

Time to Protect Our Community – WC1

September 13, 2018

On the first anniversary of Hurricane Harvey, which caused more than \$125B in damage and resulted in the loss of 88 lives, 85% of Houston area voters backed the issuance of \$2.5B in bonds that will fund critical flood-control projects **Why did they wait** until this latest catastrophe to address their critical flood-control needs when their region has a history of catastrophic flooding? I guess that is the same question we will be asking ourselves **if we do not pass WC-1 this November.**

Flooding of the Truckee River is Nothing New. Much like the floods that have occurred in Houston Texas over the years, we have experienced increased flooding in our region, with four major floods, near or above the 100-year flood level, in the past 65 years – 1997, 1986, 1963 and 1955. We get a big one every 10 to 15 years, with the last one occurring 21 years ago – **We are indeed overdue.** Even the little 40-year flood event we experienced last year, caused significant damage and required our community to spend substantial time and resources preparing for “the flood”- and that was just a 40-year flood. For you newcomers to the region, the Truckee River floods!

Imagine what a 1997 flood would do to our community when it hits us. It is a “when”, not an “if.” The 1997 100-year flood closed the airport and the interstate, caused \$750M in damage and resulted in the loss of two lives. Roads were closed, telecommunications and internet connectivity impacted, and 911 calls went unanswered in some neighborhoods. Not as dramatic as the 88 lives lost and \$125B in damages in Houston last year, but still preventable.

What is WC-1 and how will it protect us? The initiative authorizes a 2.48 cent per \$100 of assessed valuation (**about \$30 per year increase in property taxes for the average home**). This funding will augment federal funds, funding from a previous 1/8th cents sales tax for public safety and direct benefit fees paid by those in the flood zone, for a total of \$400M in flood control project construction and improvements to the Truckee River. Upon completion of the project, our community will be able to withstand a 100-year flood with no damage! When the bonds are paid off the direct benefit fee, and the property tax will end.

Are we going to wait for the next catastrophe, like Houston did? There are so many seemingly valid reasons to vote **no** on a tax increase. They all sound good and no one likes to give government more of their hard-earned tax dollars – I get it. But this is our chance to make a difference! A chance to make our community better **and safer** at a minimal fee, while ensuring that we do not lose the \$182M of federal funding if this initiative does not pass. WC-1 will not solve all our flooding problems, but after 20 years of talking and studying solutions for the Truckee River flooding issue, it is time to get this done. We have the chance to protect our community, our kids, grandkids and those that will suffer, or even die, as a result of the next 100-year flood.

We need your help to protect our community - Vote Yes on WC-1.

For more information and to see exactly where the funding will go, or to help with WC-1 “Stop River Flooding” go to www.stopriverflooding.com



Downtown Reno during 1997 Flood – Picture courtesy of Truckee River Management Authority