



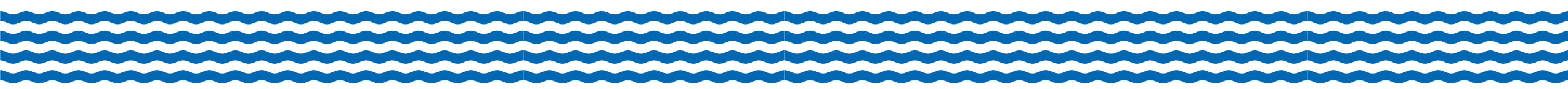
Parks Maintenance & Operations Levy Renewal

AB6090



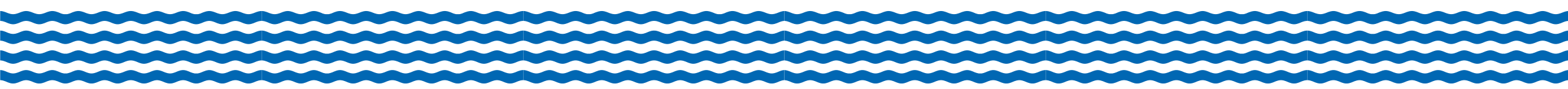
Agenda

- Parks Levy History
- Parks Levy Implementation
- 2022 Parks Levy Renewal Recommendation
- Parks Levy Options
- Election Logistics and Next Steps



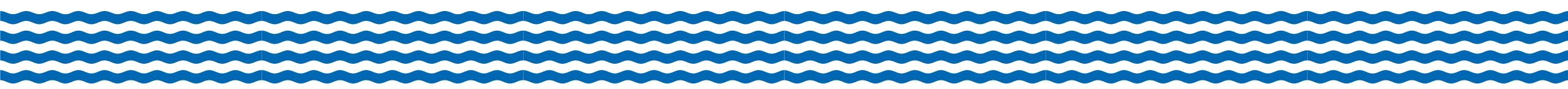
Presentation Overview

- Seeking direction from the City Council to place the parks levy renewal on the **November 8, 2022 ballot**, a full year ahead of the expiration of the current parks levy.
- Should the levy pass in November, City Council action will be required to **end the current levy one year early**.



Presentation Overview

- The parks levy renewal recommendation includes the following:
 - **Base levy:** Maintains the current parks levy amount and levy categories. The 2023 proposed base levy amount is \$989,923 and includes a 1% annual increase from 2022.
 - **Option 1:** Proposes additional funding for **ongoing playground replacements**, the alternatives vary from funding 25% of the estimated playground replacement costs over the life of the levy (\$109,000 annually) to fully funding the replacement costs (\$438,000 annually).
 - **Option 2:** Proposes increasing the annual funding for **Pioneer Park** to fund the restoration projects identified in the **Pioneer Park Forest Management Plan**. The funding alternatives range from \$36,000 to \$468,000 annually with the latter representing fully funding of the Forest Management Plan.



Parks Levy History: 2001-2008



Mercer Island Parks Levy History (2001-2002)

- In 2001, King County approached Mercer Island about transferring long-term ownership and operation of Luther Burbank Park to the City.
- The transfer of the park property was finalized in 2002.



Mercer Island Parks Levy History (2003)

- In 2003, the Mercer Island community approved a **six-year parks levy** to fund the operations and maintenance of Luther Burbank Park.
- The \$415,000 annual parks levy passed with 55% voter approval.

CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

PROPOSITION NO. __

LEVY FOR LUTHER BURBANK PARK OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

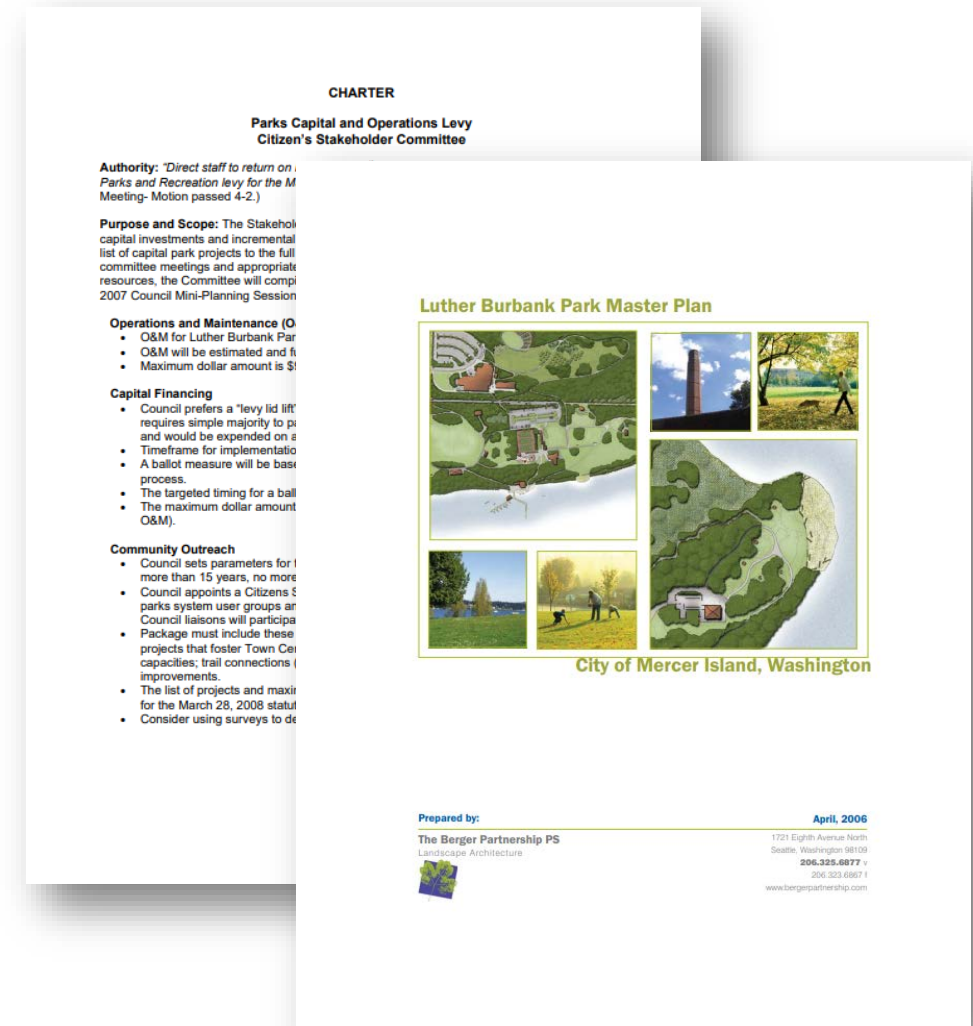
The City Council of the City of Mercer Island presents this proposition concerning annual increases in the City's regular property tax levy to pay costs of operating and maintaining Luther Burbank Park formerly owned by King County. This proposition authorizes annual increases in the City's levy for six consecutive years for this purpose. The levy shall be increased in year one above the limit set by RCW 84.55.010 by \$0.0662 per \$1,000 of assessed value to collect \$415,000. The levy may increase in years two through six by the June Seattle-Tacoma CPI-W. Should this proposition be approved?

YES

NO

Mercer Island Parks Levy History (2004 – 2007)

- The **Luther Burbank Park Master Plan was adopted in 2006** and established the long-term vision for the park, including providing the framework for future capital investments.
- In 2007, a Citizen's Stakeholder Committee was formed to prepare a recommendation on a parks levy ballot measure (to replace/renew the 2003 parks levy).
- **The Stakeholder Committee recommended that the parks levy should be expanded to support system-wide parks maintenance and operations in addition to funding Luther Burbank Park.**



Mercer Island Parks Levy History (2008)

- In 2008, the Mercer Island community approved a **15-year parks levy**.
- The scope of the parks levy included funding to continue operating Luther Burbank Park and to support operations at all city parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities.
- The \$900,000 annual parks levy passed with 54% voter approval and began in 2009.
- While the parks levy passed, the companion capital bond measure did not, having received only 53% approval. Bond measures require 60% approval.

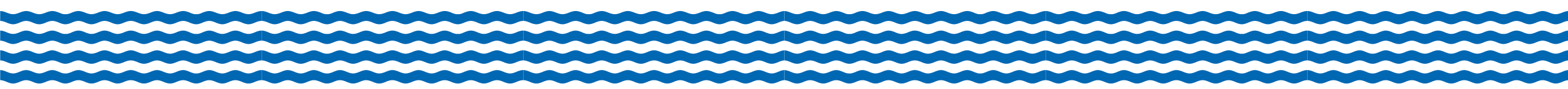
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND
PROPOSITION NO. 2

LEVY FOR PARK OPERATIONS
AND MAINTENANCE

The City Council of the City of Mercer Island adopted Ordinance No. 08-08 concerning property taxes to maintain and operate park and recreational facilities. This proposition would increase the City's regular property tax levy by \$900,000 to a total authorized rate of up to \$1.25 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for collection in 2009 and increase the levy as allowed by chapter 84.55 RCW for each of the 14 succeeding years to continue operating Luther Burbank Park, improve forest and vegetative health of open spaces, and operate and maintain park and recreation-related facilities and services. Should this proposition be:

APPROVED?.....

REJECTED?.....



2009 Parks Levy



2009 Parks Levy

- The 2008 ballot language was general and included funding to continue operating Luther Burbank Park and to support operations at all city parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities.
- The City Council allocated parks levy funding to specific categories for budgeting purposes. (See table at right.)
- The 2009 parks levy also included \$128,000 in funding associated with the bond measure that failed.

2009 Parks Levy	
Luther Burbank Park (O&M)	\$370,000
School Related Park & Recreation Activities (O&M)	\$260,000
Capital Projects (O&M)	\$128,000
Pioneer Park Forest Management (Capital)	\$77,000
Open Space/Vegetation Management (Capital)	\$65,000
Total	\$900,000

2009 Parks Levy

- When the City Council enacted the 2009 parks levy, they levied less than what was approved by the voters.
- The \$128,000 O&M associated with the bond measure was removed.
- While \$110,000 was allocated for small capital projects at Luther Burbank Park.
- **The final amount levied in 2009 was \$882,000, establishing the basis for the 15-year parks levy.**

2009 Parks Levy	
Luther Burbank Park (O&M)	\$370,000
School Related Park & Recreation Activities (O&M)	\$260,000
Capital Projects (O&M)	\$128,000
<u>Luther Burbank Small Capital Projects (Capital)</u>	<u>\$110,000</u>
Pioneer Park Forest Management (Capital)	\$77,000
Open Space/Vegetation Management (Capital)	\$65,000
Total	\$900,000 \$882,000

2009 Parks Levy

- Sometime during the life of the 2009 parks levy (likely around 2010), the reference to “School Park and Recreation Activities” was changed to general Parks Maintenance O&M.
- This was a reference/text change only and did not impact the budget or the parks levy.
- **The Parks Operations & Maintenance Funds collected via the parks levy are part of the General Fund.**

2009 Parks Levy	
Luther Burbank Park (O&M)	\$370,000
School Related Park & Recreation Activities (O&M)	\$260,000
<u>Parks Maintenance (O&M)</u>	<u>\$260,000</u>
Luther Burbank Small Capital Projects (Capital)	\$110,000
Pioneer Park Forest Management (Capital)	\$77,000
Open Space/Vegetation Management (Capital)	\$65,000
Total	\$882,000

Comparing the 2009 and 2022 Parks Levy Budget Allocations

- The table at the right reflects the 2022 parks levy budget allocation, compared to 2009.
- The 1% statutorily allowed increase was taken in all but two years over the life of the parks levy.
- The 1% increase was applied to the O&M categories, while the capital funding categories remained flat.

2009 vs. 2022 Parks Levy Budget Allocations		
	2009 Allocation	2022 Allocation
Luther Burbank Park (O&M)	\$370,000	\$373,007
Parks Maintenance (O&M)	\$260,000	\$355,115
Luther Burbank Small Capital Projects (Capital)	\$110,000	\$110,000
Pioneer Park Forest Management (Capital)	\$77,000	\$77,000
Open Space/Vegetation Management (Capital)	\$65,000	\$65,000
Total	\$882,000	\$980,122

Comparing the 2009 and 2022 Parks Levies

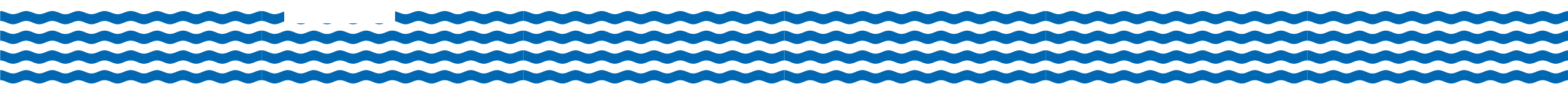
- The 2009 Parks Levy budget allocation was:
 - \$630,000 to Operations & Maintenance
 - \$252,000 to Capital Projects
- The 2022 Parks Levy budget allocation is:
 - **\$728,122 to Operations & Maintenance**
 - \$252,000 to Capital Projects

2009 vs. 2022 Parks Levy Budget Allocations		
	2009 Allocation	2022 Allocation
Luther Burbank Park (O&M)	\$370,000	\$373,007
Parks Maintenance (O&M)	\$260,000	\$355,115
Luther Burbank Small Capital Projects (Capital)	\$110,000	\$110,000
Pioneer Park Forest Management (Capital)	\$77,000	\$77,000
Open Space/Vegetation Management (Capital)	\$65,000	\$65,000
Total	\$882,000	\$980,122

2022 Park Operations & Maintenance General Fund - Expenditures

- In 2022, the parks operations and maintenance budget is **\$2.34 million.**

2022 Parks Operations & Maintenance Expenditures		
Expenditure Category	Amount	%
Park Maintenance	\$876,591	37%
Aubrey Davis Park Maintenance	\$530,778	23%
Luther Burbank Park Maintenance	\$373,007	16%
Athletic Field Maintenance	\$294,223	13%
Park Maintenance School Fields	\$195,842	8%
Trails Maintenance	\$69,690	3%
Total	\$2,340,131	



2022 Park Operations & Maintenance General Fund - Revenues

- In 2022, the parks levy contributes **\$728,122** to parks operations and maintenance, which is **31% of the funding for Mercer Island parks.**
- Other sources of revenue for parks operations and maintenance include General Fund Revenue such as Property Tax, Sales Tax, & B&O Tax.
- The City also receives funding from WSDOT for the maintenance of Aubrey Davis Park.

2022 Parks Operation & Maintenance Revenue		
Revenue Category	Amount	%
Sales/B&O/Other Property Taxes*	\$842,447	36%
Parks Levy	\$728,122	31%
WSDOT (Aubrey Davis Park)	\$570,596	24%
User Fees	\$198,966	9%
Total	\$2,340,131	

*The tax revenue amounts are estimated and represent the parks operations and maintenance proportionate share of the total tax revenue received in the General Fund.



2009 Parks Levy: 14 Years of Reinvestment



Luther Burbank Park – Operations & Maintenance



2022 Parks Levy Budget Allocation

Luther Burbank Park (O&M)	\$373,007
---------------------------	-----------

- Maintenance of landscaping including the planter beds, lawn upkeep, tree care and pruning, litter pick-up, and garbage.
- Maintenance of recreation facilities in the park including two playgrounds, tennis/pickleball courts, the off-leash dog area, and the swim beach.
- Maintenance of trails, open space areas, the parking lots, and the picnic areas.
- Maintenance of the Luther Burbank Administration Building.

Luther Burbank Park – Capital Projects

14 Years of Reinvestment

- Over the past 14 years, the parks levy supported over \$1.5 million in capital reinvestments in Luther Burbank Park.
- Capital project work included:
 - Park improvement projects
 - Trail improvement projects
 - Facility projects
 - Major landscaping projects & habitat restoration
 - Utilities and drainage projects
 - Critical planning and design projects, such as the dock replacement project

2022 Parks Levy Budget Allocation

Luther Burbank Small Capital Projects (Capital)	\$110,000
---	-----------



Luther Burbank Park – Capital Projects

14 Years of Reinvestment

Park Improvement Projects

- Floating dock for entry/exit of small unmotorized watercraft
- Playground parts, toys, and repairs
- Milfoil removal from the swim beach
- New/replacement park entrance sign
- Tennis court repairs

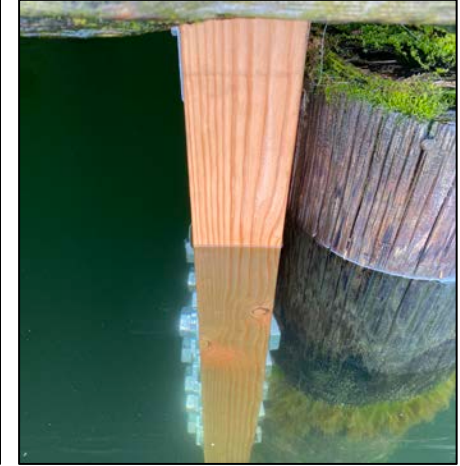


Luther Burbank Park – Capital Projects

14 Years of Reinvestment

Park Improvement Projects

- Swim beach piling removal/new buoys
- Repair rotting pilings underneath docks
- Reconstruct and strengthen eroding shoreline at off-leash area with rockery and terracing
- Add additional picnic tables at Area B
- Add new fire truck playground structure

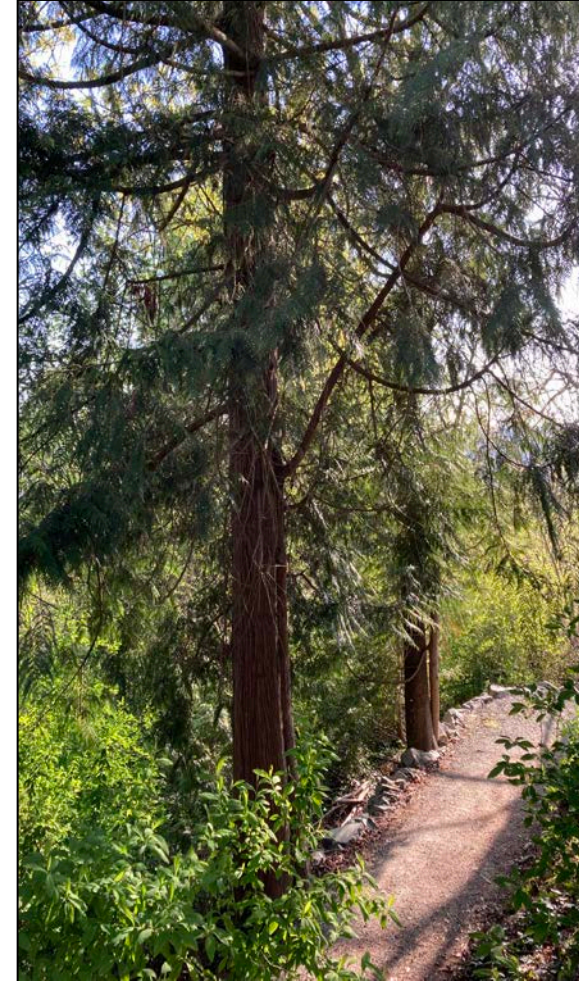


Luther Burbank Park – Capital Projects

14 Years of Reinvestment

Trail Improvement Projects

- ADA walkway improvements at playground
- Park-wide cedar split-rail fence repairs
- Added new Hawthorn Trail
- Added new trail off 84th Ave trail
- Trail asphalt patching



Luther Burbank Park – Capital Projects

14 Years of Reinvestment

Facility and Building Projects

- Replacement of failed Boiler Building drainage system
- Replacement of failing Boiler Building windows with new low-maintenance windows
- Expanded caretaker's yard for native plant nursery
- Installation of automated gate for Administration Building access
- Playground restroom roof repair
- Pergola roof replacement
- Caretaker's house asbestos abatement
- Replace rotted wood wall with concrete wall at boiler building annex



Luther Burbank Park – Capital Projects

14 Years of Reinvestments

Major Landscaping & Habitat Restoration Projects

- Administration building slope planting with native vegetation
- Replace dying and decaying trees with new trees
- Replanting 84th Ave hillside with native trees and shrubs

Other:

- Repair of bricks surrounding *Handsome Bollard*



Luther Burbank Park – Capital Projects

14 Years of Reinvestments

Parking Lot, Utilities, Drainage & Other Projects

- New meadow drainage system to reduce standing water in meadow
- Repaired sewer for restrooms by the dock
- Upgrade outdoor lighting to energy efficient LEDs
- Emergency storm drainage repair to mitigate parking lot flooding
- Reseal and restripe parking lot

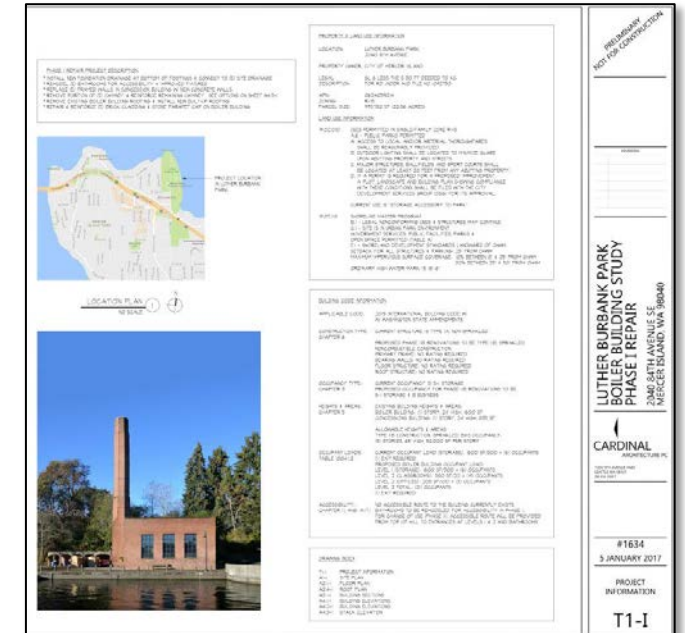


Luther Burbank Park – Capital Projects

14 Years of Reinvestments

Planning and Design Projects

- Demand study for waterfront access for dock replacement project
- South Shoreline Trail design and permitting
- Mapping boundaries of the wetlands
- Boiler Building renovation feasibility study
- Aquatic lands lease renewal and annual payment to Department of Natural Resources
- Boundary survey to address encroachments



Park Maintenance

14 Years of Reinvestment



2022 Parks Levy Budget Allocation

Parks Maintenance (O&M)	\$355,115
-------------------------	-----------

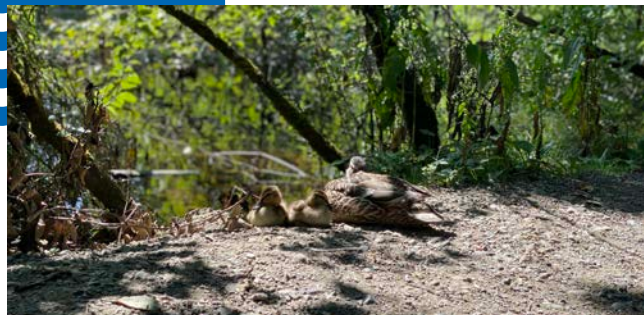
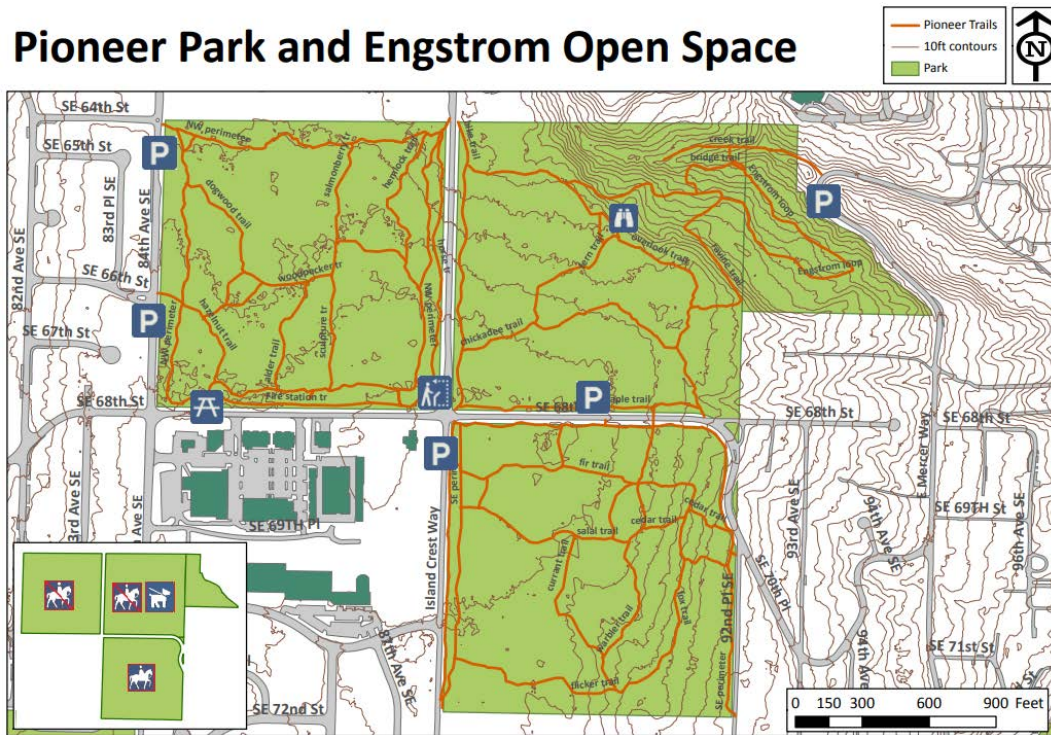
Overview

- Parks levy funding supports operations and maintenance on over **200 acres of park land**.*
- Landscaping and lawn care, maintenance of restrooms, sport courts, and picnic shelters and preservation of shorelines.
- 28 miles of walking paths and trails, 14 Playgrounds.*
- Supports the maintenance and operation of athletic fields across the Island including Island Crest Park, the South Mercer Playfields, and Homestead fields.

*Figure does not include open space areas, Pioneer Park, or Luther Burbank Park.

Pioneer Park Forest Management 14 Years of Reinvestment

Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space



2022 Parks Levy Budget Allocation

Pioneer Park Forest
Management (Capital)

\$77,000

Overview

- Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space provide **122 acres of forested open space**, comprising 43% of the open space in the City.
- Management of these properties is guided by adopted vegetation management plans.
 - 2003 Pioneer Park Forest Management Plan.
 - 2009 Forest Health Survey.
 - These plans focus on canopy regeneration, invasive tree removal, and ivy management as the key steps towards achieving a healthier and more resilient forest.

Pioneer Park Forest Management

14 Years of Reinvestment



2022 Parks Levy Budget Allocation

Pioneer Park Forest Management (Capital)	\$77,000
--	----------

Project Overview

- Mitigation of holly and other weedy tree infestation of forest understory.
- **Planting of over 15,000 native trees and shrubs in nearly 75 acres of Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space.**
- New trees will replace aging canopy and become the future forest for next generations.

Open Space / Vegetation Management

14 Years of Reinvestment



2022 Parks Levy Pioneer Park / Open Space Funding

Open Space/Vegetation
Management

\$65,000

- **164 acres of open space** throughout Mercer Island in addition to Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space
- The Open Space Vegetation Plan, adopted in 2004 and updated in 2014, guides stewardship and restoration in these open spaces
- Parks levy funds ivy removal from the base of existing tree canopy across 95 acres of forest and the planting of nearly 16,000 native trees and shrubs

Why renew the parks levy?



Why renew the parks levy?

Mercer Islanders LOVE their parks and open space!

From the 2020 PROS Plan Survey:

- 99% of respondents feel public parks and recreation opportunities are **essential to quality of life on Mercer Island.**
- 94% of respondents are very or somewhat satisfied with the value they receive from Mercer Island Parks & Recreation.
- **68% of respondents visit a park at least once a week.**



Why renew the parks levy?

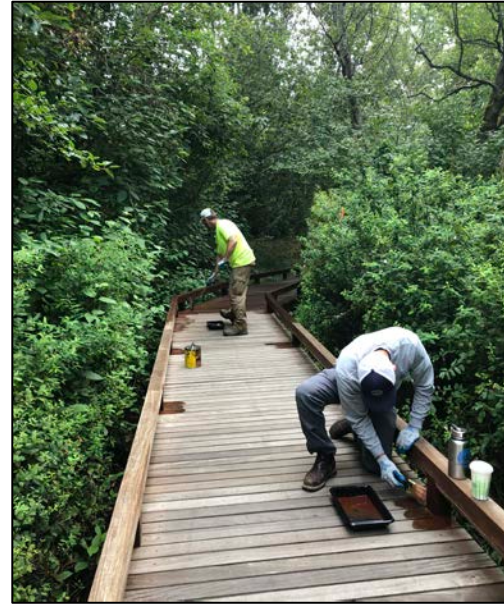
From the 2021 PROS Plan Survey:

- 95% of respondents stated they were somewhat to very satisfied with the value they receive from Mercer Island Parks & Recreation.
- **75% of residents visit a parks & recreation facility at least once a week.**
- Half of respondents indicated an increase in usage of parks, trails, and open spaces since the start of pandemic.



Why renew the parks levy?

- **Preserve and protect Mercer Island parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities for current and future generations.**
- Continue funding capital reinvestment projects to extend the useful life of parks and open space assets.
- Provide a safe environment for park visitors.
- Have fun! Get outside! Escape! Enjoy!



Levy Implementation



Timing of Parks Levy Vote

Staff recommendation:

- Pursue November 8, 2022 election for the parks levy renewal.
- Requires City Council to take action on a ballot ordinance by July.
- Additional options for election in February, April, August or November of 2023.
- Worth considering potential overlap with MISD and King County ballot measures in 2023.

Upcoming King County Election Dates and Deadlines

Election Date	Ballot Materials Submission Deadline
November 8, 2022	August 2, 2022
February 14, 2023*	December 16, 2022*
April 25, 2023*	February 24, 2023*
August 1, 2023*	May 12, 2023*
November 7, 2023*	August 1, 2023*

*Preliminary, subject to confirmation by the Washington Secretary of State.

Timing of Mercer Island Parks Levy Vote

- King County recently announced a potential levy to increase funding for the **Conservation Futures Program** for the November 2022 ballot.
- Still requires King County Council approval.



Image: David Gutman / The Seattle Times

Parks Levy Implementation Timeline

- State law requires a voted levy to be enacted within 12-months of election.
- Should Council move forward with the November 2022 election date, and should the parks levy pass, the City Council will need to take action to enact the new levy.
- **This involves ending the current parks levy one year early and replacing it with the newly approved parks levy.**
- This will occur as part of the biennial budget process.

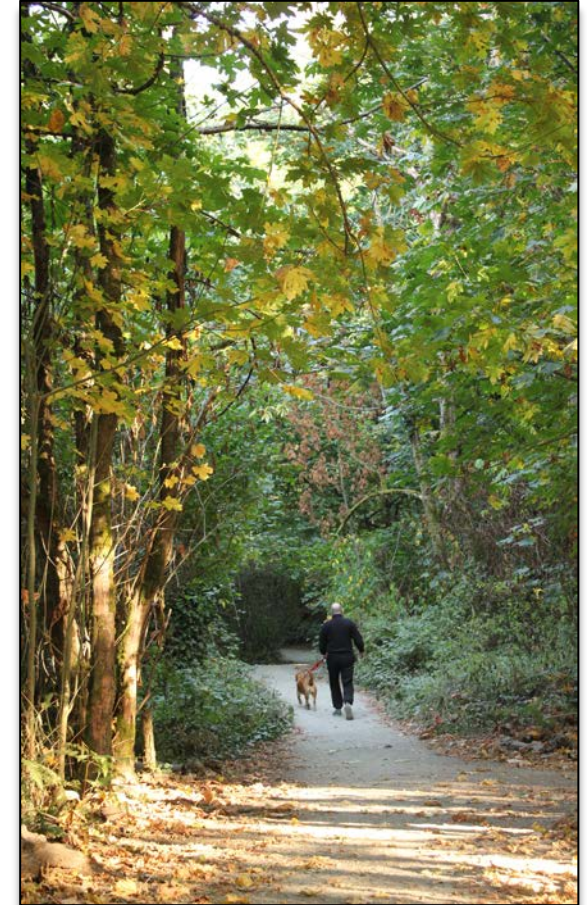


2022 Parks Levy Renewal: Overview



Parks Levy Renewal Overview

- Staff have prepared several parks levy renewal scenarios for consideration by the City Council.
- This includes a **base parks levy renewal** proposal, which essentially replaces the current parks levy and two options:
 - The first option proposes new capital resources to fund for **ongoing playground replacements**.
 - The second option proposes increasing the annual funding amount for **Pioneer Park**.



2022 Parks Levy Renewal: Base Levy



Proposed 2022 Parks Levy Renewal – Base Levy

- **Maintains current parks levy and funding categories.**
- Assumes a 1% increase in 2023.
- November 8, 2022 General Election:
 - Upon approval, the new parks levy would **take effect on January 1, 2023.**
 - The current parks levy would be retired a year early.
- 15-Year Term, consistent with the prior Parks Levy.

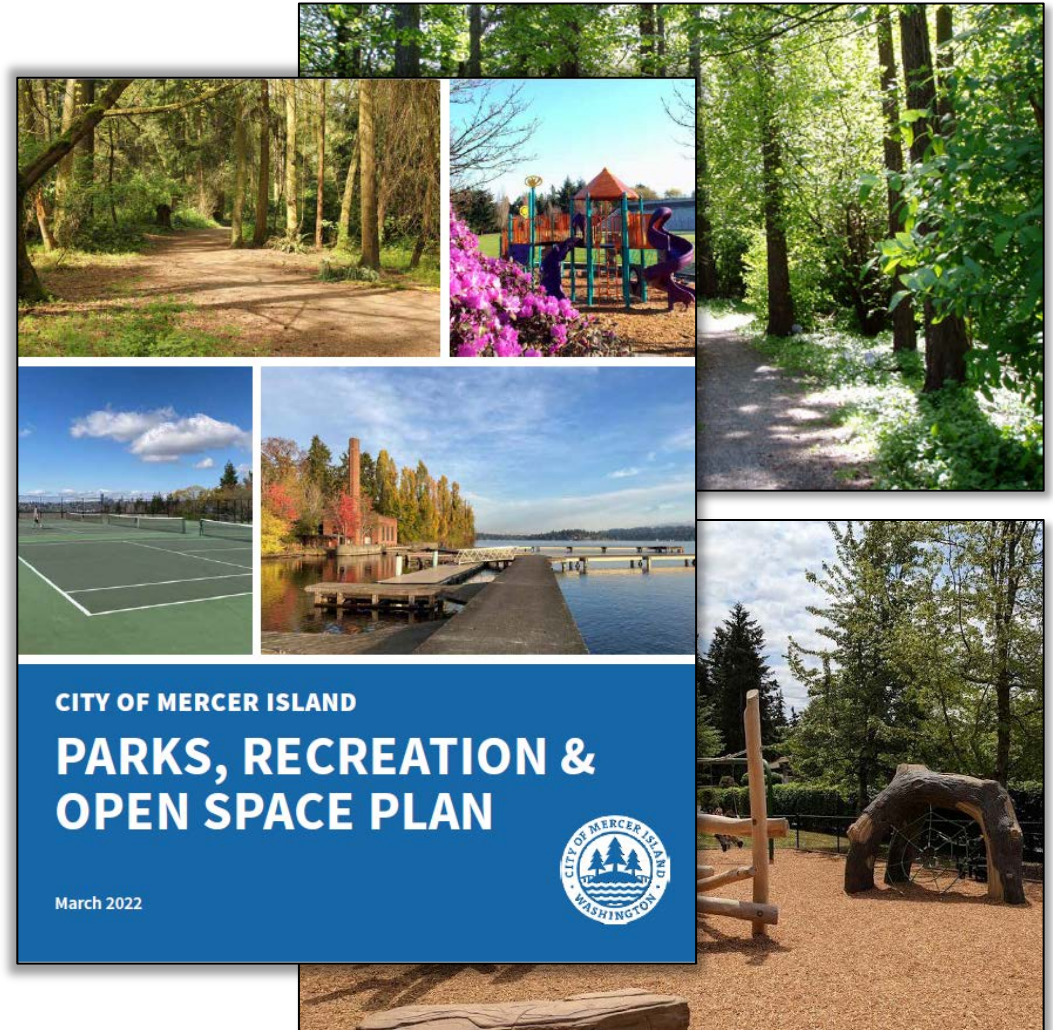
Proposed Parks Levy Budget Allocations	Current Parks Levy	Proposed Parks Levy Renewal
Luther Burbank Park (O&M)	\$373,007	\$376,737
Parks Maintenance (O&M)	\$355,115	\$358,666
Luther Burbank Small Capital Projects (Capital)	\$110,000	\$111,100
Pioneer Park Forest Management (Capital)	\$77,000	\$77,770
Open Space/Vegetation Management (Capital)	\$65,000	\$65,650
Total	\$980,112	\$989,923

2022 Parks Levy Renewal: Options



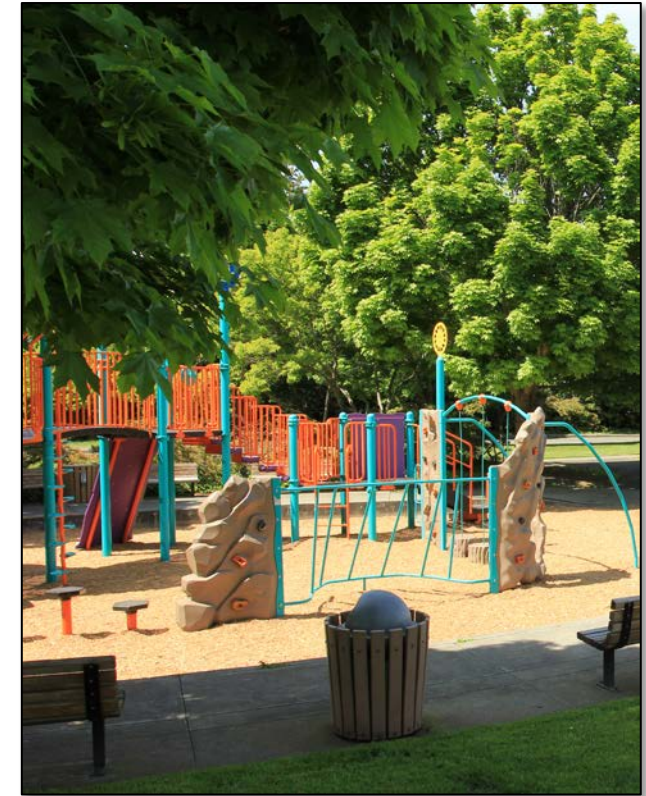
Proposed 2022 Parks Levy Renewal - Levy Options

- The City recently adopted the **2022 Parks, Recreation & Open Space (PROS) Plan**.
- The PROS Plan identified **\$40 Million** in parks, open space, trails, and recreation facility capital projects over the next six years.
- There is an estimated **\$24 Million capital project funding gap** over that same time period.
- The following two levy options were developed based on the six-year parks capital project list and other known capital needs.



Proposed 2022 Parks Levy Renewal - Levy Options – Playground Replacement

- Manufactured play equipment has a typical useful service life of 15 to 20 years, depending on play equipment condition, wear, and usage.
- **All Mercer Island playgrounds (except for Mercerdale Park) will need to be replaced over the next 15-years.**
- This is a total of 17 playground replacements over a 15-year period.



Proposed 2022 Parks Levy Renewal - Levy Options – Playground Replacement

- Chart is adapted from the PROS plan.
- Colors denote range of playground age from newest (green) to oldest (red)

Parks		Installation Age	
Aubrey Davis Park	Area A	2011	11
	Area B	2007	15
Deane's Children's Park	Castle/Swings/Climbing Rock	2005	17
	Main Play Area/Swings	2012	10
	Dragon	2018	4
First Hill Park	Tree House Structure	2007	15
Groveland Beach Park	Composite Structure	2012	10
Homestead Park	Upper Structure/Main Structure	2012	10
Luther Burbank Park	Small Composite Structure, Spring Toys	2013	9
	Large Composite Structure, Zip Line	2013	9
	Small Composite Structure, Spring Toys	2014	8
	Community Center Composite Structure	2010	12
Mercerdale Park	Train Composite Structure, Spring Toys	2022	0
	Main Composite Structure, Swings	2022	0
Roanoke Park	Boat Composite Structure	2004	18
	Spinami, Swings	2012	10
Secret Park	Composite Structure/Swings/Spinners	2007	15
South Mercer Playfields	Composite Structure, Swings	2018	4

Proposed 2022 Parks Levy Renewal - Levy Options – Playground Replacement

- The six-year Parks Capital Improvement Plan (2023-2028) identifies the following playground replacements:
 - Deane’s Children Park (Castle/Swings/Climbing Rock)
 - Aubrey Davis Park Lid B
 - Secret Park
 - Roanoke Park
 - First Hill Park
- The estimated costs of the playground replacements in the six-year CIP is \$2,373,000.



Proposed 2022 Parks Levy Renewal - Levy Options – Playground Replacement

- Of the 13 remaining playgrounds, all of them, except for Mercerdale Park, are expected to reach the end of their useful life over the next 15 years.
- The total cost of these playground replacements is estimated to be \$4,674,000.
- **Total estimated playground replacement costs over the next 15-years is \$7,047,000.**

Playground Replacement Funding Levels*	2023 Annual Levy Amount**
25% Annual Funding for Playground Replacements	\$109,000
50% Annual Funding for Playground Replacements	\$219,000
75% Annual Funding for Playground Replacements	\$328,000
100% Annual Funding for Playground Replacements	\$438,000

*Playground replacement costs were estimated in 2021 as part of the 2022 PROS Plan update process. Cost estimates include a 3% annual escalator to address inflation

**Assumes a 1% increase annually over the life of the levy.

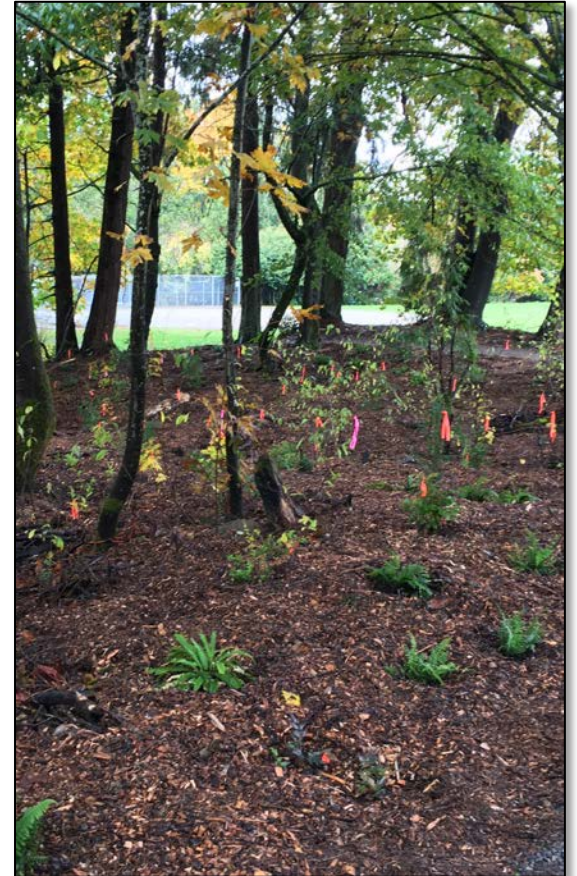
Proposed 2022 Parks Levy Renewal - Levy Options – Pioneer Park

- **Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space provide 122 acres of forested park land, comprising 43% of the open space on Mercer Island.**
- Management of these properties is guided by the **Pioneer Park Forest Management Plan** that was adopted in 2003 and updated in 2009.
- The Forest Management Plan prescribes successive forest restoration tasks that, once completed, will result in a resilient, biodiverse native forest that provides social, economic, and ecological benefits for the Mercer Island community.



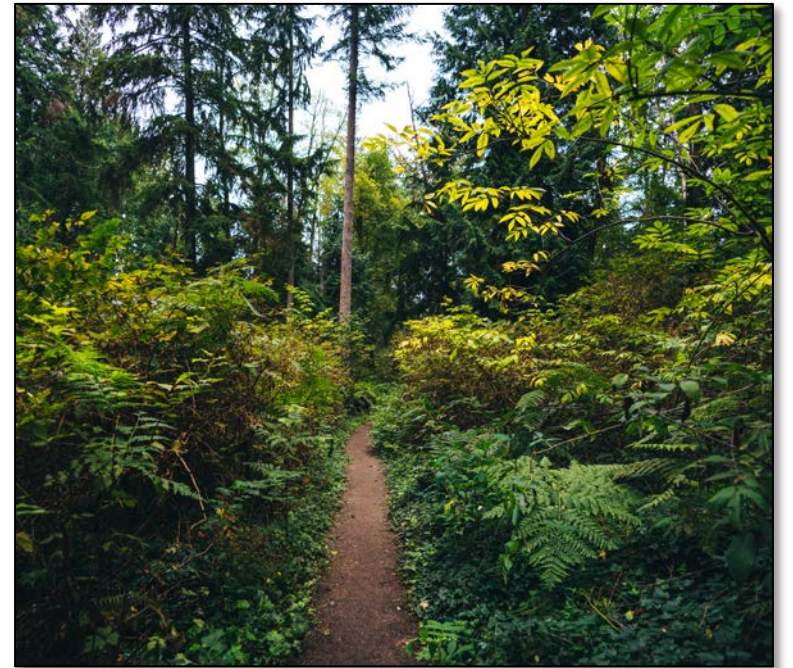
Proposed 2022 Parks Levy Renewal - Levy Options – Pioneer Park

- The Forest Management Plan tasks include:
 - Managing invasive tree species in the understory.
 - Removing ivy from the base of existing canopy trees, to promote the longevity of older forest trees.
 - Tree planting and maintenance (Phase 1).
 - Removing English ivy and other invasive plants from the forest understory.
 - Tree planting and maintenance (Phase 2), to ensure diversity in the age of the forest stands throughout the park.



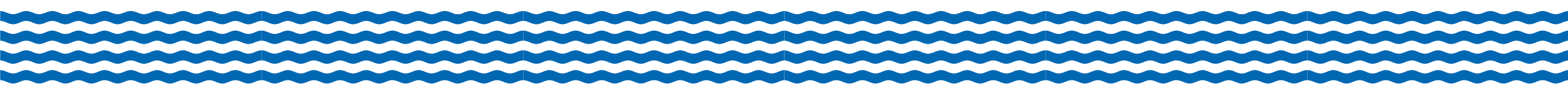
Proposed 2022 Parks Levy Renewal - Levy Options – Pioneer Park

- **Completing the remaining tasks in the Forest Management Plan is vital to the forest's long-term health, by improving its resilience to the effects of climate change and reducing the risk of wildfire.**
- Significant progress on the Forest Management Plan requires an estimated annual capital investment of \$659,000.
- The biennial budget allocates about \$191,000 in annual capital funding for Pioneer Park, of which \$77,000 is derived from the current parks levy.
- The estimated annual capital funding gap for the Forest Management Plan is \$468,000.



Proposed 2022 Parks Levy Renewal - Levy Options – Pioneer Park

Optional to Increase Funding for Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space	Annual Levy Amount
Catch-up funding to bring capital investment up to where it was in 2009	\$36,000
Fund <u>50%</u> of all Forest Management projects except for second phase of tree planting	\$133,000
Fund <u>all</u> Forest Management Plan projects except for second phase of tree planting	\$266,000
Fully fund the Forest Management Plan projects	\$468,000



Parks Levy Impact on PROS Plan Funding Gap

- PROS plan identified a 24-million-dollar funding gap for capital projects anticipated in 2023-2038 Park CIP.
- The parks levy provides a mix of funding for operations & maintenance and capital.
- Renewal of the parks levy will address a portion of the PROS plan funding gap, depending on the option selected.
- **The maximum offset of the Parks CIP Funding gap is \$3,926,308 (Base Levy + Playground Replacement at 100% Funding).**



Election Logistics and Next Steps



Development of Ballot Measure Ordinance

- Upon receiving direction from the City Council on the timing, length, and components of the parks levy renewal, staff and legal counsel will prepare a final ballot measure ordinance.
- **For a November 8, 2022 election, the first reading of the ordinance is anticipated on July 5, 2022 and the second reading on July 19, 2022.**



Pro and Con Committee

- The entity placing a measure on the ballot typically facilitates the formation of a Pro and Con committee to prepare respective statements (and rebuttals) for inclusion in the election guidebook.
- Upon direction to proceed with a November 8 ballot measure, staff will begin recruitment for these committees.
- The applications will be presented to the City Council for appointment at a subsequent meeting.
- For the November 8, 2022 election, Pro and Con Statements are due to King County by August 9, 2022 and Rebuttals are due by August 11, 2022.

City of Mercer Island

Official Ballot Title	Explanatory Statement
<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">City of Mercer Island Proposition No. 2 Levy for Park Operations and Maintenance</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">The City Council of the City of Mercer Island adopted Ordinance No. 08-08 concerning property taxes to maintain and operate park and recreational facilities. This proposition would increase the City's regular property tax levy by \$900,000 to a total authorized rate of up to \$1.25 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for collection in 2009 and increase the levy as allowed by chapter 84.55 RCW for each of the 15 succeeding years to continue operating Luther Burbank Park, improve forest and vegetative health of open spaces, and operate and maintain park and recreation-related facilities and services. Should this proposition be:</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;"> <input type="radio"/> APPROVED <input type="radio"/> REJECTED </p>	<p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">If approved by voters, this proposition would increase the City's regular property tax levy to pay for open space and forest restoration at Pioneer Park and other areas and school-related park and recreation activities. An additional measure on the November 2008 ballot is a Parks Bond. If the Parks Bond is approved by voters, the Parks Operations & Maintenance Levy would provide funding for maintenance costs associated with Parks Bond projects. The Parks Operations & Maintenance Levy would also replace the current levy which pays for operations and maintenance of Luther Burbank Park. Mercer Island City Council agreed to accept transfer of Luther Burbank from King County in 2003 and later that year voters approved a six-year maintenance and operations levy for the park which expires in 2009.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">The City's regular property tax levy would increase by up to 10.2 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation (to a total rate not to exceed \$1.25 per \$1,000 assessed valuation) for collection in 2009 and increase the levy as allowed by chapter 84.55 RCW. For the owner of an average valued Mercer Island home of \$1 million, the estimated annual cost is \$113.68 for the Operations & Maintenance Levy. The property tax increase would be in effect for 15 years.</p>
<p style="background-color: #eee; margin: 0; padding: 2px;">Statement for</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">The character of Mercer Island is enhanced by well maintained parks, open spaces and recreational facilities. Prime among these is Luther Burbank Park which was transferred from King County to Mercer Island in 2003. Islanders endorsed a 6 year levy, expiring in 2009, to operate and maintain this park. Before you now is a levy which provides for the future maintenance both of Luther Burbank Park and of the additional and improved park, open space and recreational facilities included in the separately described Capital Park Bond. This levy will pay primarily for future Luther Burbank Park maintenance, for forest restoration at Pioneer Park and for the upkeep of city and school related park and recreation activities. At a time when there is growing environmental awareness and an increasing need for recreational and sporting facilities we must maintain the limited assets we have. This levy will increase the annual property tax by \$113.68 for a \$1 million home but given the expiration of the current Luther Burbank Park levy will result in a net annual increase of \$54.29 for the same home. We urge your strong continuing support for the parks and recreational facilities of Mercer Island.</p> <p style="background-color: #eee; margin: 0; padding: 2px;">Rebuttal of statement against</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">The opposition focuses on Luther Burbank Park without fully recognizing the extent to which this proposition funds growing operational and maintenance needs for parks throughout the Island. The expiration of the Luther Burbank Levy in 2009 leaves the City with inadequate funds to appropriately maintain our parks. Recently Mercer Islanders showed they valued parks and open space by strongly supporting the funding of off-island King County parks. Let us now support our own.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">STATEMENT PREPARED BY: Joe Wallis, Bryan Cairns, Julie Crow</p>	<p style="background-color: #eee; margin: 0; padding: 2px;">Statement against</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">Five years ago, we warned that if Islanders passed the one-time limited Luther Burbank operations levy, the City Council would definitely be back for more.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">They're back!</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">In the past, when we acquired a park, operations were funded in the current budget. King County spent a little over \$200,000 maintaining Luther Burbank. Five years ago, the City Council nearly doubled that to over \$400,000. The Council's statement in the 2003 voters pamphlet claimed that without the levy "there will be insufficient funds to maintain and operate" Luther Burbank, even though we had over \$1 million a year in surplus then and in the five years since then.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">In the Luther Burbank master planning process, the public provided strong direction that operations funding for Luther Burbank should come from the general fund as it does for all other parks. The City Council is ignoring that direction.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">The Council is not only coming back, but coming back for more, expanding the levy from \$400,000 to \$900,000 a year and the duration from 6 years to 15 years.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">There are funds in the budget to maintain all our parks. This levy feeds up those funds for less popular City Council projects. Vote NO.</p> <p style="background-color: #eee; margin: 0; padding: 2px;">Rebuttal of statement for</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">Levy supporters wrote in the 2003 Voters Pamphlet, "By limiting the levy to six years, the City Council has stayed true to its promise of examining alternate revenue sources rather than relying only on a permanent levy." <u>This 15-year levy breaks that Council promise.</u> For the first time in Island history, the Council is expanding taxes by imposing continuing levies. Our parks can be maintained within the budget. For documentation and additional details visit www.livewithinbudget.org.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">STATEMENT PREPARED BY: Marty Gale, Ira Appelman, Thornon Gale</p>

98 King County Elections is not authorized to edit statements, nor is it responsible for the contents therein. The complete text of this proposition is available at the Elections Office or visit www.kingcounty.gov/elections.

Next Steps

Following direction from the City Council to prepare a parks levy renewal ballot measure for the November 8, 2022 election, staff will complete the following steps:

1. Finalize the components and funding levels for the parks levy renewal and return to the City Council for concurrence (if needed) at the June 21 City Council meeting.
2. Begin recruitment for the Pro and Con committees.
3. Finalize ballot and ordinance language for a first reading on July 5, 2022 and a second reading and final approval on July 21, 2022.
4. Submit required election materials to King County by August 2, 2022.

