

ORDINANCE NO. 2456 (2025)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BOTHELL, WASHINGTON, PROVIDING FOR THE SUBMISSION TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF BOTHELL AT AN ELECTION TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 4, 2025, OF A PROPOSITION AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO LEVY REGULAR PROPERTY TAXES IN EXCESS OF THE LIMITATIONS OF CHAPTER 84.55 RCW TO PAY COSTS OF STREET AND SIDEWALK DESIGN, IMPROVEMENT, MAINTENANCE, AND OPERATIONS; SETTING FORTH THE TEXT OF THE BALLOT PROPOSITION; DIRECTING PROPER CITY OFFICIALS TO TAKE NECESSARY ACTIONS; AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER PROPERLY RELATED MATTERS

WHEREAS, in 2016, the voters of the City approved a “Safe Streets and Sidewalks” levy lid lift, which has funded significant transportation system maintenance and upgrades, meeting nearly all of the goals for the voter-approved measure, including building four high-priority school walk routes, installing 11 flashing crosswalks, replacing nearly three miles of sidewalk panels, and performed in-house repairs to 98,000 square feet of roadway, and is set to expire after 2025 unless renewed by the voters;

WHEREAS, the City’s 2040 Vision states that Bothell’s anticipated 2044 population of over 80,000 people will need to be served by a transportation system that is well-maintained, safe, and multimodal; that neighborhoods are intended to be connected by sidewalks, transit, trails, and roads that allow us to gather for fun and enrichment; that Bothell should strive to be a safe, easy, reliable, and convenient community to navigate using any mode of transportation; and that the City intends to achieve zero traffic deaths through targeted investments in safe infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, after a robust public engagement effort the City completed a periodic update to its Comprehensive Plan in 2024 with a guiding principle that Bothell’s transportation system should continue to provide a safe, efficient, smart, financially sustainable, and resilient network; utilize a proactive Safe System approach with the goal of eliminating fatal and serious-injury collisions by 2035; balance economic development, strategic growth, neighborhood connectivity and livability while preserving the environment; and offer multiple travel options and equitable service for people of all abilities; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Bothell has the responsibility under the Constitution of the State of Washington for the improvement, maintenance, protection and

operation of public ways within the corporate limits of the City pursuant to RCW 35A.11.020 and chapter 35A.47 RCW, and the improvement, maintenance, and protection of public ways requires building sufficient capacity to adequately accommodate existing congestion and anticipate future congestion, and also requires maintaining and preserving existing transportation improvements to avoid catastrophic failure of the improvements which would require significant additional funds to reconstruct; and

WHEREAS, the City Council takes note of the “Washington Transportation Plan 2040 and Beyond” adopted by the Washington State Transportation Commission, which expresses the vision that Washington transportation system safely connects people and communities by fostering commerce and economic opportunity for all, operating seamlessly across boundaries, and providing travel options to achieve an environmentally and financially sustainable system; and

WHEREAS, the City Council further takes note of (1) the long-range strategy, “Vision 2050,” adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council, a regional planning agency, which establishes a foundational goal for a sustainable, equitable, affordable, safe, and efficient multimodal transportation system that promotes vitality of the economy, environment and health; and (2) the Puget Sound Regional Council’s Regional Transportation Plan 2022-2050 that emphasizes efficient maintenance, preservation, and operation of the transportation system, including roadways, bridges, transit, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, traffic signals and various other critical transportation assets as a top priority; and

WHEREAS, the funding dedicated for the preservation, maintenance and improvement of the City’s transportation infrastructure has been dramatically reduced due to factors such as the passage of Initiative 776 in 2002; and

WHEREAS, voter-approved transportation funding has become a necessity because as dedicated revenues have decreased, the ongoing annual costs to preserve, maintain and improve the City’s transportation infrastructure continue to rise, leaving the City unable to continue to adequately preserve and maintain the City’s transportation infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, preventive pavement maintenance is prudent public policy because it costs significantly less overall than repairs or replacement that are delayed into the future; and

WHEREAS, safe walking is dependent upon the presence of a complete pedestrian network and crosswalks equipped with modern safety features; and

WHEREAS, safe routes to school prevent accidents and allow children to receive the many health benefits of walking to school; and

WHEREAS, RCW 84.55.050 authorizes the voters of a City to permit the levy of taxes in excess of the levy limitations established in RCW 84.55.010 pursuant to a "levy lid lift;" and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that establishing a stable local funding mechanism for funding a portion of transportation improvements is essential to the continued mobility and the economic health and quality of life of Bothell; and

WHEREAS, to continue funding all or a portion of the street and sidewalk maintenance; multimodal street facilities; and sidewalk, bicycle, and crosswalk infrastructure improvements described in this ordinance (as further defined below, the "Safe Street and Sidewalk Improvements") for a period of nine years, the City Council finds that it is in the City's best interest to present a ballot proposition to the City's voters to increase the City's regular property tax above the limits otherwise provided for in chapter 84.55 RCW; and

WHEREAS, the City Council proposes to present a ballot proposition to the City's voters to renew the City's 2016 Safe Streets and Sidewalks levy lid lift and restore funding for these purposes, as further described in Section 1, in an amount equal to \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value and to provide the dollar amount of such levy increase be included in computing the limitations for subsequent levies for a total of 9 years, as provided for in chapter 84.55 RCW;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BOTHELL, WASHINGTON, DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Findings and Intent. The findings expressed in the recitals to this ordinance are hereby adopted and incorporated by reference. Accordingly, the City Council finds and determines that:

(a) The City is in need of funds to replace the expiring 2016 Safe Streets and Sidewalks levy in order to provide safe and accessible roads and multimodal transportation that supports a more connected community and to create a transportation system which allows the mobility of people and goods, consistent with the City's adopted "Vision 2040" plan and its 2024 Comprehensive Plan Amendments, which further the stated goals of the "Washington Transportation Plan 2040 and Beyond," adopted by the Washington State Transportation Commission, and the "Vision 2050" and Regional Transportation Plan 2022-2050, adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council.

(b) It is the intent of the City Council that this renewal of the Safe Streets and Sidewalks ballot measure will restore the funding available for these purposes to the levy rate approved in 2016 of \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value. It would not disturb any other levy lid lift approved by the voters. If the proposition is approved, the City Council

intends to require production of an annual accountability report documenting actions and program status.

(c) If approved by the voters, the proposition described in this ordinance would raise an estimated \$9.9 million annually (based on current projections for assessed valuation), which when combined with other grant and local funding would permit the City to fund the following improvements (the “**Safe Streets and Sidewalks Improvements**”):

(1) Design, construction, installation, operation and maintenance of streets and street safety improvements including but not limited to street resurfacing, pothole repair and other road preservation improvements to reduce the future cost of road system maintenance; arterial street resurfacing, restoration and/or replacement; and street safety improvements such as speed cushions, signage, roundabouts, chicanes, and other similar installations;

(2) Design, construction, installation, operation and maintenance of multimodal transportation improvements, including but not limited to street, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure; sidewalk repair/replacement programs; improved multimodal access to transit connections; and crosswalk installations; and

(3) Other similar multimodal transportation improvements that support a more connected community.

Section 2. Calling of Election. The City Council finds that it is in the best interests of the City and its residents to submit to the qualified voters of the City, at an election held on November 4, 2025, a proposition authorizing the City to increase its regular property tax levy for collection in 2026 by an amount greater than otherwise permitted under chapter 84.55 RCW for the purposes described in Section 3. If this proposition is approved, the City Council will be authorized to adopt, in accordance with its regular budget process, an increased regular property tax as described in Section 3.

Section 3. Purpose and Description of Ballot Proposition. For the purposes and subject to the limitations identified below, the City Council seeks voter approval under RCW 84.55.050(1) for a levy lid lift, as follows:

(a) **Limited Purpose.** The incremental amount of the increase authorized to be levied and collected pursuant to this proposition shall be used to provide for the Safe Streets and Sidewalk Improvements, as defined in Section 1(c) of this ordinance. The City Council reserves the right to determine in its discretion the precise timing of the use of funds raised by the increase, consistent with the goals described in this ordinance, which may include using some or all of the funds for the payment of debt service on obligations issued to finance improvements described in this ordinance.

(b) Maximum Levy Rate. The maximum total regular levy rate authorized for collection in 2026 (including the portion attributable to the general expense levy, the levy lid lift approved in 2018, and this renewal) is not to exceed \$1.65 per \$1,000 of assessed value. The measure would reauthorize the expiring 2016 levy lid lift authorization increment of \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value. For 2026, this would increase the total levy rate by approximately \$0.18 compared to the total 2025 levy rate (which included the 2016 levy lid lift).

(c) Levy Limits in Future Years Carried Forward for Nine Years. The increase in the dollar amount of the maximum allowable levy under chapter 84.55 RCW levied for collection 2026 pursuant to this authorization is to be carried forward for the purpose of computing the limitations on levies under chapter 84.55 RCW for the succeeding nine years, concluding with the levy for collection in 2035. This authorization is not intended to disturb any other existing levy lid lift that has been authorized by the voters and is in effect at any time during this period.

(d) Exemption for Qualifying Low-Income Senior Citizens, Veterans and Persons with Disabilities. In accordance with RCW 84.55.050(4)(e), the exemptions available to persons who qualify through the State's property tax exemption program for low-income senior citizens, veterans and persons with disabilities authorized by RCW 84.36.381 will apply to the incremental amount authorized by voters under this proposition.

Section 4. Ballot Proposition. The City Clerk of the City is authorized and directed to certify, no later than August 5, 2025, to both the Auditor of Snohomish County, and the Director of Records and Elections of King County, in their capacities as *ex officio* Supervisors of Elections in the City, a copy of this ordinance and the proposition to be submitted at that election in the form of ballot title prepared pursuant to RCW 29A.32.280, as follows:

PROPOSITION 1

**CITY OF BOTHELL
RENEWAL OF SAFE STREETS AND SIDEWALKS LEVY LID LIFT**

The Bothell City Council passed Ordinance No. 2456 concerning renewing the expiring safe streets and sidewalks levy lid lift.

If approved, this proposition would reauthorize funding for the Safe Streets and Sidewalks Improvements and set the maximum total regular levy rate at \$1.65/\$1,000 assessed value in 2026. Improvements include street repairs, potholes and resurfacing; sidewalks, crosswalks and traffic safety infrastructure; and other projects, all as described in the Ordinance. The increased amount levied would carry forward in calculating levy limits for nine years through 2035. Qualifying seniors, veterans, and others would be exempt under State law.

Should this proposition be:

APPROVED 0
REJECTED 0

For purposes of receiving notice of any matters related to the ballot title, as provided in RCW 29A.36.080, the City hereby designates its outside counsel, Alice Ostdiek, Stradling Yocca Carlson & Rauth LLP, (206) 829-3002, AOstdiek@stradlinglaw.com, as the person to whom such notice shall be provided.

Section 5. Authorization of Local Voters' Pamphlet. The City authorizes preparation and distribution of a local voters' pamphlet, including an explanatory statement and statements in favor of and in opposition to the ballot measure, if any. The preparation of explanatory statement, the appointment of pro/con committees and the preparation of statements in favor of and in opposition to the ballot title shall be in accordance with chapter 29A.32 RCW and the rules and guidelines of the Director of Elections.

Section 6. Severability. If any provision of this ordinance is declared by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, then such provision shall be null and void and shall be severable from the remaining provisions of this ordinance and shall in no way affect the validity of the other provisions of this ordinance or of any other ordinance or resolution.

Section 7. Effective Date. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and five days following its publication as required by law.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Bothell, Washington, at an open public meeting thereof, this 10th day of June 2025, and signed in authentication of its passage this day of.

APPROVED:


Mason Thompson
Mason Thompson (Jun 10, 2025 20:30 PDT)

MASON THOMPSON
MAYOR

ATTEST/AUTHENTICATED:



LAURA HATHAWAY
CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



EILEEN KEIFFER
CITY ATTORNEY

FILED WITH THE CITY CLERK: 06/05/2025
PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL: 06/10/2025
PUBLISHED: 06/13/2025
EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/18/2025
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CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, City Clerk of the City of Bothell, Washington (the "City"), hereby certify as follows:

1. The attached copy of Ordinance No. 2456 (the "Ordinance") is a full, true and correct copy of an ordinance duly passed at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City held at the regular meeting place thereof on June 10, 2025, as that ordinance appears on the minute book of the City.

2. The Ordinance will be in full force and effect five days after publication in the City's official newspaper, which publication date is June 13, 2025.

3. A quorum of the members of the City Council was present throughout the meeting and a majority of those members present voted in the proper manner for the passage of the Ordinance.

Dated 06/10/2025.

CITY OF BOTHELL, WASHINGTON



Laura Hathaway, City Clerk