

November 8, 2017

From: Cowlitz County Big Idea Board
John J. Burke Chairman

To: Mayor and Councilors of:

The cities of Woodland, Kalama, Kelso, Longview, Castle Rock and the Cowlitz County Commissioners

Dear Municipal Leaders:

In the fall of 2011, then Cowlitz County commissioner James Misner appeared before your council to pitch the idea of "The Big Idea Board", where money for tourism related activities for each jurisdiction would be pooled and distributed in selected years.

This was suggested so that instead of minimal Hotel tax dollars each year, a larger pool could be grouped together in order to accomplish that cities' "Big Idea". The concept was accepted by the five cities and the County.

Woodland was the first city to receive Big Idea Funds, followed by Kalama, Castle Rock, 503/504, Longview and Kelso. The conclusion of this cycle is December 30th, 2017. Each cities project was designed to increase the number of "Heads in Beds", thus ensuring future ongoing hotel tax dollars.

The Big Idea Board has financially supported events such as:

- Kalama's Blues Festival, the 125th Celebration of Kalama
- Festival of Lights in Castle Rock
- Required tourism improvements such as "way finding signs" in Kelso and Longview,
- Support for a Visitor Center in Castle Rock
- Support for the Woodland's Visitors Information Center.

We believe Mr. Misner's original vision has been attained and we look to continue. With this letter, we are asking for your continued support.

The Big Idea Board is writing you today with two specific requests. The first is to re-commit to the Big Idea Board concept and to extend the duration of the budgetary cycle for an additional six years.

Secondly to reaffirm or appoint new members from your jurisdiction to serve on the next phase of the Big Idea Board.

The continuation of the Big Idea will take commitment from all of our partner cities and our Country.

We hope we can count of your continued support. We would be pleased to attend a Council meeting in person to further explain the success of the "Big Idea Board" if you so desire.

Yours truly


John J. Burke

On behalf of the Big Idea Members.