



City of Edmonds Media Release

Economic Development ~ 121 5th Ave N, Edmonds, WA 98020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 13, 2019

To: Media

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MAYOR EARLING OFFERS COMMENTS ON THE EFFECTS OF INITIATIVE 976

Passage of I-976 May Mean up to \$700,000 Hit to Transportation Budget

(Edmonds, WA) - A STATEMENT BY MAYOR EARLING:

After clear passage by Washington voters of Initiative 976, aimed at rolling back automobile license tab fees to just \$30, the impacts to Edmonds, the Puget Sound Region, and the State are just starting to be estimated. One thing is certain: cutbacks across the board and around the state may need to become a reality.

As Governor Inslee stated last Wednesday, "it is clear that this vote means there will be adverse impacts on our state transportation system."

Closer to home, passage of I-976 means a loss of approximately 37% (or \$700,000) annually from the City's Street Budget, which funds the operations and maintenance of the City's transportation system, including the street overlay program, pothole repair, maintenance of traffic signals, street lights, pedestrian crossing lights, as well as sidewalk maintenance and repair, among many other things.

That being said, Edmonds residents certainly expect and deserve to see these basic transportation operations and maintenance services to be provided by their city to the extent

financially feasible. What's more, I was heartened to see in that Edmonds residents rejected I-976 by a vote of over 56%, per the latest count.

For these reasons, we will do our best not to place the burden of this revenue shortfall solely on the transportation budget. The City Council, staff and I will work diligently during the 2020 Budget review process to identify appropriate cuts throughout the City budget to share in bearing the brunt of this impact. Still and all, there may indeed be some cuts to transportation services.

While I say all of this, I am sure you are aware from regional news sources that Seattle, King County and likely other agencies plan to appeal the outcome of this vote. Legal action could forestall the immediate effect of I-976's impacts, yet we must still plan for the potential loss of these funds.

Stay tuned and rest assured that we will do our best to mitigate the damage that this Initiative may have brought on.

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