

Proposed Parks Levy Frequently Asked Questions

August 6, 2008

What is the Parks Levy?

It is a proposal that will be submitted to Seattle voters on November 4, 2008 to lift the limit on property taxes in order to collect funds for Seattle Parks.

How much would it take in, and over how much time?

\$144,720,000. It would last for six years, from 2009 through 2014.

What would the levy cost property owners?

A home assessed at \$450,000 would pay approximately \$80 per year.

How did it come about?

The current eight year parks levy will expire at the end of December, 2008. Because of requests and inquiries from the community, the City Council created a Citizens' Advisory Committee in April 2008, and asked the Committee to propose options for parks, open space, boulevard, trail, green infrastructure, and recreation projects and to identify strategic funding options for these potential improvements and acquisitions. On June 30, 2008, the Committee submitted its report identifying priority projects and needs and recommended placing a proposed parks levy before the voters this fall. Following public hearings, the City Council adopted Ordinance 112749, placing a levy on the November 2008 ballot.

What kinds of projects would it fund?

Green spaces (open spaces and greenbelts, and other open areas); neighborhood parks (existing parks, new parks identified in neighborhood plans, new parks identified in the Seattle's Parks and Recreation 2006 Development Plan, boulevards, and other properties purchased by the City for open-space and recreational purposes); and playfields (existing or new athletic fields, open play spaces, and similar areas, including spectator enhancements such as seating).

Would there be citizen oversight?

Yes. A 16-member Citizen Oversight Committee would review expenditures, advise on allocations for upcoming budget years, make recommendations on Opportunity Fund expenditures, and perform other duties. Members would have staggered terms, would be appointed by the Mayor (eight members) and City Council (eight members) and would represent the community at large geographically.

List of Projects:

Acquisition: \$24 million

12th Avenue Urban Center Village

Ballard Hub Urban Village

Belltown Urban Center Village

Bitter Lake Hub Urban Village

Capitol Hill Urban Center Village

Chinatown-International District Urban Center Village
Commercial Core Urban Center Village
Denny Triangle Urban Center Village
First Hill Urban Center Village
Fremont Hub Urban Village
Greenwood-Phinney Ridge Residential Urban Village
Lake City Urban Village
Morgan Junction Residential Urban Village
North Rainier Hub Urban Village
Ravenna Urban Center Village
University Urban Center Village
West Seattle Junction Hub Urban Village
Westwood-Highland Residential Urban Village
Wedgwood Neighborhood northeast of Dahl Playfield
Beach Drive area northwest of Morgan Junction

Green Space Acquisitions: \$6 million

Arroyos Natural Area
East Duwamish Greenbelt
Duwamish Head Greenbelt
Northeast Queen Anne Greenbelt
Ravenna Woods
Thornton Creek Watershed
West Duwamish Greenbelt

Development: \$33,090,000

Playground renovations
Atlantic St.
Bayview
Beacon Hill
Bhy Kracke
Brighton
Fairmount
Gas Works
Golden Gardens
International District
John C. Little
Laurelhurst Playfield
Lawton
Maple Leaf
Matthews Beach
Montlake
Northacres
Rainier Playfield
Ross Playground
Roxhill Park

*Sandel Playground
Seward Park
Volunteer Park*

Reservoirs
Maple Leaf Reservoir

West Seattle Reservoir

Skateparks
*Myrtle Skatedot
Judkins Skatespot
Roxhill Skatespot
Convert three wading pools to spray parks
Georgetown Wading Pool
Two additional wading pools*

Off-Leash Areas
Queen Anne and Magnolia

Northgate Urban Center Park: Development of first phase of new park north of Northgate Mall.

*Hing Hay Park: Renovation of existing park and development of park on land acquired with 2000 parks and open space levy funds.
7th Elect Church Site: Development of park on land acquired with 2000 parks and open space levy funds.*

Crown Hill Elementary: Development of park on land that is expected to be acquired from the Seattle School District.

Cedar Park: Renovation of Cedar Park in northeast Seattle on land acquired from the School District.

Chinook Beach Park: Completion of Chinook Beach Park in the Rainier Beach area - a south Lake Washington site where juvenile Chinook salmon will rear.

Marra-Desimone Park: Development of the park, which includes the Marra Farm, Seattle's largest site for urban gardening, in accordance with long-range development plan.

Camp Long: Renovation of kitchen and upgrade of other aspects of this environmental learning center facility.

Othello Park: Safety and lighting improvement at Othello Park.

Queen Anne Boulevard Improvements: Continue improvements to this Parks and Recreation boulevard started with 2000 parks and open space levy funds.

Victor Steinbrueck Park: Improvements to public safety, including but not limited to improving sight lines into the park, renovating seating, renovating the former children's play area, improving and expanding lighting, and upgrading landscaping subject to Council review.

Seattle Asian Art Museum: \$9,000,000

Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center: \$2,500,000

Playfields: \$10,500,000

Lower Woodland Playfield #7: Renovate this lit sand field to provide synthetic turf and more energy efficient lighting.

Lower Woodland Playfield #2: Renovate this lit sand field to provide synthetic turf.

Delridge Playfield: Renovate this lit sand field to provide synthetic turf.

Genesee Playfield #1: Renovate this lit sand field to provide synthetic turf.

Major Neighborhood Parks: \$10,950,000

Jefferson Park Development: Further implementation of Jefferson Park Master Plan.

Construct a district skate park facility at Jefferson Park.

Washington Park Arboretum Improvements: Further implementation of Arboretum Master Plan, including projects such as Pacific Connections, trails, and other improvements.

Magnuson Park Improvements: Improvements to shoreline access and development of a bicycle pathway to the 65th Street entrance.

Children's Play Garden: Garden and play area being developed for severely handicapped children. This funding would create working garden portion of this facility.

Discovery Park: Restore Capehart site to green space including slab and roadway demolition and removal, grading and seeding.

Trails: \$7,250,000

Burke Gilman Trail: Complete Burke-Gilman Trail through Ballard. This funding could cover 50% of the cost, with the expectation that the remaining funding would come from SDOT or other sources.

West Duwamish Trail Development: Create a linear park, including bicycle and trail improvements along the Duwamish River.

Lake to Bay Trail (formerly Potlatch Trail): Construct Thomas Street Overpass between Myrtle Edwards Park and Queen Anne as first phase of bicycle/pedestrian trail from Myrtle Edwards Park to Lake Union.

Environment: \$6,600,000

Forest and Stream Restoration - Green Seattle Partnership: Fund work of the Green Seattle Partnership, which allows the City to leverage the work of the Cascade Land Conservancy to re-establish healthy urban forests on city-owned property. Potential project locations include: West Duwamish Greenbelt; Longfellow Creek; Ravenna Park; Burke Gilman Trail; and Cheasty Greenspace.

Forest and Stream Restoration - Kiwanis Ravine: Restore habitat in Kiwanis Ravine, which is the location of a major heron rookery.

Community Gardens: Fund the acquisition and development of new Community Gardens or P-Patches and the development of Community Gardens or P-Patches on existing City-owned properties (anticipated four or more sites). The project will focus on the following neighborhoods, but may include others as opportunities arise: Ballard, Queen Anne, Rainier Valley, and West Seattle.

Shoreline Access: Develop existing City-owned street-ends to provide publicly accessible shoreline. Potential project locations include: NE 135th Street; NE 130th Street; 9/McGraw Street; 20th Avenue NW; 26/S. Fidalgo Street; 75th Avenue S.; 72nd Avenue S.; SW Bronson Way; Spokane Street; and S. Riverside Drive, but may include other sites as well. It is anticipated that the shoreline access funding provided by the levy will be supplemented by funding from other sources. However, funding may still prove to be insufficient to complete the number of projects listed here.

Opportunity Fund: \$15,000,000

What is the Opportunity Fund?

It is a fund that can be used for projects identified by neighborhood and community groups. Projects would be approved by ordinance, and could include acquisition and/or development of off-leash areas, community gardens, P-Patches, trails, and neighborhood parks. The Oversight Committee would consider these criteria:

- *Did the project undergo public review or is it consistent with an approved plan, such as a neighborhood plan?*

- *Does the project address a park or open space deficiency or underserved community?*
- *Is the project in an area experiencing growth, particularly an urban village or urban center?*
- *Does the project address an immediate health or safety problem, or take advantage of an opportunity that would otherwise be lost?*
- *Does the project contribute to solving major challenges facing our community, such as climate change, the health of our waterways, or growth management?*
- *Does the project have the potential to leverage other resources from other public agencies, public, private or philanthropic partners, and/or in-kind contributions of time and energy from private citizens?*
- *Does the project result in significantly higher operating costs for the City?*
- *Does the project demonstrate new and creative methods to meet the community's needs for parks and green spaces? and/or*
- *Does the project demonstrate a high degree of neighborhood involvement and support?*