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METROPOLITAN SERVICE DISTRICT
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STATEMENT CONCERNING JOHNSON CREEK

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In the past few weeks the Metro Council has received specific position papers from several of the special interest groups which share a concern about the drainage and flooding problem in the Johnson Creek Basin. In reading these, I am pleased to note that we seem to be reaching a consensus by all concerned. First, all parties share at least one common concern. To bring about a physical improvement to the serious drainage problems in the Johnson Creek Basin. Second, there is an obvious recognition for potential housing, commercial or industrial development in the area which would thus bring jobs and economic stimuli if the drainage problem can be resolved. We know how and have a technical wherewithal to resolve the drainage problem. We know that with adequate engineering projects and equitable regulatory procedures for future development, the drainage problems which lead to flooding can be solved.

Where disagreement has occurred in the past in the issue yet to be resolved is over the means of equitably financing these projects and the administrative and

legislative mechanisms that should be used to put the improvements and financing into place and maintain them. There are in a sense five groups concerned with this issue. The general public, the Metro Council, RAFT, Up the Creek and Fair Share. With the recent position taken by RAFT all three special interest groups now contend that the Local Improvement District (LID) as constituted by Metro is not feasible. At the same time, all groups have indicated a strong desire to have Metro continue to maintain a lead in resolving the matter. This is the same position I took before the Metro Regional Services Committee on December 9, 1980. We have now reached a point of positive momentum which I would like to keep going. The continued existence of the in place LID, however, is as was put by one Metro Councilor "like holding someone's foot to the fire while you're trying to cure their headache."

One thing that we are not short of is options for finding the political solution to finance and administer this project. Suggestions range from a regionwide tax to a special service district to condemnation of property. I am not advocating any of these positions at this time. But I am advocating that Metro bring all of the interested parties together and begin to build for a further consensus. I think it is important that Metro clearly indicate its intent to continue the process to find a solution. While we have lost Corps of Engineers funding

for this fiscal year, it is possible to receive future funding provided the Corps can be assured of Metro's continued sponsorship. In my discussions with officials at the Corps, it was indicated that this need not be a LID ordinance but a letter of intent or a resolution of the Council and this can easily be done. While we have been through some rough times, I believe we have made progress. We now have the opportunity to move forward positively and this is something which I believe is shared eagerly by all parties concerned.

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