

Letter to the Editor Submitted by Mayor Eugene Grant to Clackamas Weekly Section of Oregonian, March 21, 2005

I read with interest the March 14th article by Oregonian Newspaper opinion columnist, Andy Parker, calling on Happy Valley to share the revenue from the 212 corridor and the Clackamas Town Center with nearby cities like Gladstone, Milwaukie and Damascus. His suggestion is fatally flawed! First, there is no legal means of revenue sharing between cities in Oregon and state legislation would be required to allow it. That would result in a statewide program of revenue sharing where the state would distribute all the revenue to the cities on the basis of their population. Such a system would greatly favor the rural cities over the urban cities in the Portland Metro region. Andy Parker is asking us to start down a slippery slope to a radical new system of local government financing detrimental to the Portland Metro region.

Even if the Legislature could be convinced to limit revenue sharing within the Portland Metro region, Parker's plan would be unrealistic. Would Mayor Hamberstad and Mayor Lehan be willing to share the revenue from Lake Oswego and Wilsonville with Milwaukie and Gladstone? I think not. Yet those cities have far more money because Lake Oswego has the Kruse Woods commercial corridor and Wilsonville has the I-5 industrial corridor. When Wilsonville and Lake Oswego are ready to adopt revenue sharing then Happy Valley will talk about it.

But would the annexation of the areas of interest to Happy Valley give it an unfair share of jobs relative to housing? The City Council drew the boundaries for its area of annexation interest with an eye to this balance, and the result of annexing the entire Clackamas Town Center and 212 corridor would create a balanced city fairly equal in jobs and housing. Wilsonville would still have far more jobs than housing even if Happy Valley annexed the entire area authorized by the ballot measure. Accordingly I believe Parker should refocus on Wilsonville as a target for his radical revenue sharing concept. Seriously, I wish he would quit trying to play the divisive class warfare card altogether and recognize that Happy Valley is entitled to become a complete and well balanced city just as much as any other city.

Eugene Grant, Mayor
Happy Valley
11311 SE Charview Court
Clackamas OR 97015
503 698 5822
Office 503 778 5427