

Bond, Levy, and Ballot Issue Information

Local Ballot Issues and Measures...

Only local jurisdictions have the authority to request a special election by submitting a resolution to the Auditor's Office. There is no provision in statute for placing a measure on the ballot by citizen petition in Cowlitz County. All issues and measures are submitted by the jurisdictions.

For more petition questions, please visit the Office of the Secretary of State's website at: [Circulating Initiative and Referendum Petitions](#)

Common Issues and Measures Presented to Cowlitz County Voters...

Taxation Measures:

Bonds — Bond issues allow for the collection of tax monies and creation of long term bonds, typically for the purpose of constructing, repairing, and/or creating structures and facilities.

Levies — Levies allow for the collection of a set amount of tax monies over a short period, typically for the purpose of jurisdiction maintenance, operation, and continuity of services. Occasionally they may be earmarked for upgrades or enhancements of existing services.

Levy Lid Lift — Levy lid lifts, or levy lid increases, do exactly what the name implies. They lift the lid on the existing levy, temporarily increasing the amount of tax money collected by the district.

Sales and Use Tax — Generally a tax placed directly upon users of a general service within a jurisdiction for the purpose of continuing services when operating costs exceed anticipated revenues.

Other Measures:

Advisory Votes — Advisory votes are non-binding questions placed before the voters of a jurisdiction for the purpose of assisting the council or commissioners in a decision making event.

Change of Form of Government — A request to change the classification of a jurisdiction. Example: town to city, or city council/mayor form of government to city council/manager.

Annexations — A request to incorporate an area into a district's boundaries.

Voter Approval Requirements...

Levy Lid Lifts, School Levies, and Sales and Use Taxes — Require a simple majority, 50% + 1 vote.

Excess Levies — Require a minimum "yes" vote and a super majority to pass, 60% (minimum "yes" vote is calculated 24% of the number of voters in the district who participated in the last year's general election) .

Bonds — Require 40% validation and a super majority to pass, 60% (validation means enough voters participated in the election in order to consider it valid).

Other Measures — Passage or voter approval of other measures will vary. Refer to current statute.

For more information, view the Municipal Research and Services Center's (MRSC) [Initiative and Referendum Guide for Washington Cities and Charter Counties](#).