

**Whatcom County
Auditor's Office**

Whatcom County Courthouse
311 Grand Avenue, Suite 103
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Diana Bradrick
County Auditor

Stacy Henthorn
Chief Deputy Auditor

Retain for Use in 2024

To: County Executive, County Council, Cities, and Districts
From: Diana Bradrick, Auditor
Date: October 19, 2023
Re: **Submitting a Ballot Measure for 2024 Ballot**

If your city or district is considering putting a measure on the ballot in 2024, the resolution submittal deadline date for each election follows:

Resolution Submittal Deadline	Election Date	Election Type
December 15, 2023 @ 4:30 pm	February 13, 2024	Special
February 23, 2024 @ 4:30 pm	April 23, 2024	Special
May 3, 2024 @ 4:30 pm	August 6, 2024	Primary
August 6, 2024 @ 4:30 pm	November 5, 2024	General

Note: To help facilitate planning & budgeting for 2024 the Auditor’s Office would like to know if there are any anticipated ballot measures the February or April Special elections for your district. Please email auditor@co.whatcom.wa.us with which election you anticipate a proposed ballot measure.

Voter Participation Numbers:

We provide the number of voters participating in the last General Election for each city and taxing district for use in determining the number of votes required for bond and levy passage in the next year.

The number of voters participating in the 2023 General Election for your city or district will be posted to our website at www.whatcomcounty.us/auditor in December. You will also be sent an email with the information.

Reminder:

The Whatcom County Auditor's Office will produce an abbreviated version of the Local Voters' Pamphlet for the February and April special elections. A full pamphlet will be produced for the primary and general elections. The following *must* accompany the resolution for *every* election:

What You Must Submit With The Resolution:

1. Ballot Measure Cover Sheet:

Complete the Ballot Measure Cover Sheet. The form is available as a fillable form on the Auditor's website: <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/3593/District-Resources>.

2. Explanatory Statement:

An explanatory statement prepared by the attorney for the city or district submitting the ballot measure is required. The statement must be submitted *at the same time* the resolution is submitted. Explanatory statements are subject to review by the County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. The explanatory statement should tell what the current law is *and* what the results of passage of the ballot measure would be, not to exceed 100 words. All statements become public information five days after receipt.

3. Committee Appointments:

Prior to submitting a resolution, the city or district shall formally appoint a committee "For" *and* "Against" the ballot measure. The committee "For" will prepare a statement advocating voters' approval of the measure; the committee "Against" will prepare a statement advocating voters' rejection of the measure.

- A committee will consist of not more than three people. While each committee will have no more than three members, a committee may seek the advice of any person or persons. Each committee will identify a chair who will serve as the primary contact for the Auditor's Office.
- Submit completed and signed Committee Appointment Form for *each* committee; available as a fillable form on the Auditor's website: <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/3594/Precincts-and-Maps>.

A diligent effort must be made by the jurisdiction to appoint a committee "For" and a committee "Against" the measure. "Diligent effort" is defined as attempting to solicit participation by *at least three* of the following means:

- Posting the request on the jurisdiction's website, if they have one
- Requesting volunteers to serve at any commissioner meeting when the proposal is being discussed
- Making direct phone calls to potential individuals

- Putting up flyers on bulletin boards in libraries, grocery stores, or other community boards
- Submitting a news release or letter to the editor to the newspapers (whether for printed version or online version) requesting volunteers (A “paid ad” in the Legal Notices is not required)
- Posting on a reader board or sandwich board
- Recruiting at any district events (i.e. monthly pancake feed)
- Putting notice in emails or newsletters sent to individuals in the district
- Inserts in bills
- Other direct mail/email notifications
- Other communications

If the jurisdiction was unable to appoint either a For or Against committee, a list of efforts made will be provided to the Auditor’s Office when submitting the measure. The Auditor will review the efforts, confirming at least three of the suggestions were tried. If the Auditor determines further attempt should be made, the Auditor will make an effort seeking participants or attempt to identify interested individuals and appoint them to a committee.

Persons drafting statements for or against measures appearing in the local voters’ pamphlet who are officers, employees, or representative of any organization may only be designated as such if that organization has taken an official action to support or oppose the measure, as the case may be.

Committee statement deadlines and requirements are available on the Auditor’s website at: <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/3593/District-Resources> and will also be provided at the time the resolution is submitted, upon request.

Undue Hardship: Local jurisdictions can petition the County Council for relief from participating in the Local Voters’ Pamphlet due to undue hardship. (*See RCW 29A.32.220*)

Questions: Contact the Election Division at (360) 778-5102 or e-mail your question to elections@co.whatcom.wa.us.