

x/x/2024

RESOLUTION NO. M-_____

A RESOLUTION of the City Council of the City of Vancouver, Washington, providing for the submission to the qualified electors of the City of Vancouver at the November 5, 2024, General Election of a proposition authorizing the City to increase its regular property tax levy above the limit established in chapter 84.55 RCW to fund police and police-related services, staffing, facilities and equipment; requesting the Clark County Auditor to place the proposition on the November 5, 2024, ballot; and approving matters properly related thereto.

WHEREAS, community growth and the associated 35% increase in call volume for police services from 2017-2023 has resulted in a decline in police response times; and

WHEREAS, a growth in demand for police services has strained investigative capacity of detectives such that nearly 3,100 cases go uninvestigated each year; and

WHEREAS, there is an insufficient effective police force to meet demands of the community; and

WHEREAS, building capacity to meet the demand for services can be accomplished through investments in sworn staff, non-sworn staff, co- and complimentary-response teams and programs, and technology; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the operational gaps, the new staff will require equipment, technology and new precinct space; and

WHEREAS, during 2023, Vancouver Police Department staff identified the necessary additional operating resources needed to increase the ability of the department to more effectively respond to the public safety needs of the community, and to build capacity to proactively engage the community in pre-emptive strategies to prevent threats to community

safety, and worked with other City departments to estimate the cost of these additional resources; and

WHEREAS, the city manager convened a community advisory committee on policing to review and advise on identified needs and recommendations from the police department and to formulate a recommendation on potential investments in police and related capacities; and

WHEREAS, operating demands citywide necessitate an additional sworn staff of approximately eighty (80) commissioned/sworn full-time employees (FTEs) in a range of ranks and assignments, and approximately 36 non-sworn/non-commissioned FTE positions, related support costs, equipment and related facilities; and

WHEREAS, additional staffing will likely results in additional costs to the criminal justice system and will be eligible for this funding; and

WHEREAS, there are complimentary response services, such as the City's homelessness assistance response team and mental health and substance use disorder response teams, that, if deployed alongside police, may enhance the effectiveness and capacity of an expansion of authorized sworn officer ranks, and contribute to overall community safety and wellbeing; and

WHEREAS, during the workshop on July 1, 2024, Vancouver City Council reviewed the operating improvements necessary to increase call response time; and

WHEREAS, during the July 1, July 8, and July 15, 2024 workshops, Vancouver City Council considered the recommendation by the Public Safety Advisory Committee to increase the City's regular property tax levy to fund the operating expenses needed to improve public safety in Vancouver as the first step in a three-step funding approach for the increased police staffing; and

WHEREAS, additional voted revenue increases will be necessary to fully fund the
RESOLUTION - 2

proposed increase in police and supporting costs, including a voted excess levy to fund the capital costs and a voted sales tax levy will be necessary to fund the proposed investments beyond 2030; and

WHEREAS, Washington State law limits the annual increase of a city's regular property tax levy amount to 1% plus an allowance for new construction unless the voters of a city approve the collection of regular property taxes in a greater amount; and

WHEREAS, the City's 2024 regular property tax levy is approximately \$2.36 per \$1,000 of assessed value, which includes a \$0.2738 per \$1,000 of assessed value affordable housing levy. The City's total levy is approximately \$0.96 per \$1,000 of assessed value less than what is statutorily authorized; and

WHEREAS, RCW 84.55.050 provides for the levy of regular property taxes in an amount exceeding the limitation specified in chapter 84.55 RCW if such increased levy is authorized by a ballot proposition approved by a majority of the voters at an election held with the taxing district (a "levy lid lift"); and

WHEREAS, the City Council deems it necessary to submit to the voters of the City a permanent levy lid lift proposition of whether or not the City shall levy regular property taxes for collection in 2025 in excess of the limit factor provided for in RCW 84.55.050(1); and

WHEREAS, the City Council anticipates future levies to further fund and sustain the investments contemplated herein; and

WHEREAS, on August 5 _____, 2024, the City Council deliberated on the desired size of the levy increase and selected \$0.41/\$1,000 of assessed value as the levy rate increase to put before the voters during the general election to be held on November 5, 2024;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER:
RESOLUTION - 3

Section 1. **Findings.** The Council hereby adopts and incorporates by reference the above recitals as findings. The Council further finds that the best interests of the residents of the City require the City to fund police services, staffing, equipment, and facilities, including but not limited to the following (together referred to herein as “Police and Supporting Services”):

- Add up to eighty (80) FTEs sworn officers in a range of ranks and assignments;
- Add up to thirty (36) FTEs non-sworn police positions;
- Fund equipment, technology, and vehicles consistent with both current and future standards;
- Fund a traffic enforcement camera program;
- Expand Homeless Assistance & Resources Team (HART) response;
- Fund additional operating, related services, to include the impact of the additional staffing on jail, corrections, public defense and other criminal justice related services, maintenance and facility expenses to provide police services, as determined by the City Council;
- Fund necessary administrative and staffing costs in other City of Vancouver departments to support investments outlined above;
- The programmatic expenses above are to be limited by sustainable new revenue and appropriated through the City’s regular budgetary process.

The City Council shall determine the timing, order and manner of funding Police and Supporting Services and the use of levy lid lift proceeds, including those investments described above, as part of the budgeting process. The cost of all compensation, benefits, training, support services, equipment, technology, vehicles, infrastructure, facilities, real property, and administrative expenses and other costs incurred in connection with the Police and Supporting Services shall be deemed a part of the costs of such Police and Supporting Services. The City Council may alter, make substitutions to and amend such components as it determines are in the best interests of the City and consistent with the police service purposes described herein.

Section 2. **Calling of Election Regarding the Levy of Additional Property Taxes.** There shall be submitted to the qualified electors of the City of Vancouver, Washington a proposition whether the City shall levy regular property taxes above the levy limitations established in RCW 84.55.050 and RCW 84.55.010 for their ratification or rejection at a special election to be held on November 5, 2024. The Clark County Auditor, as ex officio supervisor of elections in Clark County, is hereby requested to call and conduct the election referenced on such day and to submit to the qualified electors of the City for their approval or rejection a proposition to (a) increase the City's regular property tax levy by \$0.41 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation in addition to the regular annual levy inflationary increase, to a total maximum regular property tax rate not to exceed \$2.90 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for collection in 2025, as allowed by chapter 84.55 RCW, and (b) for the five calendar years following 2025 (2026-2030), increase the City's total regular property tax levy amount by a limit factor of 5%. The 2030 levy amount will be used as the basis to calculate subsequent levy limits beginning in 2031.

Upon approval of the voters of the proposition set forth herein, the City may use proceeds of such levy to pay the costs of Police and Supporting Services as set forth in Section 1 of this resolution.

[REMAINDER OF PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]

Section 3. **Ballot Proposition.** The City Clerk is hereby authorized and directed as required by law, to certify a proposition to the Clark County Auditor, as ex officio supervisor of elections in Clark County, Washington, in substantially the following form:

PROPOSITION NO. 4

CITY OF VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON
POLICE AND SUPPORTING SERVICES
LEVY LID LIFT

This proposition, if passed, would fund police and supporting services, to include staffing, equipment, technology, facilities, and related criminal justice costs; increase Vancouver's regular property tax \$0.41/\$1,000, for a maximum levy rate not to exceed \$2.90/\$1,000 of assessed valuation for 2025; set the limit factor for Vancouver's total property tax levy for 2026-2030 to 100% plus annual increase of 5%; and authorize the 2030 levy amount as the basis to calculate subsequent levies (84.55 RCW).

Should this proposition be approved?

YES

NO

For purposes of receiving notice of the language of the ballot proposition required by RCW 29A.36.080, the City Council hereby designates: (a) the City Clerk (Natasha Ramras), telephone (360) 487-8484; email: natasha.ramras@cityofvancouver.us; and (b) the City Attorney (Jonathan Young); telephone: (360) 487-8500; email: jonathan.young@cityofvancouver.us, as the individuals to whom such notice from the Auditor should be provided. The City Attorney and the City Clerk are each authorized individually to approve changes to the wording of such proposition as may be recommended by the Clark County Auditor and the Clark County Prosecuting Attorney, as long as the intent of the proposition remains clear and consistent with the intent of this resolution.

Section 4. **Voters Pamphlet.** To the extent that a local voters' pamphlet and/or online voters' guide ("Voters' Pamphlet") will be produced for the November 5, 2024 election, the Voters' Pamphlet shall include an explanatory statement and arguments advocating approval and disapproval of the ballot measure, if any. Pursuant to RCW 29A.32.280, the arguments advocating approval and rejection of the ballot measure shall be prepared by committees appointed by the City Council. Each committee shall be composed of not more than three persons; however, a committee may seek the advice of any person or persons. The committee advocating approval shall be composed of persons known to favor the ballot measure, and the committee advocating rejection shall be composed of persons known to oppose the ballot measure. Should the City Council not appoint the persons to each Committee by the time required by law, the Clark County Auditor shall appoint said committees.

Section 5. **Severability.** If any provisions of this resolution shall be declared by any court of competent jurisdiction to be contrary to law, then such provision shall be null and void and shall be deemed severable from the remaining provisions of this resolution and shall in no way affect the validity of the other provisions of this resolution or of the levy or collection of the taxes authorized by this proposition.

Section 6. **Effective Date.** This resolution shall take effect and be in full force immediately upon adoption by the City Council.

ADOPTED at a Regular Meeting of the Vancouver City Council this _____, of _____, 2024.

Anne McEnery-Ogle, Mayor

Attest:

Natasha Ramras, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Jonathan Young, City Attorney