Voters approve $90 million Clackamas Community College facilities bond: Oregon election results 2014

cccclassroom.jpeg
The $90 million bond measure will allow Clackamas Community College to upgrade equipment and training for in high-demand careers, such as healthcare and engineering, officials say. (Clackamas Community College)
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Voters in the Clackamas Community College district on Tuesday approved a $90 million bond measure to modernize and expand the college's facilities, according to partial election returns.

Measure 3-477 passed with 52 percent of the votes. About 48 percent of voters, or 38,093 people, voted against the measure.

College officials say the projects included in the bond will allow teachers to better prepare students for highly specialized jobs in growing fields, such as engineering and health care.

Currently, the college does not have the up-to-date machinery or classroom space to produce job-ready graduates in some of its programs, said Greg Chaimov, a member of the college's Board of Education.

Taxpayers in the district will not see an increase in taxes. The bond will be phased slowly in to coincide with the expiration of an earlier bond.

The complete list of projects included in the bond include:

- The construction of a new "industrial technical center" at the Oregon City campus. The center will include new labs and classrooms for programs like electronics, automotive, manufacturing, welding and more.
- Replacing a 61-year-old building at the Harmony Road campus with a new workforce development and training facility.
- Updating equipment and facilities campus-wide for training in high-demand industries like healthcare, science and engineering.
- Replacing worn-out electrical, heating, ventilation and plumbing systems in existing buildings.
- Replace the student services center on the Oregon City campus with an expanded facility to meet student needs.
- Refinance the college's current capital debt and finance bond issuance costs, site improvements and demolition.

In total, the projects will cost around $111 million. The $90 million bond will be supplemented by about $21 million in grants, donations and outside funding, said college president Joanne Truesdell.
College officials said they put together the list of projects after spending two years talking with local employers, community members and students. The measure receive support from a broad number of groups, including members of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners.

Truesdell characterized the bond as a real investment in students and in the county.

The district covers much of Clackamas County except for Lake Oswego, which is served by Portland Community College, and Sandy, Damascus, and Boring, which are served by Mount Hood Community College.

Residents in the district wouldn't see any increase in the 19 cents per $1,000 tax rate on assessed property value, he said. For the owner of a $250,000 home, that tax rate amounts to about $47.50 a year.

**Voters rejected a $130 million bond measure** in May 2011 by nearly a 2-1 ratio. In 2003, voters passed a $47 million measure that paid for several new buildings.

Friends of Clackamas Community College, a political action committee, raised about $160,000 in 2014 to support the measure. The Clackamas Community College Foundation contributed $40,000 to the PAC, while Providence Health & Services, Yost Grube Hall Architecture and Portland General Election contributed about $10,000.

-- Michael Barnesberger

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