brokers and property owners provide accurate information about properties in Tacoma’s (BIA), an 84-block region in downtown Tacoma. The city uses this data for the Web site, which provides information on vacancies, available space, lease payments, zoning, parking, and tax incentives. It also can display interior and exterior images of many of the properties. Thea Foss Waterway properties, a three-mile waterfront area adjacent to downtown, recently were added to the site. Future plans include adding the city’s neighborhood business districts.

The site also provides links so businesses can analyze competition, learn about tax assessments, and access other important business information. *Tacoma Press Release June 18, 1999*

Hometown – Home Loan Incentive

Auburn and Seattle, in cooperation with a local bank, are sponsoring a home loan incentive program for city employees. To qualify, Seattle employees must live within the Seattle city limits, while Auburn employees must live within the boundaries of the Auburn School District. The program provides a reduction in loan fees by 50 percent, and discounts other costs, such as home inspections, appraisals, and escrow fees. A typical home buyer may save \$1,000 to \$1,500 or more on closing fees. The program was developed by the city of Seattle in partnership with Continental Bank. The city was seeking an incentive to encourage public safety personnel to live within the city. The program was later expanded to all city employees. Since

the Hometown program was set up, several other agencies, including the city of Boise, the University of Washington, and the Seattle Community College District, have established similar employee incentive programs. *Tacoma News Tribune, 8/5/99, and Continental Bank Representative*

New Guide for Communicating Information about Disasters

A guide, *Talking About Disaster: Guide for Standard Messages*, has been developed by the National Disaster Education Coalition (Washington, D.C., 1999) to assist anyone providing disaster safety information to the public. The information is based on historical data for the United States and is appropriate for use by emergency managers, meteorologists, teachers, disaster and fire educators, public affairs/public relations personnel, mitigation specialists, media personnel, and/or any other person in the severe-weather, earthquake, disaster, or communications communities.

This guide provides standardized safety messages for 13 hazards as well as general disaster preparedness information. The messages, including preparedness, mitigation, and safety advice, have been reviewed and approved by national organizations comprising the National Disaster Education Coalition, a group that works to deliver consistent disaster preparedness information to the public. Following each message are explanations, statistics, or reasons that reinforce the credibility of the message and that correct myths and misinformation.

The coalition is composed of the American Red Cross; the Federal Emergency Management Agency; the Institute for Business and Home Safety; the International Association of Emergency Managers; the National Fire Protection Association; the National Weather Service; the U.S.

Department of Agriculture/Cooperative State Research, Education, and Education Service; and the U. S. Geological Survey. The coalition considers this effort a major breakthrough. It is recommended that everyone having a role in communicating safety advice to the public obtain a copy of the guide and review its content. When opportunities arise to update Web sites, brochures, or other public information, this guide should be used to ensure technical accuracy and a consistent message.

Copies can be ordered from local chapters of the American Red Cross (stock number A4461M) for \$3.00 per copy, plus shipping. It is also available in both HTML and downloadable PDF format on the Internet at www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/guide.html *National Hazards Safety Observer, July 1999*

Lime-Green Traffic Signs

You may have noticed a new color being used for signs at pedestrian,

bicycle, and school crossings. It's called fluorescent strong yellow-green, which is easier to see than the familiar yellow signs, especially in twilight or overcast conditions. According to a note in *Governing* (June 1999 issue), the Federal Highway Administration gave a "thumbs up to their widespread use last year." Several Washington cities have started using these lime-green traffic signs. □



Web News (www.mrsc.org)

Join in a Discussion

In the next few months, we will be setting up a discussion board system (also known as a bulletin board system) on the MRSC Web site. Initially, we will set up a single area, but over time we will set up several discussion areas. This system will allow you to post and read questions, responses, and opinions regarding issues affecting local government. Please let us know if you would like us to set up a discussion on a particular topic.

Download Sample Documents

We continue to scan documents in addition to receiving them from you in electronic format. We now have five file libraries with sample documents that you may download: job descriptions, ordinances, contracts and interlocal agreements, sample forms of all types, and government documents. This last "catchall" category now includes several budgets and personnel policies recently scanned.

Seeking Consulting Services?

We have set up a new local government service directory containing descriptions of services provided by consulting firms along

with links to their Web sites. The listing is organized both alphabetically and by subject category. MRSC does not endorse any of these service providers, but provides the listings as a convenience to you.

Looking for a Management Intern? Internship Network Northwest (INNw) is a collaborative effort between the Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) and MRSC. INNw's goal is to assist deserving graduate and undergraduate students with finding internships with local governments, while at the same time helping local governments hire qualified student candidates. To advertise a position, fill out the form located on the internship page (see INNw under the MRSC site index).

Initiative 695

As the November elections draw near, check the MRSC Web site for the latest information on Initiative 695. Our I-695 page contains memos prepared by the staffs of MRSC, the Association of Washington Cities (AWC), Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC), and Washington Association of County Officials (WACO), links to documents on the state's Web site, and an extensive

collection of articles and editorials that have appeared in newspapers statewide.

New Web Pages

- Search the Year 2000 database that now contains the status of equipment from eight additional cities for a total of 22 cities and 3,132 records.
- Search 51 city municipal codes and 6 county codes.
- Learn about Civil Service Commissions and the roles of the Secretary and Chief Examiner
- Find out how to regulate and abate nuisances.
- Learn about Sewer and Storm Water Conservation Efficiency Loans.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions about using the MRSC Web site or locating information on the Web. □

*Fred Ward, Mgr. of Library & Information Services
Municipal Research & Services Center*

Resource Sharing Information Partnership Program

The *Information Partnership Program* seeks & collects current materials from the local governments of Washington. The materials received provide answers and support to the challenges faced by cities and counties every day. You may order the materials below by contacting the MRSC library at (800) 933-6772 or (206) 625-1300, fax (206) 625-1220, or E-mail us at mrsc@mrsc.org. Due to space limitations, the list below may not be complete. A comprehensive list of IP materials received may be requested from the library or viewed on our Web site at www.mrsc.org/library/rshare.htm.

We encourage you to make this list available to those departments who would benefit from its contents.

City Manager/Administrator Contracts

Bellevue Letter agreement and 2 amendments between city of Bellevue and city manager [10 p.], 1995-1999, (G 2.4600); **Camas** Ordinance No. 2196 revising the procedure for appointment and removal of city administrator to require the consent of a majority of the city council [1 p.], 3/8/99, (G 2.5100); **Des Moines** Employment agreement for city manager [4 p.], 1996 (G 2.4600); **Ellensburg** City manager employment agreement [5 p.], 1995 (G 2.4600); **Federal Way** Employment contract with city manager [6 p.], 1993 (G 2.4600); Performance and development appraisal form for city manager [4 p.], n.d. (G 2.4700); **Gig Harbor** City administrator/clerk employment agreement [9 p.], 1/29/92, (G 2.4600); **Goldendale** Employment contract with city administrator [5 p.], 12/21/98 (G 2.4600); **Kirkland** City Manager contract [4

p.], 9/2/1997, (G 2.4600); **Leavenworth** Employment agreement for city administrator [7 p.], 1998 (G 2.4600); **Longview** Employment contract with amendments with city manager [17 p.], (G 2.4600); **Monroe** City employment contract with city administrator, [5 p.], 5/12/99, (G 2.4600); **Port Angeles** City manager/city council employment agreement [6 p.], 5/12/99 (G 2.4600); **Port Townsend** City manager employment agreement [8 p.], 5/17/99 (G 2.4600); **Shelton** City administrator employment agreement [6 p.], 1990 (G 2.4600); **Spokane** City manager agreement [6 p.], 1999, (G 2.4600); **Tumwater** City Administrator contract [5 p.], 1997, (G 2.4600); **Walla Walla** City Manager employment agreement [9 p.], 1992 (G 2.4600); **Westport** City administrator employment agreement [2 p.], 199?, (G 2.4600)

Human Services Plans

Anacortes Application for 20% discount on utilities [2 p.], 1999 (U 4.4000); **Auburn** Consolidated plan for years 1995 to 1999 for housing and community development programs [1 vol.], 1998, (HO 7.1000); **Bellevue** City of Bellevue human services needs update, 1997-1998 [145 p.], 1997, (H 6.1000 B44 H82 1997); Consolidated housing and community development plan for the city of Bellevue 1999 [32 p. + appendices], 1998, (HO 7.1000 B44 C656 1999); 1999 human services contracts master list [13 p.], 1999 (H 6.1000); **Des Moines** The Caring Community: Des Moines human services plan [1 vol.], 1997 (H 6.1000 D44 C37 1997); **Federal Way** Human services comprehensive plan [1 vol.], 1996 (H 6.1000 F4 H85 1996); **Port Angeles** Contract between City of Port

Angeles and United Way of Clallam County for performance of local human services [6 p.], 1/19/99. (H 6.1000); **Poulsbo** Agreement for the provision of social services and commercial lease agreement between the City of Poulsbo and Sound Works, Inc. for job placement services [9 p.], 1/7/99, (ED 6.1000); Reduced water/sewer rates for low-income senior citizens and low-income disabled citizens brochure [4 p.], 1998 (U 4.4000); **Ritzville** Ordinance No. 989 to create utility donation fund for those in need [2 p.], 6/1/99 (U 4.4000); **Spokane** Human Services Advisory Board grant notification [15 p.], 1999 (H 2.1500); Homeless services automation project program description [5 p.], 1999 (H 4.1500); City of Spokane continuum of care plan for the homeless [50 p.], 1999 (H 4.1500 S73 C65 1999).

Property Lease Forms/Agreements

Anacortes Harbor area lease 30 years with State of Washington Department of Natural Resources [7 p.], 1987 (PP 3.2200); Lease agreement with Development Ventures for tidelands/moorage space [8 p.], 5/6/90 (PP 3.2200); **Colville** Lease agreement with Hedrick's Floral Greenhouse & Nursery for lease of real property [4 p.], 1997, (PP 3.2000); Lease agreement with Steven H. Oswin for lease of real property [6 p.], 1998, (PP 3.2000); **Coulee Dam** Lease agreement for lease of real property [5 p.], 1999, (PP 3.2000); Lease of restaurant and cocktail lounge [14 p.], 10/9/78, (PP 3.2000); Rules and regulations for use of the Town Hall facilities [4 p.], 1998, (PP 6.2000); **Coupeville** Property Lease agreement for the temporary

siting of government offices between the Town of Coupeville and Island County [8 p.], 1999, (PP 3.3000); **Dayton** License for use of city property [1 p.], n.d. (PP 3.7000); **Deer Park** Airport lease agreement [11 p.], n.d. (AA 5.2000); **Des Moines** Lease for marina restaurant property [5 p.], 1988 (PP 3.2000); Assignment of lease and release/lease/purchase agreement for restaurant [7 p.], 1996 (PP 2.2000); Lease for marina repair facilities [15 p.], 1995 (PP 3.2200); Real estate lease for real property leased to city [16 p.], 1998 (PP 3.2000); Lease agreement for park caretaker quarters [2 p.], 1996 (PP 3.6000); **Ellensburg** Lease of property by Kittitas County [5 p.], 3/2/99 (PP 3.2000); Lease between city of Ellensburg and church for parking [4 p.], 1997 (PP 3.2000); **Federal Way** Klahanee Lake Community/Senior Center facility rental application [2 p.], n.d. (P 1.4100); **Goldendale** Cablevision head end lease agreement [7 p.], 1996 (PP 3.2000); Ground lease with A.M. Todd Co., for business premises [9 p.], 1994 (PP 3.2000); Lease agreement to Assembly of God of Goldendale for cable TV premises [2 p.], 10/15/98 (PP 3.2000); **Longview** Lease with Signmasters, Inc. for site of sign fabrication facility [7 p.], 5/17/93 (PP 3.2000); **Omak** Memorandum of Agreement and Lease Between the City of Omak and Omak Stampede, Inc. [9 p.]; Agreement that the city owns and leases for 25 years (1/1/87-12/31/2011) portions of Eastside Park on which the arena and improvements by Omak Stampede, Inc., are located and where the Omak Stampede and Suicide Race is held on annual basis. Sets terms, scope, and limits for use of grounds and facilities as amended. Revised 07/07/97, (PP 3.4000); Memorandum of Agreement and Lease Between the City of Omak and Visitor Information Center of the City of Omak (non-profit) for city property, [3 p.], 2/16/99, (PP 3.2000) ; **Port Angeles** Lease agreement with

Olympic Mountaineering for former city hall [5 p.], 11/01/96, (PP 3.2000); Lease agreement with Bonny's Bakery for former fire station [23 p.], 11/22/96, (PP 3.2000); Use agreement with Port Angeles Food Bank for city owned premises [2 p.], 1/07/97, (PP 3.7000); **Ritzville** Farm lease and extension of farm lease [8 p.], 1988, 1996 (PL 3.2000); Lease of Airport grounds [5 p.], 1999 (AA 5.2000); **Poulsbo** Commercial lease agreement between the City of Poulsbo and the Greater Poulsbo Chamber of Commerce for place of business [4 p.], 1998 (PP 3.2000); **Spokane** Residential lease agreement and security deposit [7 p.] (PP 3.2000); Commercial lease agreement [10 p.], 1998 (PP 3.2000); Real estate purchase and sale agreement, city as purchaser [5 p.], (PP 3.1000); Possession and use agreement [3 p.] (PP 3.1100); Revocable license and permit for public right-of-way encroachment [4 p.], (S 5.0300); **Westport** Lease agreement for city owned building [6 p.] , 1998 (PP 3.2000); **Wilbur** Farm rental agreement [4 p.], 3/7/97 (PP 3.2000); **Winthrop** Lease agreement with Methow Valley Artisans for city owned business building [3 p.], 3/23/99 (PP 3.2000); Lease agreement with Winthrop Auditorium Association for city owned building [8 p.], 3/6/92 (PP 3.2000)

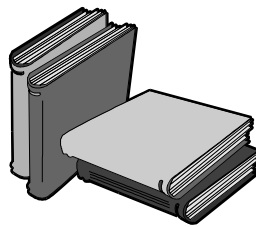
Resolution Authorizing City Council Members to Serve in Dual Capacities RCW 35.21.770

Goldendale Resolution No. 310 authorizing city councilmember to receive financial benefits from serving as a fire department volunteer and police department reserve. Dated 1/97. (G 5.3200); Resolution No. 311 authorizing city councilmember to receive financial benefits from serving in police department reserve. Dated 1/97. (G 5.3200);

Sample Towing Contracts

Bellevue Vehicle impound agreement [18 p.], 1991 (F 8.7100); **Ellensburg** Public property owner impound towing contract [1 p.], 1998 (F 8.7100); **Omak** Ordinance No. 1399 entitled "Impounding vehicles driven by persons with suspended or revoked drivers licenses or persons driving under the influence" [6 p.], 2/9/1999, (T 3.2200); **Tumwater** Service provider/professional services agreement with Jerry's Towing. [8 p.], 09/22/98 (F 8.7100)□

New Acquisitions



This list contains new publications, ordinances, and other materials recently received by the MRSC library. We also prepare a more comprehensive list of new acquisitions each month which is posted on our Web site at www.mrsc.org/library/newacq.htm. If you would like to borrow one or more of these publications, please contact Sarah Sodt in our library at (206) 625-1300.

Economic Development

The Ahwahnee Principles For Smart Economic Development: An Implementation Guidebook, Rick Cole, Trish Kelly and Judy Corbett with Sharon Sprowls, Sacramento, CA, Local Government Commission's Center for Livable Communities, 1998, 74 p. A collection of economic development policies that adhere to sustainable development and transportation principles. [ED 2.1000 A58 1998]

How To Market Your City, Camille Kellogg and Richard Lillquist, Washington, D.C., National League of Cities, 1999, 30 p. [ED 4.3000 H69 1999]

Environment

Enforcing The Shoreline Management Act: Guidance For Local Government Administrators, Washington State Department of Ecology, Olympia, WA, Washington State, 1998, 84 p. [EN 6.1000 E54 1998]

Health Effects Of Toxic Substances, M.J. Malachowski, Ph.D., Arleen F. Goldberg, 2nd ed., Rockville, MD, Government Institutes, 1999, xvi, 292 p. [EN 10.1000 H43 1999]

The Impacts Of Salmon Listings On Puget Sound Urban And Suburban Areas: Seminar Coursebook, Foster Pepper & Shefelman, June 16, 1999, Seattle, WA, 1999, 1 v. (loose-leaf). [EN 4.2200 I56 1999]

Finance

American Payroll Association Basic Guide To Payroll: 1999, Delores Risteau, CCP, Julia M. Russell, and Joanne Mitchell, George, J.D., 1999, New York, Bureau of Business Practice/Prentice Hall, 1998, 1 vol. (varied pagings). [PE 7.2000 A54 1999]

Investment Policies [compilation], Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington Library, Seattle, WA, 1999, 1 v. (various pagings). [F 5.7100 I535 1999]

Government Administration

City Council Rules Of Procedure [compilation], Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington Library, Seattle, WA, 1999, 1 v. (various pagings). [G 4.2100 C58 1999]

Creating High-Performance Government Organization: A Practical Guide For Public Managers, Mark G. Popovich, editor; foreword by David Osborne; writing team, Jack A. Brizius, et al, San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Base, 1999, xxiii, 191 p. [G 9.1100 C74 1998]

Health & Human Services

The Cost Of Protecting Vulnerable Children: Understanding Federal, State, And Local Child Welfare Spending, Rob Geen, Shelly Waters Boots, and Karen C. Tumlin, Washington, D.C., Urban Institute, 1999, 47 p. [H 4.5000 C67 1999]

Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Juan Otero, Chris Espinoza, and the National League of Cities, Washington, D.C., NLC, 1999, 45 p. [ED 6.2500 W67 1999]

Information Systems

Information Age In County Government, National Association of Counties, Washington, D.C., NACo, 1999, 64 p. [IS 0.0009 I543 1999]

Long-Range Information Technology Plans: Strategies For The Future, International City/County Management Association (ICMA), Washington, D.C., 1998, 184 p. [IS 1.2000 L65 1998]

Land Use Planning

Better Site Design: A Handbook For Changing Development Rules In Your Community, prepared by the Center for Watershed Protection, Ellicott City, MD, 1998, 174 p. + appendices, ill. [PL 10.4000 B48 1998]

Citistate Seattle: Shaping A Modern Metropolis, Mark L. Hinshaw, Chicago, IL, American Planning Association, 1999, xi, 170 p., ill. A look at the urban planning elements that went into shaping the city of Seattle and surrounding environs into a dynamic and livable urban center. [PL 10.0000 C58 1999]

Legal

WSAMA Annual Spring Conference, April 28 - 30, 1999 at Vancouver, British Columbia, Washington State Association of Municipal Attorneys; Municipal Research and Services Center, Seattle, WA, MRSC, 1999, 1 v. (various pagings). Conference papers. [L 1.2000 L450 4/99]

Parks & Recreation

Park Rules And Regulations: Sample Code Provisions [compilation] / Municipal Research and Services Center Library, Seattle, WA, MRSC, 1999, 1 vol. [P 1.3000 P355 1999]

Personnel

Cumulative Trauma Disorders: A Practical Guide To Prevention And Control, Wayne F. Peate, MD and Karen A. Lunda, Rockville, MD, Government Institutes, 1997, xxviii, 238 p., ill. Discusses cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs) and repetitive motion injuries (like carpal tunnel syndrome) and the ergonomic methods necessary to prevent them. [PE 1.6000 C75 1997]

Successful New-Employee Orientation: Assess, Plan, Conduct And Evaluate Your Program, Jean Barbazette, San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, 1994, 112 p. [PE 3.1000 S83 1994]

New Options, New Talent: The Government Guide To A Flexible Workforce, National Academy of Public Administration, Washington, D.C., 1998, 141 p. Discusses the change in management and working styles as governments and businesses shift from experience-based jobs to knowledge-based jobs. [PE 4.0000 N49 1998]

Personnel Performance Evaluations: Articles And Sample Forms [compilation], Municipal Research and Ser-

vices Center of Washington Library, Seattle, WA, MRSC, 1999, 1 vol. [PE 8.1000 P477 1999]

Violence In The Workplace: Preventing, Assessing And Managing Threats At Work, Carol W. Wilkinson, editor, Rockville, MD, Government Institutes, 1998, xxix, 283 p. [PE 4.6310 V56 1998]

Public Safety

Beyond Bars: Correctional Reforms To Lower Prison Costs And Reduce Crime, Little Hoover Commission, Sacramento, CA, 1998, xvi, 137 p. [PS 7.5000 B49 1998]

Disasters By Design: A Reassessment Of Natural Hazards In The United States, Dennis S. Mileti, Washington, D.C., Joseph Henry Press, 1999, 351 p. : ill. [PS 1.4000 D573 1999]

Junk Vehicle Abatement [compilation], Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington Library, Seattle, WA, MRSC, 1999, 1 vol. [PS 9.1087 J85 1999]

Public Works

Construction Contracting For Public Entities In Washington: Seattle, WA,

May 26, 1999, Stanton Phillip Beck, Andrew W. Maron, Richard Ottesen Prentke, and David R. Trachtenberg, Eau Claire, WI, Lorman Education Services, 1999, 186 p. [PW 1.2000 C653 1999]

Son Of Privatization: Managed Competition In Public Works [videorecording], American Public Works Association, Kansas City, MO, 1997, 3 videocassettes (VHS) (65 min., 52 min., 59 min.) sd., col., 1/2 in.1 workbook, 30 p. [PW 1.5000 S65 1997 KIT]

Transportation

Bellevue Police Volunteer Handicapped Parking Enforcement Program, City of Bellevue Police Department, Bellevue, WA, 1995, 1 vol. [T 7.1510 B44 V65 1995]

Traffic Calming Primer, Pat Noyes & Associates, Boulder, CO, 1998, 34 p., ill. [T 3.4600 T737 1998]□

BUDGET SUGGESTIONS For 2000



Information Bulletin No. 504
August 1999



The new publication, **Budget Suggestions for 2000**, is now available.

Copies have been sent to all cities and towns in Washington. You may also find it on our Web site at www.mrsc.org/bs2000.pdf.

Targeted Brownfields Assessments

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is currently offering a select number of environmental site assessments to public or non-profit entities interested in redeveloping abandoned or under-utilized properties.

Under the agency's "Brownfields" program, environmental consultants contracted by the EPA will perform the environmental assessments – estimated value up to \$50,000 – to determine the nature and extent of contamination, and, if requested, estimate the costs of site clean-up for redevelopment.

These environmental site assessments are available to public, quasi-public, or non-profit entities (such as municipalities, tribal governments, and community development organizations)

interested in redeveloping abandoned or underutilized properties. In order to qualify for the Brownfields assessments, the property must be contaminated or suspected to be contaminated with CERCLA (Superfund) hazardous substances.

EPA will generally approve expenditures for targeted Brownfields assessments when the property is publicly held. If a public or non-profit entity is aware of a Brownfields site that is privately held but has potential for redevelopment that will offer significant public benefit, EPA will consider spending funds at the site.

The EPA's selection process will be aimed at projects where a party has

concrete redevelopment plans for the site once the assessment is complete. Redevelopment can involve the creation of commercial, industrial, recreational, or conservation uses.

To apply for the program, or for more information, contact Joanne LaBaw (206) 553-2594, or by e-mail at labaw.joanne@epamail.epa.gov. □



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