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- [Local](#)
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- [Lifestyle](#)
- [NW Outdoors](#)
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- [Special Reports](#)

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- [Saturday Spin](#)
- [Forums](#)

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ROYER WANTS ETHNIC-MUSEUM PROPOSAL TO BE SEPARATE

By Scott Maier P-I Reporter

WEDNESDAY, June 25, 1986 <

Section: News, Page: A7

Mayor Charles Royer said yesterday he will propose a plan to support construction of an African-American heritage museum without using levy money designated for the Seattle Art Museum.

Meeting with the Seattle Post-Intelligencer Editorial Board, Royer said it would be politically foolish to add last-minute financing of ethnic museums to the proposed \$29.6 million levy for the art museum's downtown facility.

Council President Sam Smith has proposed tacking on \$4 million to the levy for support of ethnic museums in the Central Area, the International District and possibly Ballard.

The Seattle Art Museum, which boasts extensive African and Asian art collections, keeps 97 percent of its art work in storage because it does not have enough exhibit space.

Royer said he believes Smith's proposal is poorly developed and could jeopardize passage of the levy this fall.

"To say to voters 'We didn't think this (levy) very well through' is not very good campaign strategy and it's bad government," the mayor said.

However, Royer said he will present a proposal later this week that will commit the city to development of an African heritage museum. Money to pay for the museum would be determined after further study, Royer said. The mayor has said, however, the city would not negotiate with people who have been occupying the old Colman School for several months demanding that it be turned into an African heritage museum.

Royer's proposal will enable the City Council to support the African heritage museum without tampering with the proposed levy, he said. "The council needs a way to vote for the idea," the mayor said.

Smith said yesterday he still believes that the levy presents a last- chance opportunity to fund the ethnic museums.

"There are no other financial sources for this kind of thing. All of this studying would be hogwash because there is no money," Smith said.



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The City Council is expected to take action on the proposed art museum levy next month. If given council approval, the levy would be submitted to voters in September.

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