



Oak Harbor's Public Parks In Jeopardy

The Oak Harbor City Council is considering removing a code requirement for a public election before the city can sell or dispose of parkland which puts Oak Harbor's public parks in great jeopardy.

What's The Difference?

Current Code: The current Oak Harbor Municipal Code Section 1.30.010 has a provision that requires the city to hold a public election before the sale or disposition of city park property.

"Developed city park property shall not be disposed of in any manner without citizen approval in an election, except as provided in subsection (2) of this section."

The caveat is subsection (2):

*"No citizen approval at an election shall be required when the city council determines by resolution that some portion or all of a developed park property is required to accomplish a **necessary public purpose** including, but not limited to, water, sewer or roadway improvements."*



Oak Harbor Election Provision Municipal Code Section 1.30.010 Fact Sheet

Staff Recommendation: City staff suggests that city-wide economic development is a "necessary public purpose."

Proposed Change: Redline removal of the public election process from the city code.

The Problem: The proposed change would allow Oak Harbor to sell or dispose of public parkland without input or oversight from the public.

Why Should You Care?

Voting Matters. Removing the election provision disenfranchises the people of Oak Harbor.

Parks Are Important. The disenfranchisement of the people of Oak Harbor puts the city's parks at great risk of being sold for development, parks that are vital in the defense against climate change, contribute to healthy ecosystem functioning, and are a public benefit to city residents' overall well-being.

Population Is Growing. Oak Harbor residents live in the municipality that will assume the greatest number of people over the next 20 years under our Comprehensive Plan in Island County. As Oak Harbor's population grows, all Island County residents must support the protection of their parkland and wild spaces to ensure our county's overall quality of life and collective access to public land — and protect



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Oak Harbor Election Provision Municipal Code Section 1.30.010 Fact Sheet
the voting rights of Oak Harbor residents to weigh in on what happens
to city's already limited green space.

Ultimately, the people who live in Oak Harbor need to decide what happens to their public parks — not the City Council.

What Can You Do About It?

WRITE OR CALL IN: Write or call into Oak Harbor's City Council **before their July 9th** meeting to defend the people of Oak Harbor's right to vote to choose what happens to their parkland.

How to submit public comment:

- Send an email to the OH City Clerk at jlindsey@oakharbor.org
- Leave a voicemail for the OH City Clerk at 360-279-4571
- Submit comments through the city website:
<https://oakharbor.gov/467/Public-Comment-Form-for-Council-Advisory>

ATTEND THE JULY 9 MEETING: Show up at **City Hall on July 9, 2024 at 6 pm** to comment in person or just be present to show your support for the election provision. *City Hall, Council Chambers, 865 SE Barrington Drive, Oak Harbor, WA 98277*