

10 September 2007

TO: Blaine Chamber of Commerce
FAX: 332-4544



RE: Blaine is a *destination* - NOT just a portal

This is inadequate!

The village of "Fairhaven" in South Bellingham is a geographical destination. In 1983 we constructed the masonry lamp columns. These are significant, **AND** symbolic: Blaine needs similar identity enhancement, with the downtown designated "Blaine Harbor," to attract people.

Good, descriptive highway signs can contribute. The signs we have had thus far direct folks to Semiahmoo and Birch Bay, but do not direct folks along Peace Portal Drive to downtown Blaine. Folks headed for the border on the Pacific Highway exit get trapped between waiting trucks or end up by the park off D Street or the H Street shopping center, and never experience Blaine Harbor at all!

Some signs are vital reader-boards, like the ones used by the casinos. Are we going to let our business pass us by into Canada without an attempt at corralling some of it? Blaine is generally a negative experience for those who wait in line and badly need a restroom. We need to overcome this by providing information, via signs, and services in the way of restrooms - among other things! I can agree with those who think billboards unfair and unnecessary, but I hope you join with us in our effort to substitute some casino signs along I-5 with Blaine Harbor signs.

1. Semiahmoo gets more signage than Blaine - *Why?*
2. Casinos get moving signs and their "businesses" compete with tax-paying businesses. *We need to respond with superior efforts!*
3. Blaine (Harbor) needs to be put on the map, "with bells on"...
4. Exit 275 is as much a liability for a Blaine public relations advocate as it is a hazard for visiting travelers waiting in line.
5. Exit 276: To the border, Big Al's, filling stations - **NOT downtown!**
6. Exit 274, "Peace Portal Drive":

Please support ⇒

Blaine Harbor
Services & Marina

7. We need several billboard-type signs on the highway:

Please support ⇒

Blaine Harbor Welcomes You
Services • Sculpture Park • Restrooms

8. The vision of a future footbridge crossing Blaine Harbor to Semiahmoo generates positive interest and discussion, and if implemented, *the impact would be immediately recognized...!*

Sincerely,

Joel Douglas