

**Resolution Number: 31073**

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A RESOLUTION relating to the **levy** lid lift to be submitted to the voters by the ordinance that was introduced as Council Bill 116274; requesting a Management Plan; and requesting the Mayor and various City departments to undertake actions to address the policy and program recommendations of the **Parks** and Green Spaces **Levy** Citizens' Advisory Committee.

**Date introduced/referred:** July 14, 2008

**Date adopted:** July 21, 2008

**Status:** Adopted

**Vote:** 7-0 (Excused: Clark, McIver)

**Committee:** Committee of the Whole

**Sponsor:** RASMUSSEN, CO-SPONSOR: BURGESS, CONLIN

**Index Terms:** STATING-POLICY, ELECTIONS, PARKS, OPEN-SPACE-LAND, CITIZENS-ADVISORY-COMMITTEES PROPERTY-TAXES, TAXES

**References/Related Documents:** Related: CB 116274

**Text**

A RESOLUTION relating to the levy lid lift to be submitted to the voters by the ordinance that was introduced as Council Bill 116274; requesting a Management Plan; and requesting the Mayor and various City departments to undertake actions to address the policy and program recommendations of the Parks and Green Spaces Levy Citizens' Advisory Committee.

WHEREAS, under the ordinance that was introduced as Council Bill 116274, the City will submit to the voters a six-year, \$145,500,000 levy lid lift to acquire and develop new parks, recreation facilities, green spaces, playfields, trails, and community gardens; and redevelop, repair and restore existing parks, recreation facilities, cultural facilities, green spaces, playfields, trails, community gardens, and shoreline areas; and

WHEREAS, the ordinance that was introduced as Council Bill 116274 will require the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation to submit an annual spending plan if the levy lid lift is approved by the voters;

WHEREAS, in the course of its work, the Parks and Green Spaces Citizens' Advisory Committee created by the City Council in Resolution 31055 identified several policy and program changes that the Committee believed worthy of consideration by the Mayor and Council and noted them in its final report, as shown in Attachment A;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE THAT:

Section 1. Management Plan. If the levy lid lift proposed in the ordinance that was introduced as Council Bill 116274 is approved by the voters, the Department of Parks and Recreation ("Department") will be required to submit a proposed spending plan allocating expected additional taxes and interest earnings among the categories, subcategories, and projects for the coming year as part of the annual budget process. To assist the Council in reviewing such spending plans, the Council requests that the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation ("Superintendent") develop a Management Plan that: (1) sets out the schedule for project implementation; (2) identifies the key positions that will manage the programs and projects funded under the levy lid lift; and (3) describes each position's specific role in levy implementation. This Plan should also describe how staffing levels are expected to change over a six-year period. The Council intends that positions funded from levy proceeds will sunset at the end of the levy term unless otherwise authorized by ordinance. The Council requests that the Department submit the Management Plan to the Council no later than June 1, 2009. The Department is requested to update the Plan annually and submit the updated Plan to the Mayor and City Council. In addition, the Superintendent is requested to work with the Seattle Parks Foundation to seek private and public funds to enhance projects and programs funded through the levy. The Plan should also describe how levy funds will leverage these private and public funds.

Section 2. Parks and Green Spaces Advisory Committee Policy and Program Recommendations. The recommendations for policy and program changes are shown in Attachment A.

Section 3. Future Levy for Parks Facilities. The Council requests that the Mayor consider proposing a levy for the ballot in 2010 focused on parks facilities or combined with the Seattle Center to address the unfunded projects considered by the Parks and Green Spaces Citizens' Advisory Committee ("Committee") created by the City Council in Resolution 31055. These unfunded projects are listed in the Appendices to the Committee's final report in Clerk File 309493. The Committee conducted significant outreach and obtained project information from community meetings, e-mails to the Council's web site, and survey forms, but was unable to recommend funding all projects. These unfunded projects include community recreation centers (especially those at locations that were not funded in the two previous Seattle Center/Community Center levies), swimming pools, arts and cultural facilities, and senior centers, among other things.

Section 4. Identification of Additional Means to Create Parks and Open Space. The Council requests that the Department add a task to its Strategic Action Plan 2009 implementation work program to assess additional means to fund the acquisition and development of parks in rapidly growing neighborhoods that have deficits in parks and green spaces, as well as funding for operations and maintenance. The means

to be considered should include creating a metropolitan parks district, transferring development rights, and imposing open space impact fees. The Council requests that the Department of Finance and the Office of Policy Management dedicate staff resources to assist the Department in this analysis.

Section 5. Interdepartmental Strategy for Creating Green Infrastructure and Green Connections. The Council requests that the Executive create an interdepartmental work group, comprised of the departments of City Light, Planning and Development, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Seattle Public Utilities, and the Office of Sustainability and Environment, to better coordinate City efforts to create green infrastructure and green connections on City-owned land including but not limited to street ends, and utility and street rights-of-way. Staffing for this interdepartmental work group should be included in the 2009 work program for the Office of Policy and Management (OPM). In an increasingly dense urban environment, such projects present an opportunity for the City to improve the quality of life for its residents without having to incur the significant expense of property acquisition and major park development. This effort should build upon the recommendations in the Bands of Green report updated by the Seattle Parks Foundation in 2006 and the Open Space Seattle 2100 report endorsed by Resolution 30934. This interdepartmental work group should develop prototype programs and projects to green City-owned land and identify strategies to better coordinate programs and funds from various City departments. The Council requests that OPM present a written report identifying strategies and prototype programs and projects to the City Council by December 1, 2009.

Section 6. Inter-agency Strategy for Neighborhood Green Spaces. The Council requests that the Department add a task to its Strategic Action Plan 2010 implementation work program to consult with other public agencies, in particular the Seattle School District, to identify creative uses of school (and other public agency) facilities and grounds to help meet park, recreation, and open space needs throughout the City.

Section 7. Broaden the Use of City Golf Courses. The Council requests that the Department add a task to its Strategic Action Plan 2009 implementation work program to assess the use of proceeds from the City's golf course operations to pay for multi-purpose improvements at City golf courses such as perimeter trails.

Section 8. Green Jobs. The implementation of the parks and green spaces levy, in particular projects such as reforestation and stream and shoreline restoration, provide an opportunity to create green jobs. The Council encourages the Department and other departments to help foster employment of this kind.

Section 9. Strengthen Program Partnerships. The Council urges the Department to strengthen its partnerships with nonprofits that have the potential to leverage additional resources to achieve the goals of this levy through programming and volunteer efforts.

Section 10. Swimming Pool Development and Redevelopment. The Council encourages the Department of Parks and Recreation to build upon its current efforts to

modernize the City's swimming pools for energy efficiency and savings in operations by completing the effort to install pool covers and ultra-violet light treatment of water through the Green Building Revolving Fund and other means. The Department is also encouraged to consider public-private partnerships to expand its efforts to develop new and renovate existing swimming pools to increase recreational and fitness opportunities.

Section 11. Review of Best Available Technology for Synthetic Turf. Prior to appropriating any funds for playfield projects to be funded under the levy lid lift in the ordinance that was introduced as C.B. 116274, the Council will review available research on use of synthetic turf and alternative means to improve the City's existing fields. Depending on the results of this analysis, Council will either direct funding to the synthetic turf projects that are identified in the proposed levy or redirect the funding associated with those projects to other playfield enhancements. This review will be completed by July 1, 2009.

Section 12. Victor Steinbrueck Park. It is the Council's intent that prior to appropriating any planning and design funds for Victor Steinbrueck Park (Park) to be funded under the levy lid lift in the ordinance that was introduced as C.B. 116274, the Council will evaluate the success of removal of the automated public toilet, installation and operation of surveillance cameras, and increased policing in addressing public safety issues in and around the Park. It is also the Council's intent that prior to appropriating any construction funds for Victor Steinbrueck Park to be funded under the levy, the Council will require that the Department of Parks and Recreation conduct a project design process with broad public outreach and submit a project design to the Council for its review and approval. Should levy funds not be appropriated for the Park project and not be used to address any unanticipated additional costs of other levy funded projects in the Development category, these funds will be placed in the levy Opportunity Fund.

Section 13. When the Council reviews the Mayor's proposed budgets for 2009 and later years, the Council intends to assess the extent to which the Executive has complied with the requests in this resolution.

Adopted by the City Council the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2008, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2008.

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President \_\_\_\_\_ of the City Council

Filed by me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2008.

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City Clerk

Attachment A: Recommendations for Policy and Program Changes,  
excerpted from Parks and Green Spaces Citizens' Advisory  
Committee Final Report, June 2008

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## Attachment A

Excerpted from Parks and Green Spaces Citizens' Advisory Committee  
Final Report, June 2008

### V. Recommendations for Policy and Program Changes

In the course of the Committee's work several important policy issues emerged which the Committee believes are worthy of consideration by the Mayor and Council:

The Committee urges the Mayor and Council to address unmet needs at parks facilities, including the community recreation centers, swimming pools, arts and cultural facilities and senior centers by including those facilities in a future levy. With a limited amount of funding potentially available in this levy, the Committee could not fund critical improvements to park facilities beyond essential life-safety improvements at Langston Hughes and the Volunteer Park Seattle Asian Art Museum, and needed upgrades at Camp Long. The Committee is aware of the critical need to improve the City's recreation centers, especially at those locations which did not receive funding in the two previous Seattle Center/Community Center levies, and the need for improvements to pools and other park facilities. We believe voters would support a future measure that combines these needs with the Seattle Center, or in another levy focused on parks facilities.

In addition to placing the levy on the ballot, the Committee urges the Mayor and Council to consider adopting other mechanisms, such as the creation of a Metropolitan Parks District and Transfers of Development Rights, to fund the creation of parks and green spaces in underserved areas. The Committee finds that a levy of the amount proposed, while enormously valuable, will be insufficient to address the deficits of parks and green spaces in all of the City's rapidly growing neighborhoods. The creation of a Metropolitan Parks District, with the City Council serving as its governing board, has the potential to provide a permanent source of funding for parks and recreation needs. Transfer of Development Rights are being used to acquire open space in other jurisdictions.

The Committee recommends that the City take advantage of tremendous potential to expand and enhance Seattle's parks and create green connections among neighborhoods through creative use of street ends, utility rights-of-way and other City-owned properties. This potential can only be achieved through better cooperation among City departments. The Parks Department cannot alone meet the community's need for parks, green spaces and "green infrastructure." The Mayor and City Council must insist that other departments, (such as the Department of Transportation, Seattle Public Utilities, and City Light) are proactive in helping communities address open space deficiencies, improve parks, and create green connections. Committee members pointed to the creation of new

park land on reservoirs at Cal Anderson Park and Jefferson Park as excellent examples of what can be achieved when City departments work in concert to create open space. This levy proposal includes a substantial number of projects that will require cutting across departmental silos, including more park projects on reservoir lids, the creation of bicycle trails as "green connections" between parks and neighborhoods, and the reforestation of greenbelts that are owned, in part, by City utilities.

The Committee recommends that the City take the initiative to overcome park and green space deficiencies by working with other jurisdictions to make more creative use of land that is owned by public agencies. Past park levies have provided the resources for the Parks Department to acquire surplus land from the Seattle School District or other public agencies for Park development. The Committee believes that strategy should also be considered if this levy passes. There are also opportunities to create new neighborhood green spaces without transferring ownership of the land. A prime example is the "Gray to Green" strategy used by the City and the Seattle School District in the past to convert paved-over school yards into playgrounds and community gardens that serve the needs of students and the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Committee urges the Parks Department to strengthen its partnerships with nonprofits that have the potential to leverage additional resources to achieve the goals of this levy. The Committee suggests that the City could offer more and better recreation programs by coordinating the Parks Department's programming with nonprofit organizations such as the Boys and Girls Clubs and the YMCA. In a similar vein, the Green Seattle Partnership has mobilized a tremendous amount of volunteer energy to restore the quality of Seattle's forests and stream corridors.

The Committee supports the issuance of revenue bonds as a mechanism to finance improvements at City golf courses, and expand their use through the creation of perimeter trails. During the public meetings, citizens stressed the need for improvements at the City's golf courses. Others came forward to urge the City to broaden the use of the golf courses by creating perimeter trails, as recommended in the "Bands of Green" report by the Seattle Parks Foundation. These advocates proposed the City issue revenue bonds to be paid with the proceeds of golf course operations as a strategy for funding these improvements. The Committee recommends that the Council explore the feasibility of this strategy. It should be noted that the Committee has not included levy funding for the Jackson Park Trail because of the potential use of revenue bonds. If that strategy proves infeasible, the Committee believes the Jackson Park Trail could be funded through the opportunity fund created by the levy.

The Committee urges the City to lead the way in creating "Green Jobs" within its Park system and throughout City government. Participants in the public outreach workshops suggested restructuring jobs within City departments to place greater emphasis on environmental stewardship. Others suggested creating more job opportunities for youth and/or disadvantaged individuals to work in green projects such as reforestation and stream restoration.