



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 8, 2013

Groundbreaking Ceremony for Mount Vernon Waterfront Revitalization Project and Downtown Flood Protection Project, Phase II set for June 15

MOUNT VERNON – A new era for Downtown Mount Vernon begins on Saturday, June 15, when groundbreaking ceremonies are held for Phase II of the Waterfront Revitalization Project and Downtown Flood Protection Project, which will create a 24-foot wide pedestrian river walk, a 30,000 square foot Riverfront Park and a permanent downtown floodwall.

“As proud as we are of Mount Vernon today, we are even more excited about downtown’s future,” said Mount Vernon Mayor Jill Boudreau. “We are very grateful to all the elected officials and organizations that provided the necessary funding to make this transformational project possible.”

The City of Mount Vernon will officially break ground at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 15, on the Skagit River Revetment near the intersection of Gates and Main Street.

Phase II will include the construction of approximately 1,650 linear feet of concrete flood wall to protect the historic downtown area, 1,650 linear feet of a 24-foot wide river walk and trail connection to a regional trail system, and the construction of a 30,000 square foot Public Riverfront Park. The project also includes the addition of public restrooms which will be located at the southeast corner of Gates and Main Street. Construction is expected to be completed by Fall 2014.

The first phase was completed in October 2010 and includes 1,300 linear feet of floodwall and river trail from the Division Street Bridge north to Lions Park. The second phase includes the area from the Division Street Bridge to just south of Kincaid Street.

“During Phase II construction, there will be no net loss of parking and downtown will continue to be the thriving heart of Mount Vernon, with a vibrant mix of unique shops, restaurants and services,” Mayor Boudreau said. “Plus with the Downtown Farmers Market, festivals, art walks and other destination activities, there’s never been a better time to discover why there’s no place, any place like Downtown Mount Vernon.”

Mayor Boudreau noted that to help ensure minimal impact, the City has worked closely with downtown businesses, the Mount Vernon Downtown Association and the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce on strategies including new parking and directional signage, construction staging, advertising, events and other communication programs.

The City will be awarding a construction contract having an engineer’s estimated cost of between \$5 and \$5.7 million. The Project is being funded with the assistance of a few key partners: the State of Washington, through the State Capital Budget and other competitive grant programs, has provided 35% of the funding to date, followed by the City of Mount Vernon

securing 24% of project funds. Other local partners have provided 23% of funding, and Federal grants and loans provided 18% of secured funding to date. Skagit County Dike District #3 has been a key partner in the Downtown Flood Protection Project, and has made financial contributions totaling \$2.25 million since the inception of the Project.

The project is part of a comprehensive redevelopment plan for Mount Vernon's historic downtown area that is being used to guide public and private investments over the next 20 years.

The Downtown and Waterfront Master Plan is designed to build on and enhance existing retail activity along First Street, and create a vibrant, attractive, and safe waterfront and downtown, with enhanced public access to the shoreline and river, new and improved public amenities, and mixed-use redevelopment that will generate new jobs and create housing that preserves the character of downtown Mount Vernon.

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