

No Park Cops! Contact your CM to let them know our parks are for all!

Context:

The Parks Levy allocates funds to support the parks in our city. A current proposal for use of funds in front of City Council would create 26 new park ranger positions. These new positions would police parks, contributing to a drastic expansion of discriminatory policing of poor and unhoused people, specifically the Black and Indigenous community members who are disproportionately represented in our city's homeless population.

Park Rangers would essentially become permanent "sweepers." Rangers can issue Trespass Warnings and exclusions. Once a person has received a Trespass Warning from a Ranger, they could be subject to arrest if they entered that park again, opening the door to a dramatic rise in SPD arrests for "Criminal Trespass."

A second proposal to create 29 permanent positions to clean areas around encampments in the parks also raises concerns. To be clear, regular trash pick-up at encampments is a helpful service for the city to provide. However, these new positions might instead be used to create a permanent crew devoted to displacing our houseless neighbors and discarding their belongings. The City has a troubling practice of assuming all material beside an encampment is trash and has routinely discarded individual belongings and property under the guise of "debris" pick-up.

Please join us to support parks for all by contacting your City Councilmember today to ask them to decline to fund new park cops and to scrutinize the new permanent cleaning positions.

Email/Call your City Councilmember:

Subject: Parks for all! Oppose new park cops

Hello City Councilmember,

I am a resident of your district, and I am writing with grave concerns about the Park Levy Proposal.

I am writing to implore you to vote against any version of the parks levy proposal that includes opportunities for further criminalizing our city's homeless population, including the expansion of Park Ranger positions.

Expanding these positions could create discriminatory policing of poor and unhoused people, specifically of Black and Indigenous community members who are disproportionately represented in our city's homeless population. These rangers would have the power to issue Trespass Warnings to people using the parks, which would increase arrests and trauma.

As a Seattle resident, I believe that parks are a vital part of our city. We have the chance to make these spaces more livable, accessible, and community-centric. I urge you to use funds to support inclusive parks that meet the needs of all our neighbors.

In addition, I am concerned about a second proposal in the Levy to create permanent positions to clean areas around encampments in the parks. Helping those residing in encampments to dispose of their trash is a good idea. However, I worry these new positions will instead be used to create a permanent crew devoted to displacing our houseless neighbors and discarding their belongings.

Your upcoming vote on the levy sends an important message about who we are as a city. We ask you to vote in line with a commitment to the survival of our most marginalized residents. This means stopping the expansion of policing in parks and encampment removals with our Park Levy dollars.

Sincerely,
Your Name, District #

Call Script:

Hello, my name is **NAME**.

I am a district **X** voter who uses parks regularly, and I am calling to share my deep concerns about the proposed use of the Parks Levy.

I urge you to vote NO on any version of the Parks Levy that includes the expansion of Park Rangers, and these positions' ability to issue Trespass Orders.

In addition, I urge you to look closely at the proposal to create permanent positions to clean areas around encampments in the parks. There is a real danger these positions will be used to create a permanent crew devoted to displacing our houseless neighbors and discarding their belongings.

These new "park cops" would further criminalize people experiencing homelessness and poverty, lead to increased trauma and arrests, and create permanent sweep positions. As our city recalibrates the role of the Seattle Police Department, it is vital that we do not inadvertently create another version of the police specifically focused on targeting poor and/or BIPOC park users.

I ask you to vote in line with a commitment to the survival of our most marginalized residents. This means stopping the expansion of policing in parks and encampment removals with our Park Levy dollars. Thank you.

Position	Name	Email	Phone
1	Lisa Herbold	(206) 684-8801	lisa.herbold@seattle.gov
2	Tammy Morales	(206) 684-8802	tammy.morales@seattle.gov
3	Kshama Sawant	(206) 684-8803	kshama.sawant@seattle.gov
4	Alex Pedersen	(206) 684-8804	alex.pedersen@seattle.gov
5	Debora Juarez	(206) 684-8805	debora.juarez@seattle.gov
6	Dan Strauss	(206) 684-8806	dan.strauss@seattle.gov
7	Andrew Lewis	(206) 684-8807	andrew.lewis@seattle.gov
8	Teresa Mosqueda	(206) 684-8808	teresa.mosqueda@seattle.gov
9	Sara Nelson	(206) 684-8809	sara.nelson@seattle.gov

Sign Up for Public Comment:

There are two opportunities for public comment this week:

- Tuesday, 9/13 @ 9:30am Public Safety Meeting
- Thursday 9/15 @ 2:30pm Council will vote on the proposal

The Seattle City Council is conducting its meetings in a hybrid setting, both virtually and in-person. You can provide verbal comments in one of two ways:

For remote public comment: [sign-up using the form at the bottom of this page](#). **The form opens up two hours before a scheduled meeting time.** You will join the Zoom meeting by phone, and you'll get instructions on how to do this by email beforehand.

For in-person comment: Register to speak on the public comment sign-up sheet located inside Council Chambers at least 15 minutes prior to the meeting. ([600 4th Ave, Second floor, Seattle, WA, 98104](#)). Registration will end at the conclusion of the public comment period during the meeting. Speakers must be registered in order to be recognized by the Chair.

Sample public comment:

I am a district **X** voter who uses parks regularly. Please invest funds in making our parks more accessible, and not threatening, to all residents.

I urge you to vote NO on any version of the Parks Levy that includes the expansion of Park Rangers, and these positions' ability to issue Trespass Orders.

These new "park cops" would further criminalize people experiencing homelessness and poverty, lead to increased trauma and arrests, and create permanent sweep positions.

In addition, I urge you to look closely at the proposal to create permanent positions to clean areas around encampments in the parks. There is a real danger these positions will be used to create a permanent crew devoted to displacing our houseless neighbors and discarding their belongings.

As our city recalibrates the role of the Seattle Police Department, it is vital that we do not inadvertently create another version of the police specifically focused on targeting poor and/or BIPOC park users.

Please vote in line with a commitment to the survival of our most marginalized residents. This means stopping the expansion of policing in parks and encampment removals with our Park Levy dollars.