

2018 Ballot Measure and Mayoral Election Timeline and Costs

Date/Deadline	Action/Item	Statutes / Links / Resources
February		
9	Council Packet	
13	CSS/RCM Resolution - Ballot Measure calling for special election Ordinance – Voters Pamphlet	RCW 35A.06.030 and 040 RCW 29A.32.220 and 210
14	Solicit for Pro/Con Committee Members	
TBD	Deadline to SeaTac - interested residents to provide information to City Clerk	
TBD	SCM Motion – Appoint Pro/Con Committees	RCW 29A.32.280
23	Deadline to King County - Explanatory Statement Deadline to King County – Pro/Con Committees Deadline to King County – file a resolution placing a measure on the ballot	King County (KC) Elections Calendar
10 business days from filing	Deadline to Superior Court - Ballot Title Appeal	RCW 29A.36.090
2/27	Deadline to KC – Pro/Con Committee statements	KC Elections Calendar
March		
3/1	Deadline to KC – Pro/Con Committee rebuttal statements	KC Elections Calendar
April		
4/24	Special Election	KC Elections Calendar
May		
5/4	Election Results Certified	April Special Election
5/8	CSS/RCM Ordinance – Setting Mayor’s Salary Resolution – Calling for Mayoral Election	RCW 35A.12.070
5/14	Candidate Filing begins	
5/18	Candidate Filing ends	
5/21	Last day for candidates to withdraw	
August		
8/7	Special Election	KC Elections Calendar
8/21	Primary Election results certified	KC Elections Calendar
November		
11/6	Special Election	KC Elections Calendar

Election / Pamphlet	Estimate (not budgeted)
April Special Election	40,000
April Special Election Voters' Pamphlet	1,300
2018 Primary	28,912
2018 Primary Voters' Pamphlet	1,300
2018 General	22,900
2018 General Voters' Pamphlet	1,300
Total	\$95,712

Link from MRSC's City and Town Forms of Government Article:

<http://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Governance/Forms-of-Government-and-Organization/City-and-Town-Forms-of-Government.aspx#>

Common Issues and Pro/Con Arguments in Elections to Change Form of Government

What are some of the most common issues and arguments pro and con that have come up in elections to change forms of government?

In our experience, the most common issues revolve around:

- **Responsiveness and accountability** – which form will be the most responsive?
- **Professional management** – which form provides the best quality of management?
- **The appropriate role of politics in administration** – should politics be removed from administration?
- **Effectiveness and efficiency** – which form produces the most efficient and effective management?
- **Political harmony (an oxymoron?)** – which form produces greater harmony and less divisiveness?

These “arguments” have been collected from a variety of sources and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of MRSC or MRSC Staff.

Arguments For the Mayor-Council Form

- This is the form that is familiar to most Americans because it is patterned after our traditional national and state governments. There is a separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches. There are checks and balances. The council can refuse to confirm the mayor's appointments and the mayor can veto the council's legislation.
- Also separation of powers provides healthy independence, debate and creative tension. Separate legislative and executive branches provide the best opportunity for debate and consensus building.
- By electing, rather than appointing a mayor, political leadership is established. The city has a political spokesperson who has a high degree of visibility.
- Some argue that an elected mayor will have a higher standing and greater voice in regional affairs of the city
- The mayor is vested with the veto power and can serve as a check on an unpopular council decision
- A skilled administrator can be hired to minimize weaknesses in the mayor's management background or experience, but the mayor is still fully responsible. (This refers to the appointment of a CAO and the addition of professional expertise to the mayor's office)

Arguments Against the Mayor-Council Form

- The office of the mayor gives too much power and authority to one person. It permits an incumbent to make decisions based largely on political considerations, and to use the office to further personal political objectives
- They also point out that the qualities needed to win an election are not the same qualities needed to manage a modern city. A mayor, while politically astute, may not always possess the necessary management training and experience.
- If an elected mayor proves to be incompetent or worse, he/she cannot be removed until the end of their term, or after an expensive and divisive recall election.
- A separately elected mayor may resist requests from the council. The mayor may attempt to isolate the council by controlling staff, information, and reports.

Arguments For the Council-Manager Form

- Administration of city business is removed from politics
- Efficiency of professional management based on a business model also the familiar model of school board to school superintendent relationship
- Since city managers are appointed rather than elected, greater attention can be given to selecting a qualified manager. The pool of qualified candidates is larger since city managers traditionally are paid better than mayors and since candidates can be recruited from outside the city including a nationwide search. (mayors must be a resident of the city prior to their election).
- Emphasis is placed on the role of the legislative body and its policy-making function. Council gets better cooperation and information because the city manager is their employee.
- Since manager serves at the pleasure of the council without a definite term, he/she can be removed at any time, limiting the danger of an abuse of authority.

Arguments Against the Council-Manager Form

- Critics of the council-manager plan argue the following:
- The council-manager form gives too much power to one person - the city manager
- A professional manager, often chosen from outside the city, does not know the community and is too far from the voters

- Councils may leave too much decision. making to the manager, who is not directly accountable to the public
- Without an elected chief executive, the community lacks political leadership
- The council-manager form is too much like a business corporation which is not suitable for managing community needs
- City managers cost too much, local people could handle the job for less cost
- Citizens may be confused about who is in charge. Most expect the mayor to respond to their problems. The mayor has no direct control over the delivery of services and can only change policy through the city council
- City managers may leave a city when offered higher salaries and greater responsibilities in other cities

2018 Change of Form of Government Frequently Asked Questions

(The following answers are provided as a basic overview)

1. Is there a difference in how things proceed with an Elected Mayor being created via an initiative by the people vs. being put on the ballot by the Council majority?

Yes. When the Council directly places a local measure on the ballot, it requires a majority vote of Council to pass a Resolution calling for an election. The Petition method requires a sufficient petition be signed by registered voters in numbers equal to not less than ten percent of the votes cast at the last general election. (RCW 35A.06.030 and RCW 35A.06.040). In the Petition method there are a number of procedural steps that must occur prior to the measure being placed on the ballot. (RCW 35A.01.040).

2. What is the latest date for our City to submit an elected mayor proposition to get this on the April 2018 Ballot?

February 23, 2018 is the deadline to submit a Resolution placing a ballot measure on the April 24, 2018 ballot. (2018 Jurisdiction Manual, King County Elections).

3. If we don't get this issue on the April Ballot, when is the next closest time that it could appear on a Ballot and what would be the submission deadline for this later ballot date?

The next possible election date is August 7, 2018, and the deadline to place ballot measures on the ballot is May 11, 2018. (2018 Jurisdiction Manual, King County Elections).

4. Would an April ballot or the next closest ballot date be considered as 'Special Elections', and if so are there extra costs that we have to bear for a Special Election vs. a Regular Election?

Yes. Both the April 24, 2018 and August 7, 2018 elections would be deemed special elections. (RCW 29A.04.330). The costs to place a measure on the ballot during special elections is higher, as the cost is spread out only amongst the jurisdictions that participate. Since fewer jurisdictions participate in special elections, the costs will be higher.

5. When would be the next two 'Regular Election' dates and what would be the submission deadline for these?

The next Municipal General Election is in November, 2019. The deadline to place a measure on the ballot would be the first Tuesday in August (which is the date of the Primary election). The deadline to place a measure on the ballot for the August, 2019 Primary Election would be the Friday immediately before the first day of candidate filing (usually in May).

6. What is the City's cost to put such a proposition on a regular ballot?

Since the City would have City Council races on the ballot in 2019, there is no measurable additional cost. There would be a small increase in the cost of producing the voters' pamphlet due to additional pages for the additional ballot items, but an exact cost cannot be determined at this time. Since 2019 estimates will not be provided until later this year, the best estimate we can provide at this time would be the 2017 estimated costs for the general election, which is \$25,000 plus \$1,800 for the Voters' pamphlet.

7. Do we have enough money in our 2018 budget to cover the cost of this ballot measure or would we have to do a budget amendment?

Funding capability has not been determined at this time. However, it is prudent to amend the budget to authorize these expenditures.

8. What budget fund do election costs get charged to?

Election costs are paid out of the General Fund.

9. What's the cost of having a primary and/or a general election for citizens to vote for a Mayoral Candidate?

Election Costs (billed in July 2019)	Estimate (not budgeted)
April, 2018 Special Election	40,000
April, 2018 Special Election Voters' Pamphlet	1,300
August, 2018 Primary Election	28,912
August, 2018 Primary Voters' Pamphlet	1,300
November, 2018 General Election	22,900
November, 2018 General Voters' Pamphlet	1,300
Total	\$95,712

10. How long does an Elected Mayor serve for?

An elected Mayor serves a four-year term. (RCW 35A.12.050).

11. What would an Elected Mayor's salary/benefits cost per year? If this is unique to each City, is there a general guideline of cost/capita or? What do our neighboring cities' Elected Mayors cost (salary/benefits)?

The salary of an Elected Mayor is set by Ordinance. (RCW 35A.12.070). According to King County Elections, the salary of the Elected Mayor must be set before calling for a Special Mayoral Election because the filing fee is based on the salary.

Comparable Cities

Issaquah	Mayor \$115,416	City Administrator \$206,352
Tukwila	Mayor \$107,544	City Administrator \$169,428
Auburn	Mayor \$143,775	N/A
Federal Way	Mayor \$119,088	Senior Policy Advisor \$115,008

Salary data requested (exclusive of the cost of benefits) 1/26/18

Non Comparable Cities

Bonney Lake	Mayor \$25,200	City Administrator \$166,978
----------------	-------------------	------------------------------------

**All wages represent the range maximum*

12. Does any nearby City with an Elected Mayor NOT have someone serving under that Mayor who runs the day-to-day administrative side of the City?

Yes. The City of Auburn does not have a City Administrator. See chart above.

13. What’s the total cost of a City administrator (think their title is something like Deputy Mayor or ???) in our neighboring cities with an Elected Mayor?

This information is contained in the chart above.

14. With an Elected Mayor, are there still 7 Council Members?

Yes, there are still seven Councilmembers.

15. Can an Elected Mayor veto any Council vote?

An elected Mayor may veto Ordinances passed by the Council. Such veto may be overridden by the vote of a majority of all councilmembers plus one. (RCW 35A.12.100 and RCW 35A.12.130). Resolutions and Motions are not subject to Mayoral veto.

16. Can a Council over-ride an Elected Mayor’s decision?

The elected Mayor shall be the chief executive and administrative officer of the City, whose day to day decisions would not be subject to review by Council. The legislative and policymaking powers are still vested in the City Council, subject to Mayoral veto (of Ordinances only) as described above.

17. If we changed to an Elected Mayor and shortly after the citizens decided they had made a mistake, can we go back to a Council/Manager form of government anytime we want to? What would be required to return to our current form (time and money and ???)?

The City would not be able to change its form of government for six years. The process to switch from a Mayor-Council to a Council-Manager form of government would be similar. More specifically, the change can be initiated by petition of the people or a Resolution of the Council. (RCW 35A.06.030). However, the overall costs would be less as there would be no election costs to hire a City Manager.