

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-004

Approving the Oregon Historical Society Levy Renewal – Explanatory Statement and Ballot Title.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

- a. The Oregon Historical Society houses and preserves Oregon's and Multnomah County's collection of historical documents, photos, books, maps and artifacts. The Museum and Library provide public access to research, study and interact with these materials to learn Oregon and Multnomah County's history.
- b. In 2021 Multnomah County residents passed a five-year levy of \$.05 per \$1,000 assessed valuation to support the Oregon Historical Society, including the Oregon History Library and Museum.
- c. A renewal of the five-year levy of \$.05 per \$1,000 assessed valuation will provide free admission to all Multnomah County residents and school groups to the Oregon Historical Society Museum and Research Library, as well as providing support to the Gresham Historical Society, the Troutdale Historical Society, the Crown Point Country Historical Society, and the East County History Organization. An independent citizen oversight committee created to review all expenditures and ensure dollars are spent as promised will continue to provide accountability of the funds raised by the levy.
- d. The ballot title and explanatory statement for renewal of a five-year levy of \$0.05 per \$1,000 of assessed property value have been prepared and are attached to this Resolution as Exhibit A.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Resolves:

1. The attached ballot title and explanatory statement are approved and certified to the Director of the Multnomah County Division of Elections.
2. The Board Clerk shall submit this resolution, ballot title and explanatory statement to the Multnomah County Elections Director for further action as required by law.

ADOPTED this 15th day of January, 2026.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Jessica Vega Pederson, Chair

REVIEWED:
JENNY M. MADKOUR, COUNTY ATTORNEY
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By 
Jenny M. Madkour, County Attorney

Submitted by: Jessica Vega Pederson, Chair

Notice of Measure Election

County

SEL 801

rev 08/25: ORS 250.035, 250.041,
250.175, 254.103, 254.465

Notice

Date of Notice	Name of County or Counties	Date of Election
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Final Ballot Title The following is the final ballot title of the measure to be submitted to the county's voters. The ballot title notice was published and the ballot title challenge process is complete.

Caption 10 words which reasonably identifies the subject of the measure.

Question 20 words which plainly phrases the chief purpose of the measure.

Summary 175 words which concisely and impartially summarizes the measure and its major effect.

Explanatory Statement 500 words that impartially explains the measure and its effect.

If the county is producing a voters' pamphlet an explanatory statement must be written and attached to this form for:

→ any measure referred by the county governing body; **or**
→ any initiative or referendum, if required by local ordinance.

Explanatory Statement Attached? Yes No

Authorized County Official Not required to be notarized.

Name	Title
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Mailing Address	Contact Phone
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By signing this document:

→ I hereby state that I am authorized by the county to submit this Notice of Measure Election; **and**
→ I certify that notice of receipt of ballot title has been published and the ballot title challenge process for this measure completed.

Signature

Date Signed

Explanatory Statement

Founded in 1898, the Oregon Historical Society (OHS) maintains a museum and public research library in downtown Portland, preserves the largest collection of historical materials about the state of Oregon, and offers programming on the people, places, and events that have shaped Oregon. In addition, the OHS is the primary historical society for Multnomah County, with photographs, maps, manuscripts, books, films, and oral histories documenting the County's history.

Each year, approximately 40,000 people visit OHS's Portland facilities, including about 5,000 schoolchildren and college students. OHS's museum features three permanent exhibitions and rotating installations on diverse topics. In 2024, OHS opened *Rivers, Roses, and Rip City*, the first permanent exhibition dedicated to the history of Portland. This immersive exhibition, installed in OHS's Naito Family Gallery, explores the City's distinctive landscape and the communities and people that contribute to its vibrant identity. Also, OHS publishes the longest-running peer-reviewed journal in the West, the *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, which supports new research, amplifies knowledge and perspectives, and sparks relevant conversations about history.

OHS's online resources at [ohs.org](https://www.ohs.org) provide free educational resources to students and learners of all ages. In 2024 the Society's online collections were accessed by over 1.3 million visitors, with more than 20% of visitors coming from Multnomah County. OHS is set to debut an innovative new website in spring 2026 that will be entirely dedicated to sharing Portland's history through digitized collection materials and imaginative technology.

Funding from the renewed levy will maintain OHS's current public operating hours of 47 hours per week for the museum and 32 hours per week for the research library; support the preservation and curation of current exhibits; fund the development of new educational programming and scholarships; and allow OHS to continue offering free museum admission to and tours for all Multnomah County residents and K–12 school groups. Levy funds will also support operations at four East Multnomah County historical societies — East County Historical Organization (ECHO), Gresham Historical Society, Troutdale Historical Society, and Crown Point Country Historical Society.

The cost of the levy renewal will remain at \$.05 (five cents) per \$1,000 assessed property value, beginning 2026 through 2031. For example, the owner of a home assessed by the County at \$250,000 will continue to pay \$12.50 a year for this levy.

Accountability is a key component of this levy, with the Multnomah County Chair continuing to appoint an independent citizens' oversight committee — representative of Multnomah County's diverse communities — to review all levy expenditures. The Levy Oversight Committee will ensure funds are spent as approved by voters and advise OHS to ensure that its board, partnerships, staff, exhibitions, and programs proactively represent Multnomah County's diverse cultures. In addition, Multnomah County will continue to select an auditor, for which OHS will pay, to conduct annual audits of levy funds that will be made available to the public.

This levy will fund approximately one-third of operations at OHS. Other funding comes from grants, private donations, admissions, and other earned revenues.