



VOTER INFORMATION PAMPHLET

GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION • NOVEMBER 2, 2021

OPEN FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING
THE PROPOSED PARKS, ARTS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE
(PARC) TAX PROPOSITION #7



2021 IMPORTANT DATES

Week of October 11: Ballots will be mailed to registered voters. If you have not received your ballot by October 18, please contact the Utah County Elections Office at 801-851-8125.

October 27- November 1: Early voting period at the Utah County Elections Office, 100 E. Center Street, Room 3100, Provo, Utah

November 1: Last day to mail your ballot

November 2: Election Day. There will be a ballot drop box open until 8:00 p.m. at Lehi City Hall, 153 N 100 E. For Voting Center locations visit vote.utah.gov

Lehi City Corporation
Office of the City Recorder
153 North 100 East
Lehi, Utah 84043

PROPOSITION #7

Shall Lehi, Utah, be authorized to impose a 0.1% (1 cent per \$10 spent) sales and use tax to help fund recreational amenities, park facilities, cultural facilities and arts facilities and organizations in Lehi? The sales and use tax will be imposed on purchases within Lehi City, regardless of the person's place of residence.

Funding may be used for capital improvements and operations of publicly owned/operated amenities such as, but not limited to:

- Parks
- Playing fields/courts
- Park amenities
- Visual and Performing Art facilities
- Cultural facilities
- Trails/bike paths

Funding may be used to support city or non-profit organizations providing programs such as, but not limited to:

- Youth groups
- Museums
- Theater groups
- Festivals
- Heritage
- Arts and cultural programs

VOTE FOR ONE: ___ "FOR" THE PARC TAX
___ "AGAINST" THE PARC TAX

Engagelehi.org provides you with information and answers questions about the PARC tax so you can make an informed decision when you vote in November.

VOTE BY MAIL

Lehi City will be using all Vote By Mail for the general municipal election.

Ballots will be mailed to registered voters **the week of October 11** to the address on voter registration records. Please make sure your address is updated.

Your ballot must be postmarked no later than November 1 or placed in the drop box at Lehi City Hall no later than **8:00 p.m.** on election day, **November 2**.

Non-registered voters may vote at a vote center on election day. For locations and other information, please visit vote.utah.gov.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who pays the PARC tax?

The tax is collected on sales and uses within the City of Lehi. It is not a sales tax solely on Lehi residents, meaning anyone who purchases goods or services within the Lehi City boundary will pay the tax.

How will the PARC tax revenues be allocated?

According to State Code, the tax may be used for recreational, cultural, arts and parks facilities, and programs provided by the city or qualifying nonprofit groups. State Law prohibits using the tax for any other purpose including general administrative expenses.

If approved, the City Council will ultimately decide how much of the tax revenue goes to different projects.

What other cities have a PARC tax?

American Fork, Pleasant Grove, Cedar Hills, Lindon, Vineyard, Spanish Fork, Payson, Orem, and Salt Lake County all have a form of PARC tax. If you shop in any of these cities, you are already paying a PARC tax.

Is this a property tax?

No, this is not a property tax. This is a sales and use tax. It is not automatically assessed on each resident. It is charged at the point of sale regardless of your place of residence. Exclusions include purchases for groceries, gasoline, and utilities.

Has Lehi City recently raised taxes on Lehi residents?

No. Lehi City has not raised taxes on residents in recent years. Lehi City has not had a property tax increase in over 20 years and a property tax increase is not included in the FY2022 budget.

Who will decide how the funds are used?

Projects will be approved by the City Council as part of the annual budget process. As always, residents will have the opportunity to provide feedback and input during a public meeting.

If approved, will the PARC tax be permanent?

Per state law, the PARC tax will sunset after 10 years. After 10 years the city can choose to place the proposition on the ballot and give residents the opportunity to vote again on whether or not the PARC tax should continue.

ARGUMENT FOR THE PARC TAX

The arguments for or against a ballot proposition are the opinions of the authors.

Parks, arts, recreation and culture are valued aspects of the daily lives of Lehi residents. Each provides opportunities for children, individuals, families, and seniors to build relationships and community as well as spur creativity, health and wellbeing.

One of our local gems, Wines Park, was developed more than a 100 years ago after a local businessman, Ira Wines, donated the land to the city. The deal required that Lehi citizens develop the park within a certain time frame to obtain the deed. After petitioning citizens, the City Council decided to move forward with funding the park. What you may not know is that Mr. Wines offered to sell the City the adjoining block to the west, for a total of six acres. Lehi decided not to buy it.

In the late 1990s Lehi proposed building a state-of-the-art performing arts center. Thanksgiving Point had set aside 4 acres for the 155,000 square-foot facility that would include a 2,000-seat theater, classrooms, rehearsal spaces, and a recital hall. Although private donors pledged nearly \$6 million, the remaining funding never materialized, and the center was never built. Today the Lehi Arts Council is housed in an aging building that has been retrofitted into a theater that seats just 86 people.

As our population approaches 80,000 residents, it is common to see children denied opportunities in recreation and arts because we do not have the facilities for them to participate. Many recreation programs cap out every year with participants being turned away. Our arts workshops are limited to 120 participants and registration is full within 10 minutes. Past leaders have shown great foresight in acquiring recreation property while it was readily available and relatively affordable. We have approximately 366 acres of land waiting for funding to be developed.

Visitors to our city often use our sports and leisure facilities without contributing to their creation or enhancement. So, the question is this: How do we want to fund our parks and arts, and how long do we want their development to take? The Parks, Arts, Recreation and Culture (PARC) tax will collect one penny from every ten dollars spent in Lehi from not only our residents, but from any consumer that chooses to shop in Lehi. By implementing the PARC tax, any person who shops at the Outlets at Traverse Mountain, attends a program or event at Thanksgiving Point, or buys a car at Porsche Audi of Lehi contributes to the PARC fund, therefore providing a benefit to Lehi residents and visitors.

Many cities in our area collect a PARC tax, including American Fork, Cedar Hills, Spanish Fork, Orem, and Salt Lake County. When you shop in these communities, you are paying for their recreation and arts. Let's bring this revenue to our community. We urge you to become educated, be visionary, and be engaged in preparing for the future of Lehi by voting for the PARC tax.

Lehi City Mayor and Council

REBUTTAL RESPONSE:

Proponents of this additional tax say they want to "bring revenue to our community." You were told that supporting more taxes is "visionary," and it was implied that those who are "educated" would agree with them.

The truth, of course, is that being visionary when it comes to recreation and arts means thinking outside the box beyond just "more taxes." Proponents even hinted at it: Mr. Wines donated land to the city to support a park. There are many wealthy business owners and philanthropists in the community. If indeed there is a need for additional facilities, then leaders should appeal to these community stakeholders and pursue voluntary ways of making these things happen.

When you're a hammer, everything looks like a nail. When you're in government, "raising taxes" apparently becomes the only way to support community projects.

Lehi taxpayers have rejected this tax in the past, and they should reject it now. We're taxed enough, and if these facilities were really a priority, there is existing money to make them happen.

Instead of taking more from taxpayers, visionary leaders should find alternatives that include soliciting support from the Mr. Wines of our day who can help create community without imposing more burdens on an over-taxed people during times of economic turmoil.

Connor Boyack, Lehi Taxpayer

ARGUMENT AGAINST THE PARC TAX

The arguments for or against a ballot proposition are the opinions of the authors.

Dear fellow taxpayer,

Six years ago, Lehi city officials proposed a sales tax increase just like this one. That proposal failed. But here's the crazy part: when this tax was last voted on, Lehi City was taking nearly \$7 million in sales taxes each year. This past year, the city collected nearly \$14 million – double the amount!

Even crazier? The population has grown only by about 30% in that time. 30% more people, but 100% more tax income. And yet, the city wants even more.

The crazy doesn't stop there. When Lehi voters shot down this tax down in 2015, it was projected to bring in \$800,000 annually. This proposal you're voting on is going to take nearly \$1.5 million from taxpayers – again, double the amount of just six years ago.

Oddly, city leaders want to raise our sales taxes despite the Mayor noting that tax revenues "have continued to trend positively." And Councilman Hancock argued in

favor of the tax because other cities have a similar tax... so why not Lehi?

Just because other cities are taxing their residents extra, that doesn't mean Lehi should. There's a reason why the Utah Taxpayers Association opposes this type of tax: it puts "a heavier burden on those who are least able to pay," by taking a higher portion of money from poor people and those on a fixed income

The Association also notes that this type of tax "would tie the hands of elected officials as they make crucial budget decisions, and place recreation and parks programs as a protected function of government ahead of law enforcement, streets and sanitation."

Making matters worse, the federal government is sending \$6 million in extra money to Lehi, but city officials "declined to comment" on how the money would be used. With increased tax dollars slushing around, this is definitely no time to be taking even more of our money.

Please join me in voting AGAINST this tax proposal.

Connor Boyack
Lehi Taxpayer

REBUTTAL RESPONSE:

The cost of providing essential services and maintenance has greatly increased since 2015. Expenditures for police and fire emergency services has grown by \$8.3 million dollars over the last six years. Tax revenues fund parks, leisure services, facilities, cemetery, administration, and many other services and employees. As our city grows, so do our road miles, water pipelines, and other vital infrastructure that must be maintained.

Lehi City has received restricted grants from the federal government to be used for costs related to Covid-19. This funding can be used on economic recovery, and major projects related to broadband, water, and sewer. It may not be used for development of parks, recreation, or arts facilities.

In 2015 we estimated Mellor-Rhodes park construction would cost \$6.47 a square foot. Today, parks in

neighboring communities cost \$9.18 per square foot to build, which increases the cost for Mellor-Rhodes by \$6.5 million. The PARC tax would dedicate funds toward important projects without taking needed funding from other valued services.

The PARC tax is not collected on essential purchases like utilities, gas, and groceries. Non-residents play on our sports fields, swim at our recreation center, and attend regional entertainment venues. While in Lehi they shop and dine at our local businesses. Through the PARC tax, ALL consumers share the cost of building parks and supporting arts by contributing just \$0.01 per every \$10 spent. Support our parks, arts, recreation and culture by voting for Proposition 7.

Lehi City Mayor and Council

REGISTER TO VOTE AT [VOTE.UTAH.GOV](https://vote.utah.gov)