

Program #90011 - Public Campaign Finance
FY 2025 Proposed
Department: Community Services

Program Contact: Margi Bradway

Program Offer Type: Operating

Program Offer Stage: Proposed

Related Programs:
Program Characteristics: New Request

Executive Summary

This program offer will explore the feasibility and identify the resources, processes, actions and timeline necessary to successfully establish and operate a public campaign finance program using a small donor matching model for candidates seeking Multnomah County's elected offices before the November, 2026 general election.

Program Description

In 2016, Multnomah County voters approved limits on campaign contributions and expenditures for candidates seeking the positions of Multnomah County Chair, Commissioner, Auditor, and Sheriff. In 2020, the Oregon Supreme Court upheld the limits on campaign contributions, but struck down the limits on expenditures. As a result, candidates for elected office in Multnomah County are limited to accepting no more than \$568 or less from an individual or political committee, however there is no comparable limit on the amount of money that can be expended by a campaign, leading to inequities in the ability to seek elected office, particularly for candidates from historically underrepresented communities, and making it challenging for candidates who cannot self-finance their campaign or carry over funds from prior campaigns to compete for elected office.

This program will explore the possibility of establishing a partnership between Multnomah County and the City of Portland's Small Donor Elections program and report back to the Board in January 2025 on the feasibility of implementing a program ahead of the November 2026 general election. Program activities will include: consultation with City of Portland staff, elected officials, members of the public, and members of the Portland Elections Commission; identification of the software, funding, administrative steps, policy development, and other resources necessary to successfully implement and operate a small donor matching program by the November 2026 general election; the delivery of a report to the Board on the feasibility of implementing a small donor matching program ahead of the 2026 general election; and, if necessary, the development of one or more intergovernmental agreements to facilitate the development and implementation of a public campaign finance program through a partnership with the City of Portland. Should the Board find the establishment of a program in this timeframe feasible, the program shall move forward with all necessary actions identified to facilitate the development and implementation of a public campaign finance program.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Performance Measure	FY23 Actual	FY24 Budgeted	FY24 Estimate	FY25 Target
Output	Report to the Board of County Commissioners in time for the November 2026 general election.	NEW	NEW	NEW	1
Outcome	County Commissioners are briefed on the program in January, 2025.	NEW	NEW	NEW	100%

Performance Measures Descriptions

The performance measures ensure that the the Board of County Commissioners is aware of any findings related to the feasibility, cost, timeline and necessary steps of developing and implementing a public campaign finance program.

Legal / Contractual Obligation

This program will address the initiatives outlined in Multnomah County Code (MCC) 5.200 - 5.205 and Contribution Limit and Disclosure Administrative Rules (CLDR) (170.34 KB) which implement the County's campaign finance regulations.

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Adopted General Fund	Adopted Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
Program Expenses	2024	2024	2025	2025
Personnel	\$0	\$0	\$192,706	\$0
Contractual Services	\$0	\$0	\$403,647	\$0
Materials & Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$403,647	\$0
Total GF/non-GF	\$0	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$0
Program Total:	\$0		\$1,000,000	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00

Program Revenues				
Total Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Explanation of Revenues

This program offer is supported by County General Funds.

Significant Program Changes

Last Year this program was:

This is a new program offer.