

Clark County Official Local

Voters' Pamphlet

February 11, 2025 Special Election

City of Camas Edition



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Clark County Auditor's Office

You must *sign and date* your return envelope in order for your ballot to be counted!

- Sign in the signature box that has YOUR name printed on the envelope.
- If you registered to vote online, or when you obtained your driver's license, the signature on your driver's license is the signature in your voter registration record.
- If you are unsure about the signature in your voter registration record, we encourage you to call the Elections Office at 564-397-2345. We can provide a description of the signature you used when you registered to vote.
- Do NOT sign someone else's name, even if you have power of attorney.
- Voting over the phone by having someone else fill out and sign your ballot is against the law. Voters can call us at 564-397-2345 to learn about the options for voting while they are out of town.
- Drop boxes are available if you don't want your ballot or signature to go through the mail.
- Sign up to receive text messages regarding your ballot status. Text the word VOTE to 868392 (VoteWA).

Registering to vote

Registering takes only a few minutes, and you may do it by mail or online at VoteWA.gov.

You may also complete a new voter registration form. Contact the Elections Office by mail, email, or phone for more information.

The deadline to receive new voter registrations and voter updates to existing registrations online, by phone or by mail is 4 pm Monday, February 3, 2025.

Lost or damaged ballot?

If you lose your ballot, or it becomes damaged, you can obtain a replacement ballot by contacting the Elections Office.

Clark County Elections Office

Phone 564-397-2345

Relay 711 or 877-833-6341

Email elections@clark.wa.gov

Mailing address PO Box 8815, Vancouver, WA 98666-8815

Street address 1408 Franklin Street, Vancouver

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Proposition No. 5

City Utility Tax to pay for Police Services

The City of Camas adopted Resolution No. 24-016 asking voters to consider approving additional revenue to be dedicated for police services in the City. If approved by voters, this Proposition would authorize the City to increase the current 2% Utility Tax to 6% on the gross earnings of utilities providing water, sewer, solid waste and stormwater operations within the City, authorizing 4% for the purpose of maintaining and enhancing police services in Camas.

Should Proposition No. 5 be:

To vote, use your official ballot.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

To increase public safety services by providing additional funds to the Camas Police Department, the City of Camas approved Resolution 24-016. The approval of this proposition would increase utility taxes on City water, sewer, solid waste, and stormwater utilities by 4% for a total of 6% City utility tax. Camas seeks a sustainable source of funding to hire additional uniformed police personnel and pay for the associated training, as well as acquire new equipment and vehicles. If approved by voters, the new revenue will be restricted for the sole purpose of maintaining and enhancing police services in Camas.

STATEMENT FOR

Vote Yes on Proposition 5: A Safer Camas for All

Camas is one of the safest cities in the state thanks to our dedicated public safety officers. However, as our city grows, we face funding gaps threatening the Camas Police Department’s high level of service.

Proposition 5 proposes a 4% utility tax on water, sewer, stormwater, and solid waste, generating approximately \$1 million annually. This investment will support the police department by hiring two sergeants, a patrol lieutenant, and one additional officer. It will also provide necessary vehicles, uniforms, modern equipment, and essential training. Without this investment, Camas cannot adequately fund the public safety level of service we have come to expect.

These investments likely will add about \$5/month to the average utility bill, without which Camas cannot keep pace with growth nor ensure timely responses to emergencies, proactive crime prevention, and increased community engagement. This investment supports public safety and enhances our city’s overall quality of life by fostering trust, safety, and stability.

Without these resources, the Camas Police Department will struggle to meet our thriving city’s growing needs. By voting Yes on Prop. 5, we can ensure the safety and security of our neighborhoods, schools, and businesses for years to come. Join us in keeping Camas a safe, vibrant place to live. Vote Yes on Prop. 5 and support our dedicated officers.

REBUTTAL OF STATEMENT AGAINST

The 2022 ordinance did not mandate fire department use. This ordinance mandates police department use. While the proposed utility tax increase is concerning, Camas faces rising public safety costs. Relying solely on existing revenue is unsustainable as demands grow. This utility tax provides dedicated funding for the police department, ensuring community safety without compromising other services. It’s essential to maintain our quality of life and protect our families, children, businesses, and neighbors.

Statement For and Rebuttal of Statement Against Submitted by:

Deanna Rusch, Chair
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Swati Wilson
Tony Ashton

STATEMENT AGAINST

While we all support our Camas Police Department and want to ensure their success, the proposed additional 4% utility tax (6% total monthly) isn’t the right solution for our community. The City already receives substantial funding through property, business, and sales taxes, and our residents pay higher-than-average tax rates to maintain our excellent quality of life.

Our police force has done an outstanding job keeping crime rates low, and they deserve our continued support. However, before asking families to pay more for basic utilities like water and electricity, the City should demonstrate better stewardship of existing tax dollars. The recent example of the 2023 utility tax, which was promoted for fire services but didn’t deliver as promised, redirecting the money for other city services, raises serious concerns about how this new tax revenue would actually be used.

Instead of adding another burden to household budgets, let’s encourage City leadership to prioritize police funding from existing revenue sources and ensure taxpayer dollars are being spent efficiently on essential services our community needs. Please *Reject* the Utility tax increase.

REBUTTAL OF STATEMENT FOR

Camas is ranked Washington’s safest city in 2024. Camas doesn’t have a revenue problem; it has a spending problem. This unnecessary tax reflects poor city governance, not urgent police needs. While proponents claim it costs just \$5 monthly, utility rates are rising. On \$200 monthly bills, this collective 6% tax means \$144 yearly—and the City can raise it anytime, like Vancouver did (now 28.9%) and Battle Ground (12%).

Statement Against and Rebuttal of Statement For Submitted by:

Gary Perman, Chair
gary@permantech.com
Brian Wiklem
Shannon Roberts