

Measure 26-258. Mt. Hood Community College

Bonds updating career education, increasing safety, security; repairing aging facilities.

QUESTION: Shall Mt. Hood Community College update vocational facilities; improve accessibility, safety, security; repair buildings; issue \$136.445 million in bonds; citizen oversight, audits required? If bonds are approved, they will be payable from taxes on property or property ownership that are not subject to the limits of sections 11 and 11b, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This measure authorizes the Mt. Hood Community College District (MHCCD; the District) to issue bonds in a maximum principal amount of \$136.445 million. Bonds would be issued in one or more series and would mature within 21 years from issuance. The estimated levy rate would be \$0.25 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. For a property with an assessed value of \$300,000, the additional tax would be \$75 per year. The actual tax rate could vary based on changes in interest rates and assessed property values.

Note: Assessed value (AV) is the value used to collect property tax. It is shown on the property tax statement. It is NOT the same as real market value (RMV), which is the market price of the home.

By law, bond funds could only be spent on capital improvements outlined in the measure. Funds could not be used for faculty salaries or operational expenses. MHCCD anticipates receiving at least \$8 million in matching funds from the State of Oregon to offset costs. These funds are contingent upon the passage of this bond measure.

PROBABLE RESULTS OF A YES VOTE:

If this measure passes, the District will be able to raise \$136.445 million for capital costs: to make improvements to career education by updating vocational facilities, repairing aging buildings, and improving accessibility, safety, and security on the campuses of Mt. Hood Community College.

PROBABLE RESULTS OF A NO VOTE:

If this measure fails, the District would lack funds to make improvements to career education by updating vocational facilities, repairing aging buildings, and improving accessibility, safety, and security on the campuses of Mt. Hood Community College.

BACKGROUND

This measure has been referred by the MHCCD Board of Directors to the voters within the MHCCD.

Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC) was established in 1966. MHCC currently serves 18,000 students across three campuses stretching from Government Camp to East Portland, including Sandy, Corbett, Gresham, Fairview, Wood Village, and Troutdale. In the past five years, MHCC has trained nearly 1,000 healthcare professionals and provided 60,000+ student volunteer hours to local hospitals and clinics. MHCC alumni contribute over \$350 million annually to the local economy in East Multnomah and Clackamas Counties. MHCC is a provider of job training, supporting careers in healthcare, emergency response, education, skilled trades, small business, and more. As the only Oregon public college to receive the Government Financial Officers Association's Triple Crown Award, which includes producing annual comprehensive financial reports that evidence transparency, MHCC is committed to responsible management of taxpayer dollars.

THE PROPOSAL

The MHCCD Board seeks voter approval of a \$136.445 million general obligation bond to address critical capital needs, expand career training opportunities, and improve campus infrastructure. If the measure passes, the MHCCD Board of Education will oversee the bond's implementation to ensure all funds are used for voter-approved projects. The District would establish a citizen oversight committee, and require audits of the use of the bond's proceeds.

MHCCD has identified key priorities to improve educational facilities, expand career training, and enhance campus safety with the proceeds from this bond:

- Expanding career education facilities & meeting workforce demand
- Upgrading classroom technology to support online and hybrid learning
- Improving community access
- Enhancing campus safety and security
- Repairing and upgrading aging facilities
- Additional capital costs covered by the bond include site improvements, demolition, furnishings, and equipment, and costs associated with bond issuance

SUPPORTERS SAY

- This bond funds critical facility repairs and upgrades, improves campus safety and security, and expands ADA accessibility. It will have strong fiscal oversight.
- This first MHCCD bond in over 50 years will serve students at all phases of life, including more remote and online learners; will serve community members across the District; and will add value to the local real estate market.
- It will foster collaboration between industry and education, contributing to the regional economy by supporting local workforce needs through expanded training programs and improved technology resources in fields such as healthcare, construction, and data science.

OPPONENTS SAY

- During a time of rising prices, this tax is too costly for a college where enrollment has been steadily declining.
- Property taxes should not be increased to pay for new buildings, extravagant upgrades, and program enhancements for fewer students.
- The college should make better use of funds it already gets from the state and student tuition.