

August 30, 2021

OMPD Advisory Committee members,

YES Olympia Parks is made up of representatives from several parks advocacy groups. (See list at end of this letter.) While each group participates in different topics related to City Parks we are all supportive of continuing compliance with the City of Olympia and OMPD Interlocal Agreement (Agreement). The Agreement sets out specific funding details that were the foundation of the 2015 MPD voted measure for additional parks funding. The Agreement also includes a continued commitment for use of funds from the 2004 Voted Utility Tax. We will continue to monitor compliance with the intent of these voted measures.

Our community is taxing themselves in order to acquire, develop and maintain a great parks system. As our population grows and density of uses increase the importance of parks and open spaces is even more critical than in the past. Access to outdoor spaces and recreation is a key feature of the quality of life we enjoy. The open spaces preserved as part of our parks system also support environmental sustainability.

We have two concerns, one with the draft compliance report and the other about the City declaration of exigent circumstances.

First, funds that were removed from the Parks budget during early 2020 were not restored when 2020 year-end funds were distributed, even though the City had available funds. We disagree with the committee statement below regarding the reasons for this and their support of these changes.

*Based on the report presented, it appears that \$723,000 (\$423,000 in NVUT and \$300,000 in VUT) was diverted from land acquisition to park operating purposes. After review of the 2020 year-end funding presentation, it appears funding was not restored to OPARD from end-of-year savings. Due to the lower-than-expected revenue generated by the City, we support these changes.*

When year-end funding was discussed at the March Finance Committee meeting there was an estimated \$3.1 million available for allocation. At the April 21 Finance Committee meeting a total of almost \$4 million was shown to be available. City Manager Jay Burney, during the April meeting, indicated that the balance showed available funds after the City had honored 'contractual obligations' but did he did not mention the Interlocal Agreement and the expectation that funds would be restored if year end funds are available. We view the Interlocal Agreement as equivalent of a contract. (Any voted tax measure should be treated the same.)

Here is the specific clause in the Interlocal Agreement:

(iv.) The City intends to allocate in its budget the remaining one-half of the Non-Voted Utility Tax (NVUT) to acquire new park land and to maintain and develop those acquired park properties, with a priority on acquisition to the extent practicable. If such budget allocation does not occur, to the extent a year end fund balance exists, then the City intends, absent an exigent financial circumstance, to allocate the first \$500,000 of that balance to such purposes.

While the City had declared an exigent circumstance, it was clear in the Spring of 2021 that the city finances for 2020 did not suffer that in reality. Because of this, funds that had been withheld from Parks budgets should be restored.

It is troubling that the commitment to restore funds that were withheld from the Parks budget was not raised by staff or Council members. The staff presented a long list of potential uses for the year-end funds and did not include restoration of parks funds. Considering the end of year balance, we would have expected that staff and Council would honor the spirit of the agreement.

The final disposition of 2020 year-end funds as adopted by the Council at their May 4, 2021 meeting is attached. This list includes one time as well as on-going expenses. When this list was presented at the May 4 Council meeting the city manager indicated that the restoration of parks funds was still a potential but there has been no formal action that we are aware of to date. We believe a request to restore Parks funding should be included in the report from the Advisory Committee.

Our second concern is the City Council declaration of exigent circumstances, which occurred on April 24, 2020. At the time, this declaration made sense. However, the declaration has no specific end date. Since the City is apparently past the emergency level concern when it was adopted, the declaration should be ended. If a new emergency arises, the Council could hold another hearing as per the agreement. Simply declaring an ongoing exigent circumstance was not the intent of the Agreement. We hope that the report for 2021 will show compliance without the use of a declaration of exigent circumstances.

We appreciate the work of the Committee and hope that you will adjust your report to reflect the concerns we have outlined above.

Sincerely,

Signed by Bob Jacobs and Karen Messmer – representing the YES Olympia Parks Coalition

#### Yes Olympia Parks Coalition

YES Olympia Parks is a coalition of organizations that support parks, open spaces, and recreation. The coalition negotiated the wording for the MPD ordinance and the Interlocal Agreement between the City and the MPD. These documents defined the terms under which the coalition would support and campaign for the Olympia Metropolitan Park District (OMPD) ballot measure, which it successfully did.

- Olympia Coalition for Ecosystems Preservation
- Friends of LBA Woods (formerly LBA Woods Coalition)
- Friends of the Waterfront
- Woodland Trail Greenway Association
- Parks and Sidewalks Campaign Committee of 2004
- North Capitol Campus Heritage Park Development Association

# 2020/2021 End of Year General Fund Allocation - - Adopted at May 4, 2021 Council Meeting

Updated: 4/27/2021

Attachment #1

2020/2021 EOY GENERAL FUND FUND ALLOCATION RECOMMENDATION				2020/2021 Funds	\$3,983,778
Line ID	Department	Exp Description	Expenditure	OT/OG*	Allocation
1	CPD	Squaxin Interpretive Sign/Display	25,000	OT	25,000
2	CPD	Housing Market Study Update	50,000	OT	50,000
3		<b>Subtotal Community Planning &amp; Development</b>			<b>75,000</b>
4	FIN	Budgetary Software Licenses (Workiva)	11,250	OG	11,250
5	FIN	Business Accountant Add'l - CP&D	12,000	OG	12,000
6		<b>Subtotal Finance</b>			<b>23,250</b>
7	GEN CITY	2021 Expenditure Reductions (excludes vacancies)	952,688	OG	952,688
8	GEN CITY	ERP Financial Software Contribution	200,000	OG	200,000
9	GEN CITY	1% COLA - Independent Employees (Retro Jan - Jun 2021)	120,000	OT	120,000
10		<b>Subtotal General City</b>			<b>#####</b>
11	OCM - Strategic Initiatives	Police Auditor - Add'l Funding	70,000	OG	70,000
12	OCM - Strategic Initiatives	Public Safety Plan	100,000	OT	100,000
13	OCM - Strategic Initiatives	Demonstration Review	100,000	OT	100,000
14	OCM - Strategic Initiatives	Data Visualization	50,000	OT	50,000
15	OCM - Housing/Homeless Response	Interfaith Works Commitment	250,000	OT	250,000
16	OCM - Housing/Homeless Response	Homeless Response Support	150,000	OG	150,000
17	OCM - Housing/Homeless Response	Homeless Scattered Site Support	300,000	OG	300,000
18		<b>Subtotal Office of City Manager</b>			<b>#####</b>
19	OFD	Regional Fire Authority Study	150,000	OT	150,000
20	OFD	Basic Life Support Transport Financial Study	50,000	OT	50,000
21		<b>Subtotal Olympia Fire Department</b>			<b>200,000</b>
22	OPD	OPD Guild 2020 Retro Pay	190,000	OT	190,000
23	OPD	Critical Response Unit Expansion Pilot	250,000	OT	250,000
24		<b>Subtotal Olympia Police Department</b>			<b>440,000</b>
25	OFD/OPD	Public Safety Asset Management	200,000	OG	200,000
26		<b>Subtotal Public Safety</b>			<b>200,000</b>
27	PW	Building Repair & Maintenance	500,000	OG	500,000
28	PW	Snowplows - plows, not trucks	50,000	OT	50,000
29		<b>Subtotal Public Works</b>			<b>550,000</b>
30		<b>Department Grand Totals</b>			<b>#####</b>
31		Remaining to Unallocated Fund Balance Reserve			<b>202,840</b>
32		<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>3,983,778</b>