

**Seattle Districts Now Starts the Campaign to Promote
a Mixed System of Electing Seattle City Councilmembers
Seven by Districts and Two At-Large**

Press Conference Thursday, September 27, 11:30am
University Heights Community Center, Room 109
5031 University Way NE, Seattle WA 206 527-4278

Seattle, WA –Seattle District Now a group Seattle of residential and business leaders who feel that Seattle needs a change in how it elects its City Councilmembers will be registering on Thursday as a political campaign with the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission. The Seattle Districts Now is proposing a City Charter Amendment that will change Seattle from a nine member at-large City Council system to one that has seven Councilmembers elected each by a separate district and two at-large. This commonly-used method of elections is generally called a mixed system.

Our press conference is being held to announce formally our campaign, provide displays of large maps showing how each district is drawn up and present our proposal, and introduce the press to many of the 90 community leaders who are already sign on to the campaign. Endorsers include 2 state senators and business and community leaders from across the city. Key leaders of the campaign and our attorneys who helped draft the proposal will be present to answer your questions

Faye Garneau a Seattle business leader Co-Chair of Seattle District Now states “A mixed District/At-Large system would give every Seattle resident a specific point of contact at City Hall. It would ensure that an elected official would speak as your neighborhood’s voice on major issues.”

Seattle District Now is starting a determined campaign to place a City Charter Amendment on the November, 2013 City Ballot. The Charter Amendment when passed will change how Seattle elects City Councilmember in 2015. In 2015 voters will be electing one City Councilmember for their own district and two at-large City Councilmembers.

Seattle District Now want to ensure city councilmembers are closer to the people they represent and that voters better know their city councilmembers. A mixed district/at-large system also provides for geographic distribution, so that no major area of our city is unrepresented. The seven district representatives would give individual neighborhoods a distinct voice on major issues, while the two at-large representatives ensure that the citywide perspective is maintained on our Council.

Suzie Burke of Seattle District Now gives another reason for the Amendment, “Over the years, Seattle City Councilmembers have been often clustered in certain neighborhoods, while other areas of the city haven’t had a council member who knew and understood their area’s needs and concerns. A mixed District/At-Large system would ensure that no part of our city goes unrepresented.”

The boundaries of each district will be described in the City Charter Amendment, which is currently in draft form. The boundaries of the district were drawn by Dr. Richard Morrill Professor Emeritus of the University of Washington and a demographer. He drew the district boundaries based on 2010 census information with input from the members of Seattle District Now. Seattle District Now is confident that it will obtain the estimated 30, 943 signatures that will be needed to place the Charter Amendment on the 2013 Ballot.

John Fox Seattle District Now's other co-chair says that "The cost of a winning City Council campaign has soared from \$210,000 in 2005 to more than \$270,000 in 2011," said John Fox. "With a mixed District/At-Large system, most campaigns would see their voter contact expenses cut to 1/7th of the current cost and candidates could win by doorbelling precincts, rather than relying on expensive mailers and TV ads."

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Our website will be live Thursday at <http://www.SeattleDistrictsNow.org>.

2005 Four Council winners raised an average of \$210,286

2007 Five Council winners raised an average of \$249,014

2009 Four Council winners raised an average of \$169,076

2011 Five Council winners raised an average of \$271,064

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