



May 13, 2014

THE CITY OF SEATTLE  
PROPOSITION NUMBER 1  
SEATTLE PARK DISTRICT

The City of Seattle Proposition 1 concerns formation of the Seattle Park District, a metropolitan park district.

This proposition would create a metropolitan park district, called the Seattle Park District, to provide ongoing funding to maintain, operate and improve parks, community centers, pools, and other recreation facilities and programs. The District would have the same boundaries as the City of Seattle and be governed by a board composed of the Seattle City Councilmembers. The District could exercise powers under state law to levy property taxes and contract with the City to perform the District's functions.

[ ] For the formation of a metropolitan park district to be governed by the members of the Seattle City Council serving in an *ex officio* capacity as the Board of Commissioners of the Seattle Park District.

[ ] Against the formation of a metropolitan park district.

**City Attorney's Explanatory Statement for "Seattle Park District" measure placed on the August 5, 2014, ballot.**

Seattle Proposition 1, if approved, creates the Seattle Park District, a metropolitan park district with the same boundaries as the City of Seattle. The Seattle Park District would be a distinct municipal corporation with all the powers granted by state law in RCW chapter 35.61. The governing body of the District would be the councilmembers on the Seattle City Council. The District's governing body may choose to dissolve the District if requested by either the City or by petition with 10% of Seattle voters. Among the District's powers is the ability to levy a property tax, up to \$0.75 per thousand dollars of assessed value, to raise revenues to provide ongoing funding to maintain, operate and

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improve parks, community centers, pools, and other recreation facilities and programs.

As a separate taxing district from the City of Seattle, the Seattle Park District levy would not be included when determining the limits on the City's ability to levy property taxes.

When the City placed this measure on the ballot, the Mayor and the Council also approved an ordinance that authorized the Mayor to sign an interlocal agreement with the District should its creation be approved by the voters. This agreement provides that the City would maintain its current general fund support of the Seattle Park system and that the District would pay the City to increase support to the Park System. The District would pay for this increased support by imposing a property tax of approximately \$47.9 million per year for the first six years of the District. That would be \$0.33 per thousand dollars of assessed value or \$133 per year for an average home with a value of \$400,000. The money would be used to pay the City to improve and maintain City parks, address a maintenance backlog of projects, increase programs for seniors, improve park safety, and support other Parks programs. The City will retain ownership of all parks property and the District will not hire its own staff.

The companion ordinance, proposed interlocal agreement and spending plan is available at: <http://go.usa.gov/8YQA>