

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the amount the District wants to borrow as a bond?

Up to \$3.5 million over a period of 10 years.

What will that cost me?

The Bond cost is estimated to be \$0.50 per \$1000 of assessed home value. We've calculated that it would cost property tax owners, who live in an average-priced home, less than \$7 per month in addition to their current taxes. This increase would be listed on your property tax for the duration of the bond.

How much is the District's budget now, and how is that funding acquired?

The District's revenue projection for the current fiscal year is \$1 million in tax revenue with an additional \$1 million in expected grant income. This projection is based on the assessed value of property in the District at the District's permanent tax rate of \$1.5080.

How does the District's permanent tax rate compare to other comparable District's?

Philomath Fire & Rescue's permanent tax rate is \$1.5080 per \$1000 of assessed value. The proposed bond measure would increase the total average amount per property to around \$2.00 per \$1000 of AV. For comparison, Corvallis Rural Fire District, which serves an area just outside the Corvallis city limits, has a permanent tax rate of \$2.11 per \$1000 of assessed value.

How would the District use the Bond funding?

The District has three top priorities: equipment, apparatus, and facilities. Over a period of 10 years, the District would replace or update fire-response and rescue vehicles, staff vehicles, and emergency equipment. Equipment includes self-contained breathing apparatus, heart monitors, portable radios, protective clothing, hydraulic tools, and tires for vehicles. Facility improvements would provide essential space for volunteers, paid staff, and the general community. A detailed expenditure plan is available on the District's website under "Bond Information."

How do you use the revenue you already get from property taxes?

The District funds nine programs: Administration; Emergency Medical Service; Suppression; Safety; Training; Prevention; Communication and Mapping; Buildings and Grounds; and Vehicles, Equipment, and Maintenance. Major expenditures are for maintenance of vehicles, equipment, and facilities; utilities; supplies; services; training; staff; benefits; and insurance.

Why can't the District pay for vehicles, equipment, and facilities with revenue from existing property taxes?

The rate of increase of property tax revenue is less than the rate of increase in costs to run and equip the District. The District has simply not been able to set aside

additional reserve funding for long-term needs for vehicles, equipment, and facilities.

Wouldn't it be cheaper to contract or combine with Corvallis or another fire and rescue service?

It would be more costly to consolidate than to continue to operate as a separate District. At this time, the Board has determined that it is not in the best interest of the District to pursue consolidation with another fire and rescue service.

How will passage of a Bond Measure make service better for me? What's wrong with the service I have now?

With modern, dependable vehicles, the District will be able to respond to your needs more quickly than possible now. Aging vehicles have become more prone to break down when responding to a call or to be temporarily out of service for repair. Investments in equipment will improve the safety of responders and the public. Improvements in facilities will accommodate the paid staff that respond from the station 24 hours a day and grow the volunteer program, measures that will improve the cost-effectiveness and response times of the District over the long term.

How do I know if I am affected by being in your service area?

A map of the District's service area is on the website. You also can call the District and ask.

What happens if the Bond Measure doesn't pass?

The District has a contingency plan should this bond not be supported. The District will maintain but not replace apparatus, which will influence response time. It will use existing property tax revenue to replace essential equipment more slowly and over a longer period of time. Staff salaries and benefits and volunteer incentives will be frozen at current levels, which will influence the District's ability to maintain a skilled workforce. The District will maintain but not renovate existing facilities, which will limit the number of responders available for after-hours calls, creating longer response times.

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