

Department: Nondepartmental

Program Contact: Eric Arellano

Program Offer Type: Existing

Program Offer Stage: Proposed

Related Programs:
Program Characteristics:
Executive Summary

The Oregon Historical Society (OHS) is a private not-for-profit entity founded in 1898. Since 1899, it has received appropriations from 1) state government (except 2002-6) in recognition of its operation of the state history museum and a large Oregon history research library; 2) Multnomah County (\$335k per year, 1999-2003) as a participant in the county library levy; and 3) Multnomah County special purpose levy 26-118 in November 2010 that provides for levy support at the rate of \$0.05 per thousand of assessed value and renewal of the second five-year period at the same rate. In May of 2021, measure 26-174 approved a third levy renewal from fiscal years 2021-22 through 2025-26.

Program Description

OHS operates the Oregon Historical Society Museum, the Research Library, and educational programs for adults, families and school groups (and also serves as the Multnomah County history repository). After nearly a decade of cuts in appropriations, programs, and service hours, the levy funding (which started in 2011 and was overwhelmingly renewed by Multnomah County voters in 2016 and 2021) has provided basic operational support for our core programs, including our exhibit series; statewide education programs; public programs; Digital Collections website and online digital history resources like The Oregon Encyclopedia; research library services as well as funding to underwrite the improved hours of service in the library, free admission to residents of Multnomah County, improved collections development and care. OHS is committed to serving the diverse communities of Multnomah County and the State of Oregon, and it reflects that commitment in every aspect of its operations.

Four East Multnomah County historical societies-- East County Historical Organization, Gresham Historical Society, Troutdale Historical Society, and Crown Point Country Historical Society-- together now receive \$200,000 annually from the levy proceeds. These funds are critical to the continued operation of these four organizations. The levy allocates the balance, estimated at \$3.2 million in FY 2022-23 to the Oregon Historical Society for its programs and operations.

The 2022 OHS exhibit series portrayed connections to the past and to one another through various art forms. The photography, paintings, music, even the art of a carousel, were selected to give a sense of time, place, and who we are. Last year's informative exhibits included: I Am An American: Stories of Exclusion and Belonging (The Immigrant Story presents an exhibition that explores the different facets of Asian American experiences) Frances Stilwell: Oregon's Botanical Landscape featuring paintings of Oregon's native plants in their natural habitats; and twin exhibits highlighting the natural beauty of Oregon's State Parks, A Walk in the Park with images from OHS's collection and A Century of Wonder: Celebrating 100 Years of Oregon State Parks, that includes contemporary images of the parks. To complement the museum exhibit, highlights from A Century of Wonder were used to form a traveling exhibit.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Primary Measure	FY22 Actual	FY23 Budgeted	FY23 Estimate	FY24 Offer
Output	Multnomah County residents admitted free of charge	3,890	17,500	8,382	9.640
Outcome	Improved library hours per week	32	32	32	32
Output	Increased number of public programs	187	205	100	100
Quality	Care of Collections through additional curator/registrar	0	0	1	0

Performance Measures Descriptions

While the lifting of many COVID-19 pandemic restrictions by the State and County allowed OHS to fully open and to sponsor in person lectures and programs, OHS continued to sponsor many virtual and hybrid programs. School tours also began to return in the fall of 2022. OHS continues to reach out to educators through an education-related E-Digest, and through in-person programs. A broader weekly e-digest is now sent out to over 20,000 subscribers. The annual Oregon History Day competition was held virtually but will return in-person in 2023.

Legal / Contractual Obligation

Measure 26-174 provides the Oregon Historical Society with a five-year property tax levy at the rate of \$0.05 per thousand dollars of assessed value. Four east county historical societies (Fairview-Rockwood-Wilkes, Gresham, Troutdale, and Crown Point Country) will together receive \$200,000 per year from the levy proceeds.

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Adopted General Fund	Adopted Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
Program Expenses	2023	2023	2024	2024
Contractual Services	\$0	\$3,643,039	\$0	\$3,873,074
Internal Services	\$0	\$29,000	\$0	\$29,000
Total GF/non-GF	\$0	\$3,672,039	\$0	\$3,902,074
Program Total:	\$3,672,039		\$3,902,074	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Program Revenues				
Taxes	\$0	\$3,646,083	\$0	\$3,861,074
Interest	\$0	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
Beginning Working Capital	\$0	\$22,956	\$0	\$38,000
Total Revenue	\$0	\$3,672,039	\$0	\$3,902,074

Explanation of Revenues

This program generates \$29,000 in indirect revenues.

This is a dedicated local option property tax levy collected by Multnomah County on behalf of the Oregon Historical Society (OHS). OHS receives no other County funding.

Significant Program Changes

Last Year this program was: FY 2023: 10023 OHS Local Option Levy