

## **VOTERS' GUIDE FOR NOVEMBER 4, 2014 GENERAL ELECTION**

### **PROPOSITION NO. 1 City of Spokane Levy for Improved & Integrated Streets.**

The Spokane City Council adopted Resolution No. 2014-0085, approving a levy proposition to improve and repair the city's streets and terminate the use of the existing \$0.57 property tax assessment for repayment of the 2004 street bond. This proposition would authorize a property tax levy lid lift commencing in 2015 of \$0.57 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, resulting in no net increase in the 2015 tax rate. The levy funds would be used to pay for street repairs and improvements and would be the basis for subsequent levies for 20 years, all as provided in the resolution. Should this proposition be:

Approved ..... ☐

Rejected ..... ☐

### **EXPLANATORY STATEMENT FOR PROPOSITION NO. 1**

Proposition No. 1 proposes a twenty year levy to improve and repair the city's streets. The proposition would terminate the use of the existing \$0.57 property tax assessment for repayment of the 2004 street bond and authorize a property tax levy lid lift commencing in 2015 of \$0.57 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, resulting in no net increase in the 2015 tax rate. The levy funds would be used to pay for street repairs and improvements and would be the basis for subsequent levies for 20 years.

### **ARGUMENT ADVOCATING VOTERS' APPROVAL OF MEASURE:**

Proposition 1 – a Levy for Improved and Integrated Streets - is a refinancing proposal to maintain and streets, by reinvesting the current 57 cents per \$1000 of assessed property value paid for streets. The 20-year initiative is designed to provide \$20M-\$25M per year in significant new street work continuing the same amount of money citizens pay today for such repairs. The levy will focus on improving arterial streets, with the goal of providing maintenance or repair work on all 266 miles of arterials during the 20-year life of the proposal. By combining arterial repairs with repairs to water lines and stormwater drainage systems, the city expects to bring in \$25 million a year for integrated projects. The levy will allow the City to double the amount it spends on residential street repair, by directing some dollars currently spent on arterials to residential areas.

Expanded citizen oversight will continue to provide a voice to everyone and work to keep the project on target and within budget. The Plan Commission subcommittee, led by members of the community, will focus on a holistic view of the streets, including sidewalks, bicycle lanes and the network below the streets.

Spokane citizens have been looking for a long-term solution to the damaged streets for years, and Proposition 1 is the solution. Voting YES for the Streets Levy will allow Spokane to improve failing streets, create jobs and provide a better transportation network for the community – without a tax rate increase.

Please vote YES for Proposition 1.

**ARGUMENT PREPARED BY:**

Committee Chair: Lois Stratton, 1724 W Mansfield, Spokane, WA 99205.

(509)325-0821

Members: Casey Calvary and Jack Geraghty

**ARGUMENT ADVOCATING VOTERS' REJECTION OF MEASURE:**

Spokane Voters - Reject the Pitch for the Street Levy!

It is true that Spokane streets are in need of repair and on-going maintenance, and it's true that the 2004 bond has successfully repaired many streets. The fact remains, however that the remaining \$80 million plus of debt for sixteen more years from that ten year bond is a terrible legacy to bequeath to our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The levy is a method to circumvent the limits of the amount of debt which can be loaded onto the taxpayers. Unfortunately, the street levy is NOT just about fixing streets, but has been broadened to mean 20% of the total or \$100 million is dedicated to "Complete Streets", meaning not only streets, but includes bike lanes, sidewalks, street trees, curb ramps, storm swales, and more. These street "improvements" have been incorporated into the determination of what qualifies as "Complete Streets" without regard for the cost to the taxpayers.

The street levy will generate \$10 million annually from Spokane taxpayers, of which \$5 million will go pay off remaining debt and \$5 million for projects. Then through grants, matching funds, etc. the total becomes \$25 million per year for twenty years or a grand total of \$500 million. Where do the grants and matching funds come from? THE TAXPAYERS!

In addition, there are hundreds of millions of new & additional taxes coming our way within the next year. It's time to say NO...and, after ten years...WHY AREN'T THE POTHLES FIXED YET?

Committee Chair: George McGrath, 3317 S. Grand Blvd., Spokane, WA 99203

(509)838-1866

Members:

## **REBUTTAL STATEMENT ADVOCATING VOTERS' APPROVAL OF MEASURE:**

The 2004 street bond was a great success because it combined thoughtful spending with citizen oversight. Proposition 1 improves on this approach, using the levy process to generate matching funds that allow “pay as you go” construction, with no new indebtedness to pay back. A “Complete Streets” approach ensures the new arterials are safe for bicyclists and pedestrians alike, meaning fewer cars to add wear and tear to our roads. Vote “yes” on Proposition 1!

## **REBUTTAL STATEMENT ADVOCATING VOTERS' REJECTION OF MEASURE:**

Advocates state this proposition is “designed” to provide \$20-25 million per year for twenty years. Every penny, whether levy, grant or matching funds from state or federal funds is TAXPAYER MONEY. YOUR MONEY. This includes the \$4-5 million going to “Complete Streets” annually. This isn’t streets, its bike lanes, landscaping, trees, sidewalks, water and sewer.

This proposition increases the taxpayer’s burden by many years and gives the government the license to WASTE taxpayer money.

**PROPOSITION NO. 2 City of Spokane Riverfront Park  
General Obligation Bonds - \$64,300,000**

The City Council of the City of Spokane passed Resolution No. 2014-0084 approving a plan to finance the renovation, improvement and modernization of the aging infrastructure of Riverfront Park, including the Loeff Carrousel building, U.S. Pavilion, Ice Rink, Skyride and Park facilities with no net increase in the current annual tax levy for Parks. This proposition authorizes the City to finance the renovation of Riverfront Park buildings, facilities and infrastructure; enhance security and safety facilities; improve parking, lighting, heating and cooling systems; and improve other capital facilities of Riverfront Park and the Parks system. General obligation bonds would be issued in a maximum principal amount of \$64,300,000, maturing within 20 years from date of issue, and repaid from an annual excess levy on real property, all as provided in the Resolution. Should this proposition be:

Approved ..... ☐

Rejected ..... ☐

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT FOR PROPOSITION NO. 2**

Proposition No. 2 proposes the issuance of general obligation bonds in a maximum principal amount of \$64,300,000, maturing within 20 years from date of issue, and repaid from an annual excess levy on real property. The bonds would be used to finance the renovation, improvement and modernization of the aging infrastructure of Riverfront Park, including the Loeff Carrousel building, U.S. Pavilion, Ice Rink, Skyride and Park facilities with no net increase in the current annual tax levy for Parks. The proposal would also authorizes the City to finance the renovation of Riverfront Park buildings, facilities and infrastructure; enhance security and safety facilities; improve parking, lighting, heating and cooling systems; and improve other capital facilities of Riverfront Park and the Parks system

**ARGUMENT ADVOCATING VOTERS' APPROVAL OF MEASURE**

Long ago Spokane leaders made the bold decision to host Expo '74 and convert a railroad yard into Riverfront Park. It was the most significant investment in Spokane's future up to that time. It's time to again invest in our future and Riverfront Park.

**NO TAX RATE INCREASE**

Fortunately, we can make that investment without incurring a tax rate increase. City residents pay 34 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value toward the repayment of current park bonds. This new proposal keeps the individual taxpayer share the same while generating \$60 million for Riverfront Park.

## A REVITALIZED AND SAFER PARK FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

Bond funds will be used to construct a well-lit pedestrian promenade running through the park, as well as strategic public plazas to better accommodate large events. A new building will house the treasured Carousel. More grassy meadows will offer relaxation with the park's stunning natural setting. The current park infrastructure –built long before the advent of digital technology – will be updated with modern features demanded by today's events. Anchoring all of these features will be a covered and lighted Pavilion. With more lights and security, Riverfront Park will be a place families can enjoy anytime.

## AN INVESTMENT IN SPOKANE'S FUTURE

Riverfront Park is Spokane's number one tourist attraction, drawing 2.2 million visitors a year. More tourists mean more dollars to support our fire department, schools, and libraries. Riverfront Park will remain an economic generator only if we continue to invest in it. Nearly 40 years have gone by since the last major investment in Riverfront Park. That's long enough.

### **ARGUMENT PREPARED BY:**

Committee Chair: Chris Wright, 3112 W. Alice, Spokane, WA 99005.  
(509)325-1921

Members: Randy Cameron

### **ARGUMENT ADVOCATING VOTERS' REJECTION OF MEASURE:**

Spokane Parks Department lists 130 park sites in Spokane. Devoting \$64 million to one - Riverfront Park PLUS a share of 8% of the general fund, approximately \$11,800,000 annually, citizens would pay for one facility seldom used while 130 neighborhood parks frequently used go wanting.

Visitors: Expo 74 processed 1 million visitors through Riverfront Park in six months of operations, which required a worldwide marketing campaign. Without an event like Expo, there is no reason for visitors to make Riverfront Park a destination. Most cities have a main park area for use by local citizens. There's no reason for visitors to travel hundreds or thousands of miles to visit Riverfront Park, and many parks have rivers flowing through.

The claim that Riverfront Park has 2.2 million visitors per year seems exaggerated. That would mean 6,027 visitors per day, 365 days per year, winter-summer-good weather-bad weather-school in session or not.

Economic Impact: The \$64 million bond is supposed to hire 450 employees, and provide \$22 million in wages. Is that for one year or the duration of the project? \$22 million divided by 450 jobs equals just under \$49,000 per employee.

The purported jobs spread through a population of approximately 500,000 in the greater Spokane Region amounts to less than 1% of the population.

Use Common sense! Now is not the time. Other taxes proposed: STA, School Dist. 81, Library, City \$200 million revenue bond, gas tax, bottled water tax and more.

Vote NO on Proposition 2, the Riverfront Park Boondoggle.

Committee Chair: George McGrath, 3317 S. Grand Blvd., Spokane, WA 99203  
(509)838-1866

Members:

#### **REBUTTAL STATEMENT ADVOCATING VOTERS' APPROVAL OF MEASURE:**

The opponent of Proposition No. 2 wants you to believe that Riverfront Park is unimportant to our community. Its hosts hundreds of community and nonprofit events each year. And yes, an independent study confirmed 2.2 million people visit the park each year, adding thousands of dollars to the Spokane economy. Revitalizing Riverfront Park will be a 5-year project providing jobs to local construction trades. Support this essential community asset by voting "yes" on Proposition 2!

#### **REBUTTAL STATEMENT ADVOCATING VOTERS' REJECTION OF MEASURE:**

Proposition 2 is an onerous attempt to yoke the taxpaying citizens of Spokane to an ever-increasing and lengthening burden which will NOT benefit the majority of the taxpayers. Expo 74 generated over 1 million visitors in six months. The claim that 2.2 million people visit Riverfront Park each year is ludicrous. We do not have 6,027 visitors daily year-round. Vote NO for the proposition, remove this absurd TAX INCREASE from now and future taxpayers.