

CITY OF BURIEN, WASHINGTON

ORDINANCE NO. 874

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BURIEN, WASHINGTON, PROVIDING FOR THE FORM OF THE BALLOT PROPOSITION AND SPECIFYING CERTAIN OTHER DETAILS CONCERNING SUBMISSION TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF BURIEN AT A SPECIAL ELECTION TO BE HELD THEREIN ON NOVEMBER 4, 2025, OF A PROPOSITION AUTHORIZING BURIEN TO LIFT THE LEVY LIMIT ESTABLISHED IN RCW 84.55.010 IN ORDER TO FUND PUBLIC SAFETY; SETTING FORTH THE BALLOT PROPOSITION; AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

WHEREAS, the City of Burien, Washington (“the City”) provides comprehensive public safety services to its residents; and

WHEREAS, these public safety services include, but are not limited to, police services through a contract with the King County Sheriff’s Office; police co-response teams; and street, lighting, and sidewalk infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the City is seeing a large increase in direct and contracted costs for public safety, primarily driven by inflation and wage growth, and such costs are expected to continue to rise in addition to costs for providing police co-response teams and infrastructure costs for streets, lighting, and sidewalks; and

WHEREAS, the Burien City Council has reaffirmed public safety and service levels as at top priority; and

WHEREAS, the City has maintained responsible fiscal policies to minimize taxes on Burien residents, including providing services with limited staffing levels, reducing police contract costs by having unfilled positions, and carefully managing a balanced budget despite restrictive property tax caps; and

WHEREAS, to avoid increasing taxes to pay for costs of public safety services in the 2025-2026 budget, the Burien City Council approved the strategic use of contingency reserve balances and federal funding to create a proof of concept for the ultimately successful co-response model for crisis response; and

WHEREAS, the City only receives \$0.795, which is 7% of the total property taxes paid by property taxpayers within Burien, the remaining \$10.02 (93%) is distributed amongst the State of Washington, King County, and, along with voter-approved levies, to fire districts, school districts, and other governmental entities. For instance, for a home with a median value of \$596,000, the City receives \$473.93 out of the total \$6,447.32 of property tax paid by the homeowner; and

WHEREAS, as a result, the City's property tax revenue growth has not kept pace with inflation, nor has it kept pace with cost increases in law enforcement and related services; and

WHEREAS, the Burien City Council directed the City's staff to explore funding options to both maintain and expand current levels of public safety services; and

WHEREAS, Burien engaged FCS Consulting Group to provide a 2025-2030 General Fund financial forecast for both revenues and expenditures; and

WHEREAS, Burien also engaged consulting firm Consor to assess community support for public safety funding options and to gather insights into community priorities; and

WHEREAS, at the Burien City Council meeting on May 19, 2025, Consor and DHM Research reported findings proving that public safety is the Burien community's first priority, and recognized that residents want to continue and expand the co-response model, add more police officers for faster emergency response, and increase street and sidewalk lighting as well as improve sidewalks and roads; and

WHEREAS, to improve public safety services and meet community needs and expectations regarding public safety, and after further discussion about revenue alternatives, based on the consultant reports the City's staff recommend that the Burien City Council adopt an ordinance asking voters to consider a ballot measure at the November 4, 2025, election to increase the City's regular property tax levy above the annual levy lid limit; and

WHEREAS, RCW 84.55.050 authorizes the voters of a city to authorize an increase above the levy limitations established in RCW 84.55.010 (a "levy lid lift"); and

WHEREAS, RCW 84.55.050 requires that the ballot measure for a proposed levy lid lift state the aggregate maximum regular property tax rate per \$1,000 of assessed valuation to be levied in the first year of the levy lid lift, taking into consideration the City's regular levy for its general purposes, any allowable increases, and the proposed incremental increase; and

WHEREAS, the Burien City Council desires to allow the electors to approve or reject a proposition under RCW 84.55.050(2), authorizing the Burien City Council to levy the City's regular

property tax in an amount that exceeds the incremental limit factor that would otherwise be prescribed by RCW 84.55.010;

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

Section 1. Findings. The Burien City Council hereby finds that the best interests of the residents of Burien require the City of Burien (“the City”) to pay costs associated with providing public safety services (“Public Safety”), including, costs associated with: a police contract, including adding additional police officers and providing community crime prevention programs; infrastructure, including safer streets, sidewalks, and additional street lighting; and expanding police co-response teams to address homelessness, public drug use, and mental health crises.

The Burien City Council will determine the timing and distribution of Public Safety levy funds, guided by community-identified priorities as gathered through public outreach. A portion of the existing police contract expenses will be transitioned from the General Fund to a Public Safety Levy Fund, allowing the City to maintain and strengthen essential services while aligning with the community’s vision for safety.

Section 2. Calling of Election Regarding the Levy of Additional Regular Property Taxes. Pursuant to RCW 84.55.050, the Burien City Council hereby calls for the submission of a proposition to the qualified electors of Burien asking whether the City shall increase its regular property tax levy for six years in excess of the limitation established in RCW 84.55.010. The Director of King County Elections (the “Director”), as *ex officio* supervisor of elections in King County, is hereby requested to call the election in Burien on November 4, 2025. The proposition submitted to the qualified voters of Burien for their approval or rejection would authorize (1) increasing the City’s regular property tax levy not to exceed \$0.95 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation to a total maximum regular property tax levy rate not to exceed \$1.90 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for collection in 2026, and (2) for the five calendar years following 2026 (2027-2031), increasing the City’s total regular property levy amount by a limit factor of 6%. The levy lid lift is intended to increase the property tax revenues by a minimum of \$8.68 million for 2026 and increase with assessed values and new construction annually.

The taxes authorized by this proposition would be in addition to the maximum amount of regular property taxes the City would have been limited to by RCW 84.55.010 in the absence of voter approval under this ordinance, plus other authorized lid lifts, if any.

Upon approval by the voters of the proposition hereinafter set forth, the City may use proceeds of such levy to pay Public Safety costs as more particularly described in this ordinance.

Section 3. Election. The City Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to certify the following proposition to the Director, in substantially the following form. Such election shall be conducted by mail unless otherwise determined by the Director.

CITY OF BURIEN PROPOSITION NO. 1
LEVY LID LIFT FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

[FOR DISCUSSION – LANGUAGE AFTER THE FIRST SENTENCE IS LIMITED TO 75 WORDS; MUST INCLUDE MAXIMUM TOTAL REGULAR PROPERTY TAX LEVY FOR FIRST YEAR, LIMIT FACTOR FOR SUBSEQUENT YEARS, PURPOSE, AND IF DESIRED, QUALIFYING SENIOR EXEMPTION. DRAFT BELOW ASSUMES THE LEVY LID LIFT IS TEMPORARY]

To fund public safety, including police staffing, co-response programs, and safer streets and sidewalks, the Burien City Council passed Ordinance 874. This measure increases the City’s regular property tax levy not to exceed \$0.95/\$1,000 to a maximum rate not to exceed \$1.90/\$1,000 for 2026; and sets the limit factor for the City’s total regular property tax levy for 2027-2031 to 6%. Exemptions apply to seniors, veterans, and others as described in RCW 84.36.381.

Should this proposition be approved:

YES?
NO?

For purposes of receiving notice of the exact language of the ballot proposition required by RCW 29A.36.080, the City Council hereby designates: (a) the City Clerk and (b) the City Attorney, as the individuals to whom such notice should be provided. The City Attorney and City Clerk are each authorized individually to approve changes to the ballot title, if any, deemed necessary by the Director.

The City Clerk is authorized to make necessary clerical corrections to this ordinance including, but not limited to, the correction of scrivener's or clerical errors, references, numbering, section/subsection numbers, and any reference thereto.

The proper Burien officials are authorized to perform such duties as are necessary or required by law to submit the question of whether the regular property tax shall be increased, as provided in this ordinance, to the electors at the November 4, 2025, election.

Section 4. Exemption. If the ballot proposition set forth herein is approved by the voters, as authorized by RCW 84.36.381, senior citizens, disabled veterans, and other people with

disabilities (as defined in RCW 84.36.381) shall be exempt from the tax increase resulting from such levy lid lift.

Section 5. Voters' Pamphlet. The preparation and distribution of a local voters' pamphlet providing information on the foregoing ballot measure is hereby authorized. The pamphlet shall include an explanatory statement and arguments advocating approval and disapproval of the ballot measure, if any. In accordance with RCW 29A.32.280, the arguments advocating approval and rejection of the ballot measure shall be prepared by committees appointed by the City Council. Each committee shall be composed of not more than three persons; however, a committee may seek the advice of any person or persons. The committee advocating approval shall be composed of Burien residents known to favor the ballot measure, and the committee advocating rejection shall be composed of Burien residents known to oppose the ballot measure.

Section 6. Severability; Ratification. If any provisions in this ordinance shall be declared by any court of competent jurisdiction to be contrary to law, then such provision shall be null and void and shall be deemed separable from the remaining provisions of this ordinance and shall in no way affect the validity of the other provisions of this ordinance or of the levy or collection of the taxes authorized by this proposition. Any act consistent with the authority and prior to the effective date of this ordinance is hereby ratified and confirmed.

Section 7. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be published in Burien's official newspaper and take effect five calendar days after publication.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BURIEN, WASHINGTON, AT A REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING THEREOF THIS 14th DAY OF JULY, 2025.

CITY OF BURIEN



Kevin J. Schilling, Mayor

ATTEST/AUTHENTICATED:



Heather McCoy, City Clerk

Approved as to Form:



Pacifica Law Group LLP, Bond Counsel

Filed with the City Clerk: June 30, 2025
Passed by the City Council: July 14, 2025
Ordinance No.: 874
Date of Publication: July 18, 2025

CERTIFICATE

I, the undersigned, City Clerk of the City of Burien, Washington, and keeper of the records of the City Council, DO HEREBY CERTIFY:

1. That the attached Ordinance is a true and correct copy of Ordinance No. 874 of the City Council (the "Ordinance"), as finally passed at a regular meeting of the City Council held on June 30, 2025, and duly recorded in my office.

2. That said meeting was duly convened and held in all respects in accordance with law, and to the extent required by law, due and proper notice of such meeting was given; that quorum of the City Council was present throughout the meeting and a legally sufficient number of members of the City Council voted in the proper manner for the passage of said Ordinance; that all other requirements and proceedings incident to the proper adoption or passage of said Ordinance have been duly fulfilled, carried out and otherwise observed, and that I am authorized to execute this certificate.

Dated this 15th day of July, 2025.

CITY OF BURIEN, WASHINGTON



City Clerk