



King County

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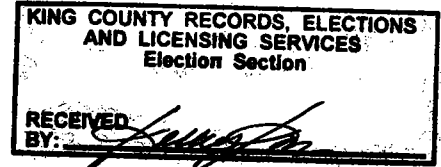
**KING COUNTY**

**Signature Report**

**May 11, 2007**

**Ordinance 15759**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104



**Proposed No.** 2007-0224.3

**Sponsors** Phillips, Ferguson and Constantine

1 AN ORDINANCE providing for the submission to the  
2 qualified electors of King County at a special election to be  
3 held in King County on August 21, 2007, of a proposition  
4 authorizing a property tax levy in excess of the levy  
5 limitation contained in chapter 84.55 RCW, for a period of  
6 six consecutive years, at a total rate of not more than  
7 \$0.050 per one thousand dollars of assessed valuation in the  
8 first year with annual increases in the levy amount by the  
9 percentage change in the consumer price index in years two  
10 through six, for the purpose of providing funds to enable  
11 the continued and increased operation and maintenance  
12 supporting King County's regional and rural parks and  
13 recreation facilities and programs, and increased  
14 accessibility for the disabled; providing for the  
15 resubmission of the proposition to the voters at the special  
16 election held on November 6, 2007, should this measure be

17 rejected by the voters at the August 21,2007, election; and  
18 providing for other related matters.

19

20 **SECTION 1. Findings.**

21 A. King County owns and operates a park system with over twenty-five thousand  
22 acres of regional parks and open spaces and over one hundred seventy-five miles of  
23 regional trails. In addition, the county is the provider of local parks in the rural area and  
24 is the transitional provider of local parks in the urban unincorporated areas. County parks  
25 and open spaces include Marymoor park, Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland park, the  
26 King County Aquatic Center and portions of the Burke-Gilman trail.

27 B. Since 2003, on recommendation of the Metropolitan Parks Task Force and  
28 direction from the county executive and county council, the parks and recreation division  
29 has focused on managing a system of regional parks, open spaces and trails and a limited  
30 set of regional active recreation assets.

31 C. Consistent with its role as a regional and local rural service provider under  
32 Countywide Planning Policies and the state growth management act, the county has  
33 divested itself of local parks and facilities in urban unincorporated areas as these areas  
34 incorporate or annex to cities.

35 D. Since 2003, the county has emphasized generating revenue from park system  
36 assets. Over twenty percent of annual parks and recreation operating revenue is now  
37 generated from user fees and entrepreneurial efforts.

38 E. Nearly sixty percent of the operating budget for parks and recreation is  
39 directly provided by a voter-approved levy.

40 F. The current parks levy was recommended by the Metropolitan Parks Task  
41 Force before being referred to voters by the metropolitan King County council. The levy  
42 was approved by fifty-seven percent of the voters at a special election in May 2003.

43 G. The current parks levy was initially authorized at a maximum rate of \$0.049  
44 per one thousand dollars of assessed value. Collection began in 2004, and will be  
45 completed at the end of 2007. Levy proceeds may only be applied to the operating costs  
46 of regional parks, local rural parks, the community partnership grants program, and costs  
47 associated with these purposes.

48 H. As specified under ordinance 14586, a citizen oversight committee was  
49 established. The July 2006 report of the citizen oversight committee concluded that the  
50 county complied with all levy requirements in 2004 and 2005.

51 I. The King County executive created the parks futures task force in November  
52 2006 to recommend a funding plan for the current park system and to examine what steps  
53 should be taken, if any, regarding future park system acquisitions. The task force is  
54 comprised of nineteen individuals representing business, nonprofit and environmental  
55 groups. It began meeting in November 2006 and concluded its work in March 2007,  
56 receiving information from the county, various cities and stakeholders.

57 J. The task force issued a report in March 2007 recommending that the county  
58 place two companion ballots before the voters at the August primary election. The first  
59 recommendation was to renew the parks levy with a \$0.07, six-year, inflation adjusted  
60 property tax lid lift. The second recommendation was for a new \$0.05, six-year, inflation  
61 adjusted property tax lid lift to expand park and recreation opportunities through the  
62 acquisition of open space and regional trails, and increased environmental education and

63 conservation programs and capital improvements at Woodland Park Zoo. The consumer  
64 price index would be used to determine annual inflation.

65 K. Under state law, an inflation adjusted levy lid lift may be for a maximum term  
66 of six years, and levy funds may not supplant other funds.

67 L. The task force recommended that the \$0.07 renewal levy be used to sustain  
68 and enhance current levels of operations and maintenance of county regional and rural  
69 parks, to provide up to \$300,000 annually for the recreation grant programs, and support  
70 capital funding for the parks division.

71 M. King County has identified an acquisition and development strategy to  
72 complete the three-hundred-mile regional trails system, which includes the Burke-  
73 Gilman, Sammamish River, Green River and East Lake Sammamish trails. The strategy  
74 identifies priority acquisitions and development based on criteria such as key connectors  
75 or missing links, proximity to urban populations, pursuit of acquisitions which could be  
76 lost to development, and partnerships with other agencies.

77 N. King County has a goal of improving water quality in the region by acquiring  
78 and preserving open space and natural areas within watersheds.

79 O. The task force recommended that three cents of the five-cent acquisition levy  
80 be allocated to King County for protecting and acquiring key open space and natural  
81 lands as well as acquiring and developing critical trail connections as identified in the  
82 division's Regional Trail System Plan.

83 P. The task force recommended that open space and natural lands acquisitions be  
84 made that will protect additional lands, shorelines, lakes, streams and water quality  
85 within watersheds, and called on the county to ensure appropriate public access as part of

86 any such acquisitions. The task force noted that both the purchase of development rights  
87 and fee title may be appropriate.

88 Q. Regional trail expenditures recommended by the task force include acquisition  
89 of remaining planned regional trail corridors and development of key urban regional trail  
90 connections including the East Lake Sammamish trail, the Sammamish River trail  
91 connection to East Lake Sammamish trail and the Soos Creek trail.

92 R. The task force recommended that one cent of the five-cent acquisition levy  
93 proceeds be distributed to cities for acquisition and development of open space and  
94 natural lands and city trail projects that support connections to the regional trail system,  
95 defined to include both county regional trails and city trails that are regional in nature,  
96 and may specifically include local trails in underserved areas linking to city or county  
97 trails that connect to regional trails. Any such distributions would be contingent upon an  
98 equal or greater contribution of matching funds from the recipient city for the same  
99 project.

100 S. The task force recommended that city funding requests be made through the  
101 Conservation Futures Tax Citizen Oversight Committee, whose mission should be  
102 expanded to review applications for this purpose.

103 T. The task force recommended that one cent of the five-cent acquisition levy be  
104 used for a one-time investment in environmental education and conservation programs  
105 and capital improvements at Woodland Park Zoo.

106 U. There are approximately two hundred sixty thousand disabled citizens in King  
107 County, who are entitled to access to parks and recreational opportunities.

108            SECTION 2. Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout this  
109 ordinance unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

110            A. "Levy" means the portion of the regular property tax levy, for the specific  
111 purpose and term provided in this ordinance and authorized by the electorate in  
112 accordance with state law.

113            B. "Levy proceeds" means the principal amount of funds raised by the levy, any  
114 interest earnings on the funds and the proceeds of any interim financing following  
115 authorization of the levy.

116            C. "Limit factor" means the ratio of the most recent September Consumer Price  
117 Index to the immediately previous September Consumer Price Index (final published  
118 CPI-W All City Average, as calculated by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, or  
119 its successor) expressed as a multiple of one hundred percent to achieve the result of one  
120 hundred percent plus inflation.

121            D. "Recreation grant programs" means the community partnership grant program  
122 through which King County provides funds to recreation-oriented user groups, sports  
123 associations and community-based organizations to undertake any combination of  
124 developing, operating or maintaining a public park or recreation facility or program for  
125 the public benefit.

126            E. "Regional parks" means:

- 127            1. Those parks, facilities, or properties designated in Attachment A to this  
128 ordinance as regional trails, resource and ecological lands, regional active facilities or  
129 regional passive parks; and

130           2. Any other parks, facilities or properties, including, without limitation, new  
131 acquisitions, that are designated as regional parks by the parks and recreation division  
132 based on their regional use and that are similar in character and nature to the regional  
133 parks and recreation facilities identified in Attachment A to this ordinance.

134           F. "Rural parks" means:

135           1. Those parks facilities or properties designated in attachment A to this  
136 ordinance as rural parks and facilities; and

137           2. Any other parks, facilities or properties, including, without limitation, new  
138 acquisitions, that are designated as rural parks by the parks and recreation division based  
139 on their similar character and nature to those rural parks and recreation facilities  
140 identified in Attachment A to this ordinance.

141           SECTION 3. Levy submittal to voters. To provide necessary funds for the park  
142 and recreation purposes identified in section 5 of this ordinance, the county council shall  
143 submit to the qualified electors of the county a proposition authorizing a regular property  
144 tax levy in excess of the levy limitation contained in chapter 84.55 RCW for six  
145 consecutive years, with collection commencing in 2008, at a rate not to exceed \$0.050  
146 one thousand dollars of assessed value. In accordance with RCW 84.55.050, this levy  
147 shall be a regular property tax levy subject to the limit factor.

148           SECTION 4. Deposit of levy proceeds. The levy proceeds shall be deposited in  
149 a levy subfund of the parks and recreation fund, or its successor.

150           SECTION 5. Eligible expenditures. If approved by the qualified electors of the  
151 county, all levy proceeds shall be used for the continued and increased operations and  
152 maintenance of King County's regional and rural parks, program improvements to

153 provide increased accessibility for the disabled and to provide up to \$300,000 annually  
154 for recreation grant programs. Eligible expenditures shall include all costs and charges to  
155 the parks and recreation division or the county associated with or attributable to the  
156 purposes listed in this section.

157 SECTION 6. Call for special election. In accordance with RCW 29A.04.321, a  
158 special election is called for August 21, 2007, to consider a proposition authorizing a  
159 regular property tax levy for the purposes described in this ordinance. The manager of  
160 the records, elections and licensing services division shall cause notice to be given of this  
161 ordinance in accordance with the state constitution and general law and to submit to the  
162 qualified electors of the county, at the said special county election, the proposition  
163 hereinafter set forth. The clerk of the council shall certify that proposition to the manager  
164 of the records, elections and licensing services division, in substantially the following  
165 form:

166 PROPOSITION 1: The King County Council has passed Ordinance X  
167 concerning funding for rural and regional parks, open space and trails. This proposition  
168 would replace an expiring levy and fund continued and increased maintenance,  
169 operations and disabled accessibility at King County's rural and regional parks (like  
170 Marymoor; Cougar Mountain; portions of Burke Gilman Trail). It would authorize King  
171 County to levy an additional regular property tax of \$0.050 cents per \$1,000 of assessed  
172 valuation for collection in 2008 and authorize annual increases by the percentage increase  
173 in the consumer price index for each of the five succeeding years, as allowed by chapter  
174 84.55 RCW. Should this proposition be:

175 Approved? \_\_



176 Rejected? \_\_

177           **SECTION 7. County parks citizen oversight board established.** If the  
178 qualified electors of King County approve the proposition set forth in section 6 of this  
179 ordinance, a county parks citizen oversight board shall be appointed by the county  
180 executive to review the expenditure of levy proceeds and make policy recommendations  
181 to the county executive and county council regarding future expenditures. In the event  
182 that the qualified electors of King County approve both the proposition set forth in  
183 section 6 of this ordinance and the proposition set forth in Ordinance ----- (Proposed  
184 Ordinance 2007-0225), Section 7, then the council may, at its discretion, nominate and  
185 confirm the same members to both boards or combine the board functions into one board.  
186 The board shall consist of nine members. Each councilmember shall nominate a  
187 candidate for the board from the councilmember's district. If the executive does not  
188 appoint a person who has been nominated by a councilmember, the executive must  
189 request that the councilmember nominate another candidate for appointment. Board  
190 members shall be confirmed by the council. Members shall be residents of King County.  
191 The chair of the council shall designate one additional person to participate in board  
192 discussion, but the person shall neither vote nor be a member of the board. On or before  
193 May 30 of each year beginning in 2009, the board shall review and make a written report  
194 to the King County executive and the King County council on the expenditure of all levy  
195 proceeds and any policy recommendations regarding levy proceeds. Ten copies of each  
196 written report shall be filed with the clerk of the council, for distribution to all  
197 councilmembers. The parks and recreation division shall provide the board with all

198 reports on division activities that the division transmits to the King County council in  
199 accordance with K.C.C. 7.08.090. The board expires June 30, 2014.

200           SECTION 8. Contingent resubmission to the voters at the November 6, 2007,  
201 **election and call for special election.** The proposition contained in section 6 of this  
202 ordinance shall be placed on the November 6, 2007, special election ballot by the King  
203 County manager of records, elections and licensing services if the proposition is not  
204 approved by the voters at the election held on August 21, 2007. In accordance with RCW  
205 29A.04.321, and only if the proposition is not approved by the voters at the election held  
206 on August 21, 2007, a special election is hereby called for November 6, 2007, for the  
207 purpose presenting the proposition contained in section 6 for the voters approval or  
208 rejection.

209           SECTION 9. Pursuant to RCW 29A.32.280, the following individuals are  
210 appointed to serve on the voters' pamphlet committees, each committee to write a  
211 statement for or against the proposed parks renewal levy ballot measure:

212	FOR	AGAINST
213	1. _____	1. _____
214	2. _____	2. _____
215	3. _____	3. _____
216	4. _____	4. _____

217           SECTION 10. Ratification. Certification of the proposition by the clerk of the  
218 county council to the manager of the records, elections and licensing services division in  
219 accordance with law before the election on August 21, 2007, and any other act consistent

220 with the authority and before the effective date of this ordinance are hereby ratified and  
221 confirmed.

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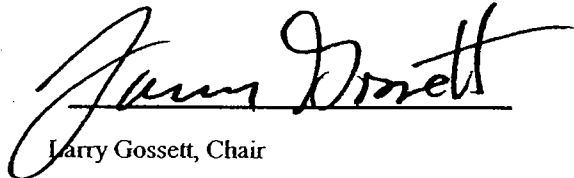
222 SECTION 11. Severability. If any provision of this ordinance or its application  
223 to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance or the  
224 application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

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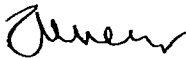
Ordinance 15759 was introduced on 4/2/2007 and passed by the Metropolitan King  
County Council on 5/7/2007, by the following vote:


Yes: 9 - Mr. Gossett, Ms. Patterson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr.  
Dunn, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Phillips, Ms. Hague and Mr. Constantine  
No: 0  
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

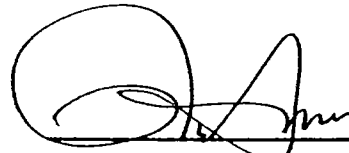
  
Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:

  
Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

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BY:   
ELECTIONS AND LICENSING SERVICES  
Election Section

APPROVED this 17 day of May, 2007.

  
Ron Sims, County Executive

Attachments A. List of King County Parks Facilities--March 2007

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KING COUNTY COUNCIL

*Attachment A to Operating Ordinance*

*List of King County Parks Facilities*

March 2007

***Regional Trails***

***North***

Burke Gilman Trail (1)

***East***

East Lake Sammamish Trail (3)

Klahanie Trail (3)

Redmond Watershed Trail (3)

Snoqualmie Valley Trail (3)

East Plateau Trail (3)

Preston Snoqualmie Trail (3)

Sammamish River Trail (1, 3)

West Lake Sammamish Trail (3)

***South***

Cedar River Trail (9)

Enumclaw Plateau Trail (9)

Green River to Cedar River Trail (9)

Maple Valley Lake Wilderness Trail (9)

Cedar River to Lake Sammamish Trail (3, 9)

Green River Trail (5, 7)

Lake Youngs Trail and Connector Trail (9)

Soos Creek Trail (9)

***Regional Active Facilities***

***North***

Big Finn Hill (6)

***East***

Marymoor Park (3)

Tolt River John McDonald Park (3)

***South***

Petrovitsky Park (9)

King County Aquatic Center (7)