

City of White Salmon

Fact Sheet – Frequently Asked Questions

Proposition No. 1, Formation and Funding of New Metropolitan Park District

The City of White Salmon Community Pool has exceeded its life span and is in need of replacement. Efforts to develop a replacement plan have been ongoing for a number of years.

Why do we need a new pool?

1. The City of White Salmon owns the existing White Salmon Community Pool. The White Salmon City Pool was built in the 1930s. It is a one-season outdoor swimming pool.
2. As the pool continues to age, the ongoing operations and maintenance expenses increase. At the same time, recent initiatives since 2005 have greatly impacted the actual revenue streams cities can exercise from available taxes, reducing budgets and especially impacting general impact funds. Voter approved levies in recent years have never fully covered the entire operations and maintenance costs for the pool, especially as annual upkeep has increased as a result of the pool's aging infrastructure.
3. Public pools must meet strict state guidelines and the current pool has difficulties meeting those guidelines each year.
4. Based on the cost to repair the current pool to a safe and efficient operating condition, the City concluded it was preferable to decommission the current pool and build a replacement pool.

We've been hearing about efforts to replace the current pool for years. What has been the result of all those efforts?

1. An "Enterprise Plan" dated March 7, 2012, was prepared for USA Swimming by the Mt. Adams Park and Recreation District (MAPARD).
2. An "Aquatic Feasibility Study" dated June 2013, was prepared by TSE Consultants for the Mt. Adams Park and Recreation District. The study cost approximately \$12,500 paid for by "Splash for Cash" community donations.
3. A "Feasibility Study" was conducted by Wellman & Associates in 2015-2016 was developed. The cost of the feasibility study was approximately \$48,770. This study looked at several options for repairing or replacing the pool and addressed locations for the building of a new pool. The study's findings led the city to conclude that the current pool is beyond its useful life.
4. The "Wellman Feasibility Study" identified property located across from Whitson Elementary as a possible site for the construction of a new pool.
5. The City of White Salmon and White Salmon Valley School District negotiated a land exchange and entered into an agreement in July 2016 allowing a new pool to be built on the property located across N. Main Street from Whitson Elementary School in exchange for a transfer of the current pool site to the school district. The agreement

specifies that a certain number of paved parking be provided for school use and that the current community pool must be demolished by 2021.

6. The City of White Salmon contracted with Yost Grube Hall Architecture for a preliminary design report for the construction of a new pool at the location across from Whitson Elementary School.
7. In 2018, the City of White Salmon hired WM Smith & Associates to develop preliminary plans, bid specifications and management plan for a new pool. The city council had heard from several citizens that it was difficult to support a pool when they did not know what it would look like or how much it would cost. The City Council identified an option at a recent council meeting and asked WM Smith to prepare a new schematic based on the selected option and complete a site assessment report. No further work will be done by WM Smith & Associates while the proposition to form and fund a new metropolitan park district is on the ballot. If the proposition passes, it will be up to the metropolitan park board to develop a work plan to build a new pool. All materials and work done by WM Smith & Aquatics would be available to the newly formed Metropolitan Park District to use as reference materials or to guide the direction they pursue for the construction of the new pool
8. All documents prepared for the city are available to the public and to a future metropolitan park district board.

Didn't city residents just vote on a pool maintenance levy last year?

1. Yes, however this levy was only for a one-year term and expires December 31, 2018. Without the implementation of the White Salmon Valley Metropolitan Park District, there will not be a funding source to support operation and maintenance of the existing pool past 2018.
2. For many years, the pool was funded with property taxes (without a specified levy) and pool fees. The fees were insufficient to cover expenses and the pool costs burdened the budget for other essential city services (police, fire, streets, etc.).
3. In 2012 the City of White Salmon placed a five-year levy lid lift dedicated to the operation and maintenance of the pool. This was for \$0.18 per \$1000 of assessed value property.
4. In 2017, the citizens of White Salmon passed a 1-year levy lid lift of \$0.18 per \$1000 assessed valuation. The current budget (as of 8/28/2018) is \$171,612. Revenue of \$61,926 comes from the approved levy lid lift, \$46,548 in pool fees, and \$60,408 in funds from the city's Current Expense Fund.
5. A complete budget history for the pool is available to the public.

How would the Metropolitan Park District be any different than past efforts to form a park district?

1. The City of White Salmon began investigating the formation of a Metropolitan Park District in 2016-2017.
2. A “metropolitan park district” (“MPD”) and its formation is different from a “park district”, e.g. the Mt. Adams Park and Recreation District. When a “metropolitan park district” is formed it includes a levy amount in the approval versus a “park district” where the levy is a separate ballot measure. The governance of the MPD would be by an elected board of commissioners.
3. The City of White Salmon City Council discussed the construction of a new pool and the best possible method to move the process along in meetings from January to April 2018. This included a discussion with Community Partners and the possibility of Community Partners taking on the responsibility of securing funding, construction, and operation of the new pool. Due to concerns about implications of an outside entity overseeing the development of a public works project, the Council concluded that pursuing an MPD would be the best way forward for the community. The MPD would provide a junior taxing district with a larger contributor base, and it would put the community in charge of determining the framework, future upgrades, and enhancements to the pool. Furthermore, it would ensure that funding dedicated to the management of a pool facility is only used for that purpose.

What was the city’s involvement in pursuing the placement of an MPD on November’s ballot?

1. At a regular council meeting on March 21, 2018, the City of White Salmon voted to pursue the formation of a Metropolitan Park District solely to construct and operate a new community pool through the petition process allowed by RCW 35.61.020. The boundaries of the proposed metropolitan park district were determined to be the White Salmon Valley School District boundaries within Klickitat County. This would allow the costs of constructing and operating a new pool to be spread across the property owners and citizens who use the pool. Currently, residents that live outside the city limits of White Salmon pay a higher price to use the pool.
2. As petitions were being circulated and nearing the time that they had to be turned in, the City of White Salmon was notified by Klickitat County that the petitions would be determined not to be sufficient as the petition itself did not include some specific “warning language.”
3. The City of White Salmon approached Klickitat County Board of Commissioners and asked if they would consider adopting a resolution allowing the proposition to form a metropolitan park district to be placed on the November 6 ballot. The City of White Salmon and the City of Bingen, as required by RCW 35.61.020, adopted resolutions that were then transmitted to the Klickitat County Board of Commissioners, along with the more than 900 petition signatures that had been collected at that time.

- On July 24, the Klickitat County Board of Commissioners, adopted Resolution 09418 requesting the Auditor’s Office to place Proposition No. 1, Formation and Funding of New Metropolitan Park District on the November 6, 2018 ballot. The proposition includes a property tax levy of \$0.25 per \$1000 of assessed valuation. The proposition notes that the maximum levy rate for a metropolitan park district is \$0.75 per \$1000 of assess valuation. Any increases other than the annual 1% increase allowed by law, requires a vote of the citizens within the metropolitan park district. In other words, this levy raises the annual tax cost on a \$300,000 home by \$75.00 (or \$6.25 per month), and without a future voter increase that can only be raised 1% -- in this example 75 cents -- per year.

How was the levy amount determined?

The amount of the levy was determined by looking at the city’s current budget for operation and maintenance and the documents that have been prepared for the city in the past. Based on the current valuation within the White Salmon Valley School District in Klickitat County, \$1,004,333,494 and using the \$0.25 per \$1000, the amount of property taxes coming to the metropolitan park district would be \$251,083. Below is a budget using this amount, the city’s operation and maintenance budget (prior to August budget amendment) and identifying district expenses.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Revenue | |
| Taxes (using \$0.25/\$1000 valuation) | 251,083 |
| Charges for Services/Sales | 46,174 |
| Total Revenue | 297,257 |
| Expenses | |
| Operation/Maintenance of Pool | 140,742 |
| District Expenses | 86,479 |
| Total Expenses | 227,221 |
| Ending Balance | 70,036 |

The district budget was predicated on the need for a part-time district manager throughout the year, legal costs (higher costs for the first one or two years then costs could go down), commissioner expenses and other costs.

Reserves (ending balance) are needed for several reasons. The metropolitan park district’s revenues come from property taxes which are mainly realized in May and November (based on payments due April 1 and October 1) and pool fees which are realized in the summer. The metropolitan park district needs to be able to maintain cash flow in order to pay for its expenses. In addition, reserves are needed for emergencies that may come up. Even a new pool, may have unforeseen emergencies.