

# SPECIAL ELECTION APRIL 25, 2023

Official Local Voters' Pamphlet published  
by the Pierce County Auditor's Office

## Drop Boxes Open 24/7 beginning April 7, 2023



**Using a Drop Box?**  
(No stamp required)  
Drop off ballot by 8 p.m.  
**April 25, 2023.**

**Mailing your ballot?**  
(No stamp required)  
Must be postmarked on  
or before **April 25, 2023.**



Scan to view drop box locations or visit  
[PierceCountyWA.gov/334](https://PierceCountyWA.gov/334)

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## NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE?

### To register to vote, you must be:

- A citizen of the United States.
- A legal resident of Washington state.
- At least 18 years old by Election Day.
- Not serving a sentence of total confinement for a felony.

### Three ways to register to vote and obtain a ballot:

- Online - [VoteWA.gov](https://VoteWA.gov)
- By mail - Call us at (253) 798-VOTE (8683) and we will mail you a form.
- In person - Pierce County Election Center

### Registration Deadlines

- Online/Mail - April 17
- In person - April 25

# NEED HELP?

**Pierce County Election Center**  
2501 S 35th St. Suite C, Tacoma, WA 98409

Open Monday - Friday  
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

**Extended hours on Election Day**  
8:30 AM - 8:00 PM

[PierceCountyElections.org](https://PierceCountyElections.org)

253-798-VOTE (8683)

[Elections@PierceCountyWA.gov](mailto:Elections@PierceCountyWA.gov)

Pierce County Auditor

## VOTER SERVICES

- Register to vote.
- Update voter registration.
- Replacement ballots for lost, damaged, or mismarked ballots.
- Disability assistance - Large font, color contrast, and audible ballot options.
- Track your ballot or print a replacement ballot at [VoteWA.gov](https://VoteWA.gov).



# City of University Place

Special Election - Proposition No. 1 - Levy Lid Lift for Dedicated Law Enforcement Funding

Questions? (253) 460-5443

Complete resolution text at  
PierceCountyElections.org

## Ballot Title

The University Place City Council adopted Resolution 1005, authorizing a proposition funding eight additional patrol and traffic officers, and a specialist addressing homelessness, park safety and crime prevention. The proposition increases the City's current property tax levy from \$0.660672963 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation to \$1.01 per \$1,000 in 2024. This levy would be used to compute limitations for subsequent levies. Taxpayers qualifying for an exemption under RCW 84.36.381 would be exempt from the increase. Should this proposition be approved?

## Explanatory Statement

The City of University Place is seeking voter approval for a levy lid lift to provide funding for additional public safety staffing, including eight additional patrol and traffic officers, and a specialist to address homelessness, park safety and crime prevention.

The City currently receives about six cents for every dollar taxpayers pay in property tax, and the City dedicates all of it to public safety. State law generally limits the City's property tax revenue growth to 1% annually, even if property values increase by more than 1%. Because this additional revenue is less than the annual increase in the City's public safety costs, the City lacks funding to add staff to patrol neighborhoods or to address increases in property crimes and speeding.

This proposal increases the City's levy rate by approximately \$0.35 per \$1000 of assessed value for collection in 2024 and would be used to calculate the statutory limitation for future levy increases. For a home assessed at \$652,240 (the average assessed home value as determined by the Pierce County Assessor Treasurer), this levy would increase a homeowner's property tax by approximately \$19 per month. Low-income seniors and low-income disabled homeowners may qualify for an exemption from this increase.

## Statement For

### Why do we need this?

University Place only has two police officers on duty at any given time. For a city of 35,000 people, that is not enough. Our officers are entirely reactive in their policing, going from call-to-call their entire shift. This leaves them unable to perform security patrols or traffic enforcement. Any police call for service requiring two officers to respond, such as a traffic accident, leaves the rest of the city uncovered. Response times and property crime are increasing.

### What do we get for our money?

Proposition One will increase our coverage to three officers on duty, add a patrol sergeant, a dedicated traffic officer, and a community outreach officer. This will allow police officers to respond faster, conduct follow-up investigations, improve traffic safety, and address escalating crime.

### Is there another way?

There is no other way to make meaningful change in our public safety without this levy. Let's improve safety and peace of mind in our community.

Vote *yes* on Proposition One!

## Rebuttal

We have the fewest officers per citizen of any city in the state. Crime is increasing and our police can't meet the demand. Most of the city budget is restricted by law to the areas where it is spent – there is no way to squeeze the budget to make a difference. If we want to improve public safety, this levy is the only way. Let's invest in our community and vote *yes* on Proposition One!

**Committee Members:** Edward Wood, Javier Figueroa  
253-961-6194

## Statement Against

### Property Taxes are less than 20% of the total city Revenue Sources. They have money.

They chose to limit police funding primarily to property taxes. Other city revenue includes: Transportation Benefit District, 6% Utility Tax on sewer, garbage, gas, electric, cell phone, cable, internet and stormwater, Sales Tax. All put in place and increased without *your vote!*

### 2021 Financial Report: 'strong financial position for at least the next 10 to 15 years'

They had about \$200,000 to fund these ballot measures and fliers to influence your vote. Enough to fund 1-2 traffic patrol officers who could likely generate enough additional revenue to fund themselves as well as at least one more patrol officer.

### 53% Increase? We need affordable housing. Housing costs matter. Business costs matter. *Vote No!*

\$19 per month is \$228 per year, a 53% increase over the current \$54.90 per month, which is \$430.93 per year. This would result in \$658.76 per year for the *average* homeowner. *That's real.* Burdening our residents and businesses. We need to protect our businesses.

### Our Average assessed values went up more than 20% in 2022.

In November the voters said *no!* Vote *no again* and be ready to say it again. Demand *responsible spending* vs higher taxes.

## Rebuttal

Peace of mind = affordable housing! Pierce County has the highest tax rates in the State. UP has the highest average tax rates in Pierce County. They're assuming they can fill these new positions. Police everywhere have been handcuffed, resulting in *many* leaving and those positions can't be filled. A 53% *permanent increase* in our city property taxes won't change this. Adjust the budget, prioritizing safety. Please vote *no again!*

**Committee Members:** Betsy Tainer, Dennis Flann  
(253) 564-7364, UPCityVotes@gmail.com,  
facebook.com/UniversityPlaceVoterResource

# Steilacoom Historical School District No. 1

Special Election - Proposition No. 1 - General Obligation Bonds - \$116,000,000

Questions? (253) 983-2233

Complete resolution text at  
PierceCountyElections.org

## Ballot Title

The Board of Directors of Steilacoom Historical School District No. 1 adopted Resolution No. 903-02-21-23 concerning a proposition for bonds to finance capital improvements. This proposition would authorize the District to refinance land and construct a new elementary school, a high school stadium, performing arts center, career technical education space and additional classrooms; make safety, security and accessibility improvements districtwide; and make capital improvements to the District's elementary schools, by issuing \$116,000,000 of general obligation bonds maturing within 21 years; and to levy excess property taxes annually to repay the bonds, as described in Resolution No. 903-02-21-23. Should Proposition No. 1 be approved?

## Explanatory Statement

Passage of Proposition 1 would allow Steilacoom Historical School District to address facility needs by issuing bonds. If voters approve this proposition, the District will use the bond proceeds to construct a new elementary school, construct a new stadium, performing arts center and career education program space at Steilacoom High School, and expand classroom space at Pioneer Middle School and Steilacoom High School. The District will also make Districtwide safety and security improvements, improve program space and infrastructure at the District's elementary schools, and refinance a land acquisition for the new elementary school.

If voters approve this proposition, the District expects to receive approximately \$2,500,000 in state construction assistance funds to complete these projects. The \$116,000,000 of general obligation bonds would mature within 21 years, and be repaid from annual excess property tax levies. The excess levy rate is estimated to be approximately \$1.26 per \$1,000 of assessed property value or, for a home with an assessed value of \$500,000, approximately \$630 a year (\$52.50 per month). Homeowners who are 61 years or older or disabled, and who meet low-income requirements may qualify for a property tax exemption. For information regarding exemptions, call the Pierce County Assessor at (253) 798-6111.

## Statement For

### Citizens Spoke - The District Listened

These projects were recommended by a citizens' advisory committee - focused on community needs. The bonds will pay: to build a new elementary school to address overcrowding in every elementary school; to build new classroom space across the district focused on preparing students for college and careers; to construct a larger stadium and performing arts space at the high school; to add a new classroom on Anderson Island; for improvements to safety, security, heating systems and address traffic issues at all schools.

### This Replaces Existing Bonds and Taxes – The Tax Rate Will Not Go Up

This replaces the current school bonds – approving this bond will not increase your tax rate. The tax rate is among the lowest in the county and will stay that way. These taxes can only be used for capital projects that improve our community.

### Vote Yes on April 25

Good schools benefit everyone in the community. Support Proposition 1 so we can continue to offer the best education for every student. Vote Yes!

## Rebuttal

We agree that our community must consider future generations and that supporting schools is critical! Funding for these construction projects will serve students and families in our community for years after these bonds are paid off. Don't believe misleading information from a person who doesn't live in our District or understand our needs. This bond proposal will not increase the tax rate! For real facts visit the district's website – then vote *yes* for kids!

**Committee Members:** Starlene Enfield, Patrick Lewis  
Concerned Citizens for Steilacoom School District  
starjenfield@gmail.com, supportshsdstudents.com

## Statement Against

The Steilacoom School District's cost analysis does not represent the full commitment required of the taxpayers. Most families are paying more for food, fuel, utilities, household goods, school clothes and supplies, and most other day to day living expenses. We must be discerning with where and how we permit our income to be used. This bond has a principal cost of *\$116 million*, with *\$78 million* in interest, for a total of *\$194 million dollars*. We must consider the future generations before we approve such a significant financial burden. Supporting schools is a good thing, but there are many ways to do that. At a time when families are having to tighten their financial belts, it is only right to expect the same of our government and its agencies. More at Info@BondNo.com.

## Rebuttal

What's critical for residents right now is keeping themselves, their families, and their homes healthy; to endure the current economic uncertainty. Pierce County requires county residency to engage on the school bond measures, not school district residency. I own property in and live in Pierce County. As a resident, taxpayer, homemaker, churchgoer, consumer, and volunteer, I am aware of needs through observation and conversation. More information can be found at BondNo.com.

**Committee Members:** Jeneen Breshears  
info@BondNo.com