

# BALLOT TITLE

**CAPTION:** Renew Five-Year Local Option Levy to Continue Library Services

**QUESTION:** Shall Multnomah County continue library services with levy of 89.0 cents per \$1,000 assessed value for five years beginning 2007?

This measure may cause property taxes to increase more than three percent.

**SUMMARY:** The library levy approved by voters in 2002 will expire in 2008. It provides over half of the library's funds. Renewal will keep libraries open, maintain hours and services, and open two planned branches. If not renewed, some libraries will close, others will be open fewer hours, and library services will be greatly reduced.

Renewing the levy will:

- Continue programs for school age children, story hours for babies and toddlers, summer reading, literacy services for children in child care, programs for teens.
- Help teachers and students use library resources; provide homework helpers to assist children with school work.
- Maintain free access to information; update books and materials.
- Continue book delivery to homebound seniors and nursing home residents.
- Open planned libraries in underserved neighborhoods of East County and North Portland.
- Keep libraries open; maintain current hours and services at Central and neighborhood libraries.

The levy raises approximately \$33 million in 2007-08; \$34.1 million in 2008-09; \$35.3 million in 2009-10; \$36.5 million in 2010-11; and \$37.8 million in 2011-12.

This levy replaces the current voter-approved library levy. The estimated cost to a homeowner of an average value single family home will be \$11.13 a month.

The estimated tax cost for this measure is an ESTIMATE ONLY based on the best information available from the county assessor at the time of estimate.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### Continue Multnomah County Library Services

Measure 26-81 will replace the current library levy. Its cost will be 89 cents per \$1,000 assessed value per year. According to the County Department of Assessment and Taxation, the average single family home would pay about \$11.13 per month for this levy.

### RESULT OF A 'YES' VOTE

Measure 26-81 provides over half the library's funds. Voting yes will renew funding for current library programs and services.

### Library Services Expected To Be Maintained Include:

- Library services for young and school-aged children – story hours for babies and toddlers, homework help, summer reading, and services for children in child care;
- Multnomah County libraries open at least six days a week for an average of 53-58 hours each;
- Central Library and neighborhood libraries open Sunday afternoons;
- Services to seniors including computer classes and book delivery for those who are homebound;
- Library services for jobseekers, small business owners, and English language learners;
- Buying new books, magazines, and other library materials.

The library levy will also provide funds to operate planned branches in underserved neighborhoods of North Portland and East County, which will open during the course of this five-year levy.

Measure 26-81 will fund continued hours and services at Multnomah County libraries including Central Library and:

Albina  
Belmont  
Capitol Hill  
Fairview/Columbia  
Gregory Heights  
Gresham  
Hillsdale  
Hogate  
Hollywood  
Midland  
North Portland  
Northwest  
Rockwood  
Sellwood-Moreland  
St. Johns  
Woodstock

### **How Are Libraries Used?**

- 52,000 kids participated in the Library's Summer Reading program in 2005, which includes over half of the county's elementary school children.
- More than 300,000 people attend library programs and events for children and teens each year.
- Each day about 13,000 people visit the 17 libraries.
- An average of 28 books are checked out every year for every man, woman, and child in the county.
- Librarians and library staff provide personal help an average of 90,000 times each week – answering questions, reading stories, checking out books, assisting students after school, and more.
- The library provides 24/7 online access to information, learning resources, and the library catalog.
- Library outreach programs to schools make nearly 120,000 contacts with students and teachers during the school year;

### **RESULT OF A 'NO' VOTE**

The library receives over 55% of its funding from the current voter-approved levy. If the library levy is not renewed, library services will be greatly reduced. New branches will not open, others will be open fewer hours, fewer books will be purchased, and many neighborhood libraries will close.